



# TEAMSTERS LOCAL 727

Representing more than 9,000  
hardworking men and women  
throughout the Chicagoland area

**John T. Coli**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**John T. Coli Jr.**  
President

AUG. 27, 2015 | MEMBER NEWS

## SKYWAY NEGOTIATIONS AT STANDSTILL; TOLL COLLECTORS PREPARE FOR STRIKE BEGINNING LABOR DAY WEEKEND

Chicago Skyway toll collectors may be forced to strike next week because Skyway Concession Company has ground contract negotiations to a halt.

The current three-year contract was set to expire July 3, but Teamsters Local 727 agreed on a two-month extension. The final negotiation meeting is scheduled for Aug. 31 — the day the contract extension expires. The members are scheduled to take a vote on Sept. 2.

“The ball is in management’s court,” said John Coli Jr., President of Teamsters Local 727, which represents the 30 Skyway toll collectors. “The company can either do the right thing and come together to reach a fair agreement, or it can force our members out on the picket line to fight for the wages, benefits and working conditions they deserve.”

Local 727 representatives have begun strike preparations such as assembling picket signs, creating banners and garnering support from Teamsters across Illinois and northwest Indiana. The union also is warning the public that a labor dispute could cause excessive delays on the Chicago Skyway during the upcoming travel-heavy Labor Day weekend.

Skyway Concession Company has increased tolls on the 7.8-mile connection between Chicago’s Dan Ryan Expressway and the Indiana Toll Road twice in the last two years. The company has been operating the Chicago Skyway since 2005 under a 99-year lease worth \$1.83 billion.

On Jan. 1, 2015, Skyway car tolls jumped another \$0.50 to \$4.50. Tolls for trucks with three to seven or more axles rose to between \$15.20 and \$35.50 each way during peak hours, making the Skyway’s rate of \$2.69 per mile for a five-axle truck the highest per mile in the country, according to one Illinois Tollway analysis.

“This gigantic corporation continues to fill its coffers while its employees struggle to make ends meet,” Coli said. “These are not just nameless, faceless employees; these are hardworking people with families who depend on them, and they will accept nothing less than a living wage and adequate health insurance.”



# TEAMSTERS LOCAL 727

**Representing more than 9,000  
hardworking men and women  
throughout the Chicagoland area**

**John T. Coli**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**John T. Coli Jr.**  
President

Skyway Concession Company also refuses to create more full-time toll collector positions and is demanding to have unfettered rights to hire temporary employees. Currently, only five of the 30 bargaining unit members are full-time employees, while the rest work fewer than 30 hours a week — despite the fact that the company often hires temporary employees throughout the year.

“Most of the bargaining unit members are single mothers trying to provide for their families while earning meager wages of only \$11 an hour and working part-time,” Coli said. “What’s more, this greedy company is skirting its responsibilities to provide health insurance under the Affordable Care Act by forcibly keeping long-time employees at part-time status. It’s truly despicable.”

“We sincerely hope management comes to its senses, but we feel it is our civic duty to warn the public of this possible labor dispute,” Coli said. “To show support for these workers, we ask that drivers avoid the Skyway in the event of a strike.”

Teamsters Local 727 represents more than 9,000 workers throughout the Greater Chicago area.