



Stop Call Center Offshoring and Outsourcing

WHEREAS, According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. lost 200,000 call center jobs between 2006 and 2014. Customer service representatives face a global race to the bottom in which companies compete by locating their customer service operations wherever they find the lowest wages and weakest worker protections; and

WHEREAS, The network of global call center vendors depends on weak labor laws and low wages. For example, in the Philippines more than one million people work in the so-called “business process outsourcing” sector, often earning less than \$2 per hour; and

WHEREAS, The 2017 tax law slashed taxes for corporations and the wealthy on the false promise of raising wages for workers. Corporate profits, share buybacks, and mergers and acquisitions have all boomed, with no corresponding increase in worker wages. The international provisions of the 2017 tax law further incentivize offshoring operations at the expense of domestic investments and sourcing; and

WHEREAS, High quality training and continuity in utility call center services is vital to public safety. Utility call center operators provide critical information to ratepayers in the aftermath of natural disasters and assist customers in obtaining essential services; and

WHEREAS, Many low-wage call center vendors are right here in the United States. One such global call center giant, Teleperformance, employs 33,000 people in the U.S. These workers earn little and face intense stress, contributing to very high turnover. These are not family-supporting jobs with a future; and

WHEREAS, The trend among corporations to save money by using low-wage vendors to provide customer service is shortsighted. It has resulted in privacy breaches, misinformation and high rates of customer dissatisfaction. Companies that fail to invest in good customer service jobs take serious risks; and

WHEREAS, In the U.S., the occupation of “customer service representative” is growing, increasing by more than 20 percent over the past 10 years. Even while jobs are leaving the U.S., companies clearly see the value of a U.S.-based workforce for the vital role of customer interaction. While challenging, we also have opportunities to organize this group of workers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The UWUA recognizes and commends employers that have committed to keep the vast majority of their customer service work in the U.S. and at union call centers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Our union seeks to limit the offshoring of call center jobs and supports legislation at the federal and state levels that incentivizes corporations to maintain U.S.-based jobs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, UWUA Local 601’s recent success in organizing and winning a contract for Atlantic City Contract Center workers provides a good example of how we can improve worker wages and benefits while preventing jobs from being off shored through contract language. UWUA will share information among our bargaining teams about strategies to strengthen existing job protections and prevent our employers from shifting an increasing share of customer service work to low-wage vendors; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, Overseas workers are not our enemy. UWUA will engage in international solidarity to support efforts by our sisters and brothers in call centers around the world that are seeking to organize and lift worker standards.