

WHY ARE YOUR DUES IMPORTANT?

United Transportation Union members benefit from many years of successful, collectively bargained negotiations. UTU members enjoy some of the most progressive benefits and services in organized labor, unmatched in the transportation trades. The benefits of UTU membership include: excellent wages; seniority rights; health, welfare and pension benefits; paid vacations and holidays; experienced representation, and legislative strength.

Additionally, UTU general committee, state legislative and local officers work hard to see that members' contracts are not violated, that their work rules are reasonable, their wages are protected and their working conditions are as safe as possible.

However, it costs money to maintain these advantages of UTU membership. Since the UTU was formed in 1969, its leaders have fought to keep the dues contributions by members as low as possible. With only eight dues increases at the International level since the UTU was formed more than 35 years ago, the leadership is taking care of the members' interests.

Where do the dues dollars go? There are several different union divisions to which a member pays dues. The member also might contribute voluntarily to the union's political action committee, or have union insurance premiums or savings contributions deducted directly along with his or her dues payment.

The four different levels of dues contributions are:

- INTERNATIONAL DUES** – This is the only part of the members' dues payment which supports the entire UTU organization. These dues support the union's strike fund, public relations fund, convention fund, maintenance of membership fund and other education and training programs. These dues also pay for offices in Cleveland, Ohio; Washington, D.C., and Ottawa; full-time legal counsel; salaries of officers and staff, and all operating expenses, including dues to the Canadian Labour Congress.

- GENERAL COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT DUES** – This dues amount is established by the general committee of adjustment to generate funds to take care of members' interests on individual properties. The amount paid differs from property to property. The rate is set by the local chairpersons who are under the jurisdiction of the general committee of adjustment.

- LEGISLATIVE DUES** – This amount goes to operate the state legislative board in the member's state. The amount is set by a vote of the local legislative representatives who are members of the state board. This legislative fund protects members on the state level by promoting policies and programs that deal with on-the-job safety and sanitation, and many other job-related problems.

- LOCAL DUES** – Local dues are separated into two categories: Local dues and local committee of adjustment dues. These dues support the costs of both providing representation at the local level and the costs of operating the local, such as wages of the officers, rent, supplies, and other expenses. The level of dues in each of these categories is set by a vote of the members of the local and local committee of adjustment.

Union membership doesn't cost, it pays. Union workers are paid about 21% more than non-union workers, and their fringe benefits are typically worth two to four times as much. Also, 85% of union workers have health insurance, compared with 57% of non-union workers. Union workers also see their wages and benefits go up faster than non-union workers.

The UTU has long recognized that it must aggressively work to keep the wages and benefits enjoyed by its members the highest in the transportation industry. UTU members' dues, which represent only about two hours of work a month for the average member working on a Class I railroad, continue to make that possible.

For additional information, contact the UTU Membership Services Dept., 14600 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, OH 44107, (216) 228-9400, or via e-mail at "j_fink@utu.org."

