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### **MCCORMICK PLACE OVERHAUL LEGISLATION SIGNED INTO LAW General Assembly Rejects Gov. Quinn's Amendatory Veto; Teamsters Filing Lawsuit**

Despite Gov. Pat Quinn's efforts to reshape the McCormick Place overhaul legislation, the Illinois General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to reject Quinn's amendatory veto on Thursday, May 27, 2010.

Senate Bill 28 is aimed at changing union work rules because lawmakers want to lower costs at the convention center. Teamsters Local 727, which represents workers at McCormick Place, contends the bill is unconstitutional because it will put into law portions of the collective bargaining agreement, thus tipping the balance of power in favor of the employers and violating National Labor Relations Board rules. Local 727 is filing a lawsuit this week.

"We have been fighting against this bill from Day One," said John T. Coli, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 727. "In the end, the legislators let their own feelings of panic cloud their judgment, and they kowtowed to the trade show managers. Workers shouldn't have to suffer because of that shortsightedness."

The legislation is the result of an overreaction to a drop in convention business at McCormick Place that echoes a national trend of decreasing conventions. However, the Chicago Tribune reported that Chicago took a relatively small hit in the weak convention market with a 7 percent drop, compared to a 30 percent drop in Las Vegas and a 21 percent drop in Orlando.

Yet, by creating a crisis atmosphere, contractors and trade show managers may have found a way to repudiate work rules they have been trying to change for years.

"The only ones who were asked to make concessions were labor organizations," said Coli. "The contractors have the ability to make Chicago cheaper to exhibitors, but they won't do it."

In April, legislators conducted a panel discussion with managers and officials without any input from labor union leaders. Under pressure from the Teamsters, union leaders – including Coli – were allowed to testify before the state panel to present their side of the argument.

Senate Bill 28 includes an exhibitor's "bill of rights," which, among other clauses, will allow exhibitors to load and unload materials from private vehicles in a designated area through the use of non-motorized hand trucks and dollies. In addition to taking away Teamster jobs, this raises serious security concerns.



Jim Reilly, who is a former head of the agency that runs the convention center and has done consulting work for the companies that employ union workers, will become interim trustee of McCormick Place for 18 months.

Quinn's veto sought to block Reilly's appointment, saying it was unconstitutional. The veto also would have reduced the number of union jurisdictions working at McCormick Place, and eliminated the hike in fees on airport taxi and bus rides.

The bill will limit crew sizes to a maximum of two people, but the trustee or MPEA board will have the power to cut crews to one person at their discretion.

In addition, all stewards will be required to be working stewards and each union would be limited to one steward per building per show. Supervising stewards will not be allowed.

Coli said it is important for members to do their part.

"It's legislation like this that reinforces my belief that our members need to become more politically active," Coli said. "We have the ability to make a difference, to get out there and talk to voters and relate to them on a personal level – and that's something only we can offer."

Teamsters Local 727 is an affiliate of Teamsters Joint Council 25, which represents more than 100,000 men and women throughout Illinois and Indiana.