

CONTRACT WATCHDOG

Teamsters Pension Stories – Teamcare and Veba

Teamsters Pensioners: Letters from Retired members in the Central States Pension Plan and their Health and Welfare Fund (Teamcare)

Let's see what our future may look like under Teamcare and their Retirement Veba Plan.

Kenneth Petersen

South Saint Paul, Minnesota | Age 65

My name is Ken Petersen, and I am writing to you to share a little of my story. I was in trucking for 31 years, of which I was a Teamster member of Local 120 in St. Paul, MN. I started in 1973 with Midwest Motor Express. I was with them for about 18 years, until they refused to sign the contract. I then went to Churchill Truck Lines, followed by H&W Motor Express, ANR Trucking and finally USF Holland.

It was a tough 30 years, long hours, layoffs, unheated freight docks, breathing lots of diesel fuel fumes. In the summer it was unbearably hot as well. Four companies went down from right under my feet. With every new company I started with, I lost any seniority that I had, plus I went back to an 85% of scale pay. In 1996 I suffered a widow-maker heart attack and had five heart procedures. I am also a disabled veteran of the Vietnam War.

When I retired, it was time for me to go. I don't physically believe I could have gone much longer. I was retired for 18 months before

I was forced to go back to work due to medical circumstances and Central States dropping their "free" medical insurance until eligible for Medicare (which was supposed to be one of the 'benefits' of working in the union, under this Fund.)

The costs of paying the premiums and co-pays, etc. were expenses that I could never have planned for and used up much of our resources, due to both my disability, as well as my wife's, who has been disabled for over 20 years.

I have been working ever since, and now it seems that I may never be able to retire. This Bill is so unconscionable; it assaults ones' senses and sensibilities. **It is unbelievable that in this nation, in this day and age, there are people out there more than willing to decimate the pensions of so many people with NO thought of the repercussions both financially, but also emotionally.**

I IMPORE you for the sake of what's right, **I just please ask that you do whatever you can to help all of us who have been betrayed by this travesty of justice removed from our hands and put into the hands of the same pension fund and its Executive Director and Trustees, who have NOT protected our interests, have done nothing to cut costs at Central States, and we have NO tools which to protect ourselves.**

Nothing was ever sent to me to indicate that I was at risk of losing my pension. In fact, everything that was sent since 2008 stated that "if you retired before 2008, none of any changes taking effect to the Plan affect you."

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We have NO person who represents us. Susan Mauren is NOT OUR advocate; if she was, she would be meeting with us and trying to help us, share resources, etc. She is a UNION official who happened to have several jobs within the union and was involved in an administrative position within, NOT a worker such as those who built Central States, the trucking companies that we helped build with our labor, our givebacks and to the Fund.

We gave UP many wage increases so that we would have a pension to retire in the last stage of our lives. We have NO protections, nothing.

Please take heed of all of the stories you are hearing; of the way in which Central States lobbied for this bill, used our resources (I am told over 7 million dollars) to get this law passed.

We were ambushed with this amendment in a spending bill – hidden from most and forbidden from the known to even have discussions on.

They have NOT practiced ANY fiduciary obligations to US, the REASON for the Fund. They are the BANK for our pensions. That is their PURPOSE.

They are NOT supposed to be used as an employer where nepotism is rife and where friends and relatives are rewarded with above average paying jobs and benefits. There has been NO cutting of costs, wages or benefits at the Fund.

Thomas Nyhan feels it unnecessary to do so as he believes having the salaries shared between the Pension and Medical Funds allows him to ‘save’ us money!! This is crazy!

Also, we were never provided any sort of worksheet or spreadsheet or justification as to how they came to the numbers they did when assigning percentages of cuts. I know many of the guys who worked the same places, the same length of time, and the variances are extreme. We NEED TO have been provided an accounting of how they came to these numbers understandable and not tied up with legalese.

This is our LIVES that are at stake and it is very serious business.

Central States assured that we would have no protections the way they wrote and lobbied for this bill. Everything else is done in secrecy and kept from us, the retirees, whom they put on the bottom of the pile when determining cuts.

Thank you. Very truly yours, Ken Petersen

The Story of a former Teamster from Local 120 in St Paul MN for 31 years.

Can you trust Tom Nyhan and the other Central States Trustees with your Family medical and your Retiree medical? Can you trust them with Your Health and Welfare?

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