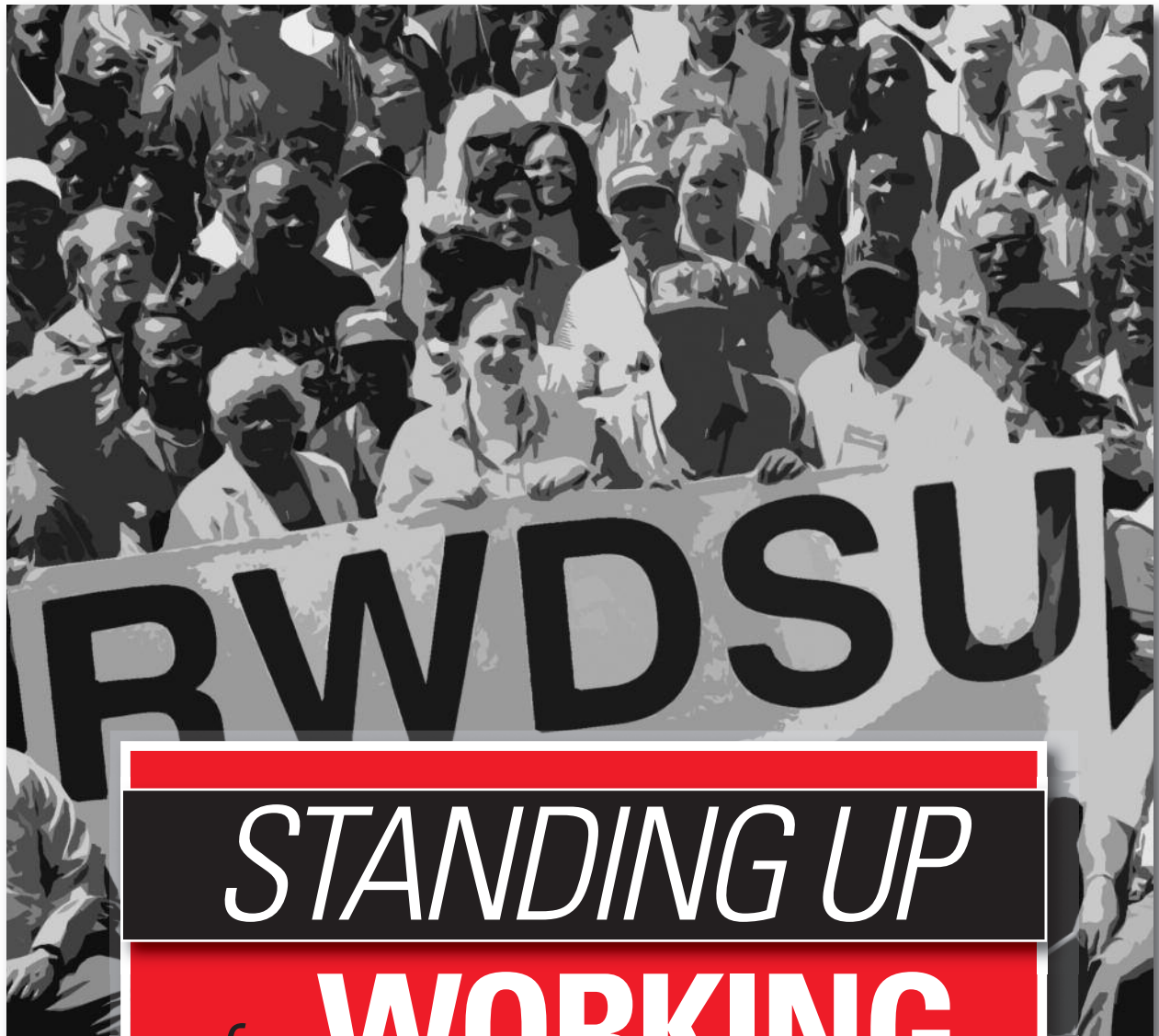


# Call to the 21st Quadrennial Convention



*STANDING UP*

*for* **WORKING  
PEOPLE**



**Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, UFCW**

21st Quadrennial Convention

Orlando, Florida • August 2 - 5, 2010

# STANDING UP FOR WORKING PEOPLE

## Preamble

*For RWDSU members and our families the last four years has been a time like no other. Working people in the U.S. and Canada have faced unprecedented challenges. The economy has exacted a terrible toll in both countries. And while the federal government in Canada has seemed unable or unwilling to deal with the problems of a struggling economy, in the U.S. working people elected a staunchly pro-worker President and Congress.*

## Shattered Dreams

**A**fter suffering through the most anti-labor President and Congress in memory, U.S. workers looked to 2008 as our moment to reclaim America. Joining together in cities and towns across our nation, we mobilized as never before and succeeded in helping to elect Barack Obama and a Congress that will stand up for working people.

However, our pride in helping elect the nation's first African-American president and other progressives was tempered by the fact that George W. Bush and his cronies had left America with an economic crisis almost unprecedented in its scale. Like other workers, many RWDSU members saw their dreams shattered as businesses went bankrupt and others seized on the financial crisis as an opportunity to roll back wages, slash benefits, and lay waste to generations of hard-won workplace protections.

In Canada, RWDSU families faced similar assaults. The nation's official unemployment rate reached 8.7% and forced hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers—including some RWDSU members—to depend on a woefully underfunded Employment Insurance system.

Yet, while working Canadians lost their jobs, Stephen Harper's Conservatives continued to serve as the champions of corporate power. Under the Tories the average pay for Canada's top corporate executives soared to a staggering \$7.2 million each year: 174 times the amount earned by the average Canadian worker. Tragically, working people in both the US and Canada have paid a staggering price for corporate greed and right-wing economic policies, and too many felt that they were powerless to do anything about it.

But not the RWDSU.

## Standing Up, Pushing Back

Using bold strategies and innovative tactics, working with our sister unions in the UFCW and throughout the labor movement, community activists and elected officials, our union succeeded in stopping many of the attacks on our contracts and standard of living. Our union consistently fought for strong, new agreements that protect our members' wages, health care and pensions. We have also gone on the offensive by

vastly expanding our commitment to organizing and building on our success in the Northeast, Midwest, in Ontario, and especially the South.

## Tough Times Demand Strong Unions

As new economic realities served to rekindle old bigotries, the RWDSU has stood solidly on the side of human dignity. We have stood firm, even in the face of harsh right-wing attacks, for religious freedom, civil and women's rights and against the exploitation of immigrants. We have fought for the rights of returning veterans and have won ground-breaking contract language in Canada to make sure that Vets can return to the jobs they left to defend our nations' interests.

In addition to our aggressive stance at the bargaining table, in organizing, and defending human rights, the RWDSU has mobilized to redefine how government makes policy choices that impact our members. In New York and elsewhere we have joined forces with community allies who, like us, believe that the goal of government economic policy must always be to create middle-class jobs and strong communities.

## Honoring RWDSU Values

Yet, we also know that our efforts in the workplace and the community can only yield limited results absent an overhaul of the economy itself. While we are proud to support progressive leaders as they fight for vital reforms, we are keenly aware that workers and their unions must speak with their own voice. And that is exactly what the RWDSU is doing.

As demonstrated by Wells-Fargo's 2009 abandonment of 1,300 Meadowcraft workers in Alabama, powerful banking and financial interests continue to turn their backs on workers and the public even as they receive tax dollars to survive. In response, the RWDSU has joined with other unions to fight for policies that require banks to invest in creating jobs with a future.

And we will continue to mobilize for strong labor laws that protect the right of all workers in both the U.S. and Canada to freely form unions and bargain first contracts.

In the face of upheaval unparalleled in our lifetime, the RWDSU today still honors the values that have guided our union since 1937.

We are, and will remain, a movement for economic justice.

We are, and will remain, a force for human rights.

We are, and will remain, a voice for progressive political change.

And we will never forget that, in the RWDSU, our only mission is to stand up for working people.

# TO ALL AFFILIATED UNIONS, JOINT COUNCILS AND JOINT BOARDS

## Greetings

Pursuant to the Constitution of the RETAIL, WHOLESALE AND DEPARTMENT STORE UNION, UFCW, you are hereby notified that the Twenty-First Convention of our Union will be held at the Walt Disney World Swan Hotel, Orlando, Florida, commencing at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, August 2, 2010.

The RWDSU Constitution provides the basis of representation and the manner of election of delegates as follows:

## Article IV

### Conventions

**Section 1.** Regular Conventions shall be held every four (4) years, at a place and time designated by the RWDSU Executive Board.

**Section 2.** The RWDSU Convention shall be composed of delegates elected by the members, as provided in this Article.

**Section 3.** (a) Each local union shall be entitled to have as delegates to the RWDSU Convention one (1) delegate for each one hundred (100) members or major fraction thereof. Each local union shall, nevertheless, be entitled to at least one (1) delegate; but no local union shall have more than ten (10) delegates; each joint board and joint council shall be entitled to have one (1) delegate to the RWDSU Convention. Each delegate shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote, except that joint board and joint council delegates shall not be entitled to vote for the officers or vice presidents of the RWDSU.

(b) Local unions may elect alternates in the same manner as delegates to the RWDSU Convention, each of whom shall only be entitled to be seated as a delegate in the absence or incapacity of the delegate for whom he is an alternate.

(c) For the purposes of votes taken in accordance with Section 15 of this Article, every local union shall be entitled, through its delegates, to cast one (1) vote for each of its members in good standing. The votes of the local union shall be divided equally among its delegates attending the Convention.

(d) Each local union president (or the principal officer of the local union if the president is not the principal officer) shall be a delegate to the Convention by virtue of election to office. Where a local union is entitled to more than one (1) delegate to the Convention, the local union secretary-treasurer (or the local union president if he is not a delegate under the preceding sentence of this subsection) shall be a delegate by virtue of election to office. The remaining delegates to which a local union is entitled and the alternates, if any, which a local union sends to the RWDSU Convention shall be nominated and elected by secret ballot in accordance with the procedures for nomination and election set forth in Section 9 of this Article IV and as provided in the UFCW Constitution, provided that, if a local union is entitled

to only one (1) delegate and decides to send an alternate in addition to that delegate, the alternate shall be the local union secretary-treasurer (or the president of the local union if the secretary-treasurer is the principal officer of the local).

**Section 4.** For the purpose of representation and voting in the Convention, the number of members in good standing in each local union shall be based upon the average membership in good standing in the local union for whom per capita payments as required by Article VIII, Section 2 or Section 3 have been paid to the RWDSU or, if no per capita payments are due pursuant to said Article VIII, Section 2 or Section 3, the average membership in good standing in the local union for whom per capita payments have been paid to the UFCW, for the calendar year immediately preceding the year in which the Convention is to be held. No local union shall be entitled to have its delegates seated if the local union is in arrears for per capita tax to the RWDSU and/or UFCW for more than one (1) calendar month preceding the Convention.

**Section 5.** Local unions may unite with other local unions located within a radius of one hundred (100) miles, and together they may elect a delegate or delegates to the Convention to represent them jointly.

**Section 6.** Newly organized local unions, which have been chartered for at least three (3) months, and are not more than one (1) calendar month in arrears in payment of per capita tax, shall be entitled to representation at the Convention. For the purpose of representation and voting in the Convention, the number of members in good standing in each such local union shall be the average membership in good standing in such local unions for whom per capita tax payments as required by Article VIII, Section 2 or Section 3, have been paid to the RWDSU, or, if no per capita payments are due pursuant to said Article VIII, Section 2 or Section 3, the average membership in good standing in the local union for whom per capita payments have been paid to the UFCW for the number of months such local has been in existence.

**Section 7.** No member shall be elected as a delegate to the Convention who has not been in continuous good standing in his local union and in the RWDSU for at least twelve (12) months preceding the Convention; except that no member of a local union which has been in existence for less than twelve (12) months prior to the Convention may be elected as a delegate thereto, unless he shall have been in continuous good standing in his local union and in the RWDSU from the time of his admission to membership.

**Section 8.** At least sixty (60) days before the date fixed for the opening of the Convention, the RWDSU Secretary-Treasurer shall issue the Call for the RWDSU Convention. He shall notify the local unions of all the relevant facts pertaining to the proposed Convention, giving instructions as to the time, place and other important facts pertaining thereto. He shall advise the local unions of the number of delegates which each is entitled to elect and the

number of votes which each local union shall be entitled to cast at the RWDSU Convention. He shall furnish the local unions with official credential blanks and other necessary forms and papers.

**Section 9.** Except as otherwise provided in Section 3(d) of this Article IV, or in local union or affiliate bylaws, delegates to the RWDSU Convention shall be elected by secret ballot in their local unions. Written notice of at least fifteen (15) days shall be given to the members of the local union of the meeting or referendum at which delegates and alternates, if any, shall be elected, and such meeting or referendum shall be held at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date fixed for the opening of the Convention.

**Section 10.** Delegates shall not be seated unless their respective credentials, duly signed by the local president and recorder or other officers, and bearing the seal of the local union, shall have been received by the RWDSU Secretary-Treasurer at least ten (10) days prior to the opening of the Convention.

**Section 11.** Proposed constitutional amendments shall not be considered by the Convention unless received by the RWDSU Secretary-Treasurer, in writing, not less than ten (10) days prior to the opening of the Convention. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, the Constitutional Committee and/or the RWDSU Executive Board may propose and submit to the Convention for the Convention's consideration amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws at any time up to and including the next to last day of the Convention.

**Section 12.** At least seven (7) days prior to the opening of the Convention, the RWDSU President shall appoint at least seven (7) persons, with the approval of the RWDSU Executive Board, from among those selected as delegates to the coming Convention, who shall constitute a Credentials Committee for the purpose of passing upon the credentials of delegates and objections thereto, if any. Appeals from the decision of the Credentials Committee may be made to the Convention.

**Section 13.** The Credentials Committee shall pass upon the credentials of all delegates and any objection thereto. The Credentials Committee shall report to the Convention as soon as possible all credentials upon which there are no contests and to which there have been no objections made, and those so reported shall be seated, and the Convention shall be a body competent to transact the business of the Convention. The Convention shall also hear the report of the Credentials Committee relating to contested delegates or objections to the seating of any delegate, and the Convention shall decide on such contests and objections.

**Section 14.** Members of the RWDSU Executive Board not elected as delegates, and members of the advisory council appointed in accordance with the provisions of Article VII, Section 1(b)(ii), below, shall be seated as delegates to the Convention with all the rights and privileges of elected delegates, but without vote.

**Section 15.** On questions before the Convention, a roll call vote shall be taken upon the request of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the delegates.

**Section 16.** At the Convention and in order to expedite the business thereof, the President shall appoint all necessary committees subject to the approval of the Convention except as may be otherwise provided for herein.

**Section 17.** A special Convention may be called by the RWDSU President or the RWDSU Executive Board upon at least sixty (60) days' notice to all local unions.

**Section 18.** Special Conventions may also be called upon the request of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the locals in good standing in the RWDSU, located in at least five (5) different states and/or provinces having a total membership in good standing of at least twenty five percent (25%) of the RWDSU's total membership in good standing. A referendum vote shall then be held as provided for, and in the event that a special Convention is approved by the majority of the members voting, the RWDSU Secretary-Treasurer shall issue a Call for a special Convention.

**Section 19.** The procedure and manner herein provided for regular Conventions, including election of delegates, issuance of credentials, representation and voting, shall be applicable to special Conventions.

**Section 20.** At a Convention, a majority of the delegates seated shall constitute a quorum.

## Article V

### ***RWDSU Officers and Executive Board***

**Section 1.** (a) The Executive Board of the RWDSU shall consist of the RWDSU President, the RWDSU Secretary-Treasurer, the RWDSU Recorder and the Vice Presidents.

(b) The officers and Vice Presidents shall be elected at each regular Convention of the RWDSU. The term of all officers and Vice Presidents shall be until the next regular Convention. They shall hold office until their successors are duly elected and installed.

(c) No member shall be eligible for nomination or election as an RWDSU officer or Vice President unless he shall have been in continuous good standing in his local union for a period of twelve (12) months immediately preceding the date of the opening of the Convention.

(d) The candidate receiving a plurality of the votes cast for any office by the delegates to the Convention shall be declared elected.

*Fraternally,*



Secretary-Treasurer

*NOTE: Resolutions bearing on different subjects must be typewritten on separate papers and on only one side of paper and sent to Office of Secretary-Treasurer, 30 East 29th Street, New York, NY 10016, not later than ten days prior to the opening of the convention.*

Dated April 16, 2010