



Photos courtesy of Obama for America

# BY **BARACK OBAMA**

## SENATOR & DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

**O**ne of the great privileges in running for President is the opportunity that I get everyday to meet so many Americans from all across the nation. As I have traveled the country I am continually impressed by the strength, character and will of the American people. Few embody that strength of resolve more than the people of Wilmington. In the face of an economic hardship you have organized and rallied together. At its essence, that is the very definition of community and the bedrock of what makes this country great. After meeting twice with workers who would be affected by the DHL-UPS agreement, I can tell you that I understand the harm this deal would cause.

So, let me say in no uncertain terms, I stand with the people of Wilmington in opposing the proposed DHL-UPS service agreement. I look at the impact it would have on all our families—whether they are new ones trying to raise children, or older ones preparing for retirement. I know that we must work together to find a solution that respects DHL's right to run a profitable company but doesn't lead to the devastation of an entire region and its economy.

On Tuesday, September 9, I had the chance to sit down with a group of ABX Air, ASTAR and DHL employees. The meeting was a valuable opportunity for

me to see where things stand on the ground and hear suggestions on how I can be of assistance to help protect the community that you call home.

We discussed the devastating impact that the proposed DHL-UPS deal could have—as many as 10,000 jobs could be lost and thousands more if you count the businesses that service DHL and its employees.

Due to the enormous impact that this could have on the region, I believe immediate action must be taken to ensure that we exhaust all options.



In July after my first meeting with air hub workers, I sent a letter to Karl Zinsmeister, Director of the White House's Domestic Policy Council, asking the Administration to carefully examine the consolidation of DHL air operations under UPS. I pointed out that the proposed consolidation of DHL's domestic airlift operations under a competitor, UPS, raises significant antitrust concerns. At the very least, the U.S. Department of Justice should examine whether having two companies in a fairly concentrated market acting as partners would hamper competition.

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I have also asked Senator Herb Kohl, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Antitrust Subcommittee, to hold a hearing to review the proposed arrangement between DHL and UPS. It is possible that the DHL-UPS contract violates the antitrust provisions of the Clayton Act. I am aware that the entire Ohio Congressional delegation has asked U.S. Attorney General Mukasey to open an investigation if the DHL-UPS deal goes through.

I also fully support many of the comprehensive and bipartisan initiatives taking place at the municipal, state and federal level to prepare a rapid response plan to help the workers who may be impacted by this deal. I have pledged my support to Governor Strickland's effort to apply for and secure a National Emergency Grant that would be used to provide support services for Wilmington should DHL carry out this restructuring.

The reason I am running for President is to honor and protect the American dream. And while I will do everything within my power to assist the people of Wilmington, we must also plan for the chance that there may be little we can do to stop the agreement from being completed.

We must lay the ground work to build a better environment to protect working families. I promise to you that as President I will fight everyday to make America a place that values the hard work and contribution of the very people who wake up everyday and do the jobs that keep this country moving forward. As the child of a mother who at times struggled to support her family, I know firsthand the toll it takes on a family trying to make ends meet.

The current Administration has failed our middle class.

For many ABX Air employees, the potential loss of health insurance for their families would be almost as devastating as the loss of income from the job itself. For them and the other 45 million Americans who are uninsured, I will work with Congress to once and for all provide quality, affordable health care to every American who wants it.

The economy has now lost 605,000 jobs this year alone including eight straight months of net job loss. The housing crisis is deepening and energy and food prices are soaring. That is why I have called for an additional \$50 billion in stimulus to jumpstart the economy.

And those who are fortunate enough to still have their jobs have watched wages in this country stagnate, while their living expenses continue to skyrocket. In recent years, the typical working household has seen its income fall more than \$2,000, and health costs rise 67 percent—as millions of families face mounting debt and the prospect of losing their homes. That's why I have



proposed a middle class tax cut of \$1,000 for 95 percent of workers and their families. My plan would eliminate income taxes entirely for seniors making less than \$50,000.

My plan would also give families the help they need to build a nest egg and provide a better life for their children. To make saving easier, every worker will automatically be enrolled in a workplace pension plan that stays with you from job to job. I will make college more affordable by providing a \$4,000 annual tax credit, and my administration will work with congress to eliminate capital gains taxes for small businesses and start-up companies. And to restore fairness to our economy, I will end tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, and give them to companies that create jobs here at home.

Employees at the airpark are not looking for special treatment—you're just asking for your



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fair shot at the American dream, for wages that can pay the bills and support your family, health care when you get sick, and a secure retirement after a lifetime of hard work. And while I can't promise that we will be able to halt the DHL-UPS deal, I can promise that as President, I will work tirelessly to make sure that dream is within reach for anyone who's willing to work for it. ✈

