

Song to my fellow truck drivers

“This “corrido” goes to all of my friends

Professional truck drivers that are clearly exploited

At the big companies or as they’re better known, corporations.

I won’t tell you their names because it is hundreds, or thousands

That are suffering in silence ‘round here in San Pedro and Long
Beach

Where you’ll find the ports filled with melancholy.

’Round here in Rancho Dominguez is the most guilty of all

The company Harbor Rail where my brothers work

As well as your humble servant, el “Frijolito de la Sierra.”

Original lyrics by Alfredo Reyes

HRT driver, songwriter

Corrido de trailereros

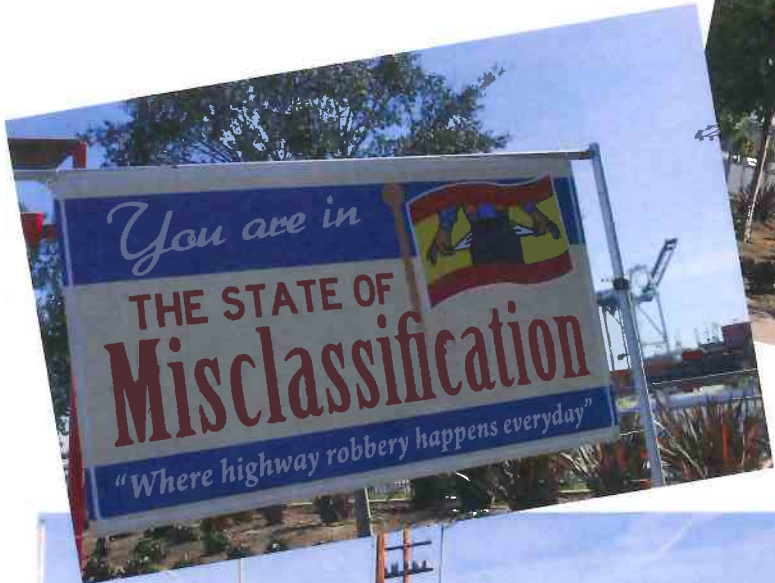
“Yo le canto este corrido para todos mis amigos
Trailereros profesionales que son bilmente explotados
En las grandes companias llamadas corporaciones.

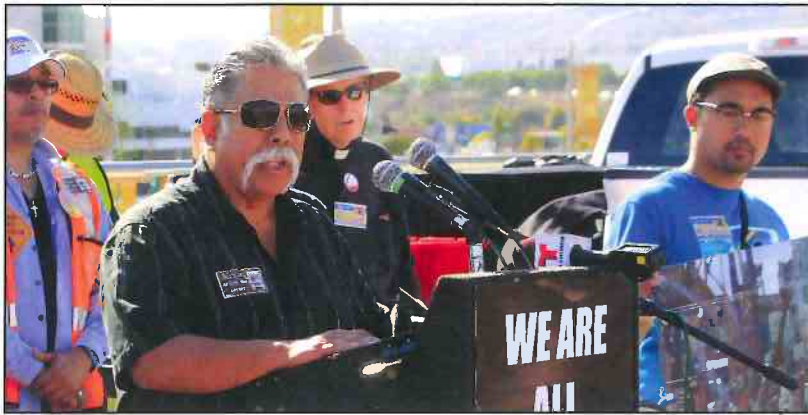
Sus nombres nos le dire porque son cientos o miles
Que estan sufriendo en siliencio ahi por San Pedro y Long Beach
Donde se encuentran los puertos que nos terminan de joder

Ahi por Rancho Dominguez esta el mero culpable
La compania Harbor Rail donde trabajan mis primos
Y un servidor de ustedes, el Frijolito de la Sierra.”

Cancion original de Alfredo Reyes

trailerero de HRT, escritor





Wage theft shouldn't be tolerated at ports or elsewhere: Guest commentary

By Rex Richardson

PressTelegram.com



Alex Paz, a truck

driver fired from TTSI allegedly as retaliation for unionizing attempts, speaks during a press conference at Waterfront Park in Wilmington on Thursday afternoon. Drivers are protesting against area trucking company that allegedly misclassify workers as independent contractors instead employees. This distinction, they said, allows trucking firms to avoid paying fair wages and following labor laws. Nov. 13, 2014. (Brittany Murray / Staff Photographer)

The Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles combined make up the largest port complex in the Western Hemisphere, and serve as the entryway for more than 40 percent of the goods that come into the United States from overseas. These ports are our largest regional economic drivers, and it is estimated that they support nearly 300,000 jobs in our region.

Thousands of working men and women play a major role in ensuring that goods are moved through our ports and across our country. Given the impact that port-related industries have on the quality of life of thousands of local families, it is critical that the goods movement system works, and it works for everyone. That is not always the case.

Last Thursday, truck drivers across the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles yet again stood together on strike, the fifth action in about a year, bringing to the public's attention the issue of "wage theft."

Wage theft is an unlawful act of stealing by an employer when they fail to comply with legal requirements regarding working terms and conditions. It can take many forms, such as being paid less than the minimum wage or less than the hours worked, being paid a fixed daily or weekly amount regardless of hourly wage law, or being classified as an "independent contractor" and not an "employee."

California and Federal agencies have already declared that these striking port truck drivers are misclassified and are sanctioning employers to pay back lost wages.

Unfortunately, wage theft is larger than just the port trucking industry. Wage theft affects many

low-wage sectors alike. Particularly here in Long Beach, workers in the janitorial services, housekeeping, caregiving, and home health care services are also susceptible to the many forms of wage theft. It is estimated that in Los Angeles County alone, \$26.2 million are stolen from low wage workers every week.

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The issues that impact these low-wage workers affect many Long Beach families in a deep and personal way. I was raised by a hard-working mother who was a CNA and private agency home care provider for many years and a step-father who was a cross country truck driver. And as council member for the 9th District of Long Beach, home to thousands of families like my own, I have a profound belief that all workers deserve the rights of a minimum wage and strong wage protections.

Long Beach is a city that values corporate responsibility that includes a high degree of respect and dignity for their workforce. Long Beach should not be a city that accepts wage theft in our port, domestic, property services, hospitality, or health-care sectors. We now have the opportunity to lead the discussion on wage theft and demand that misclassified drivers be given the opportunity to exercise their rights as employees.

Labor peace in our ports means a stronger local economy and better quality of life for our region. Strong wage protections for low wage workers means true fairness and economic justice for families and more economic security for our communities.

I am committed to working with my fellow City Council members and the mayor to begin a thoughtful dialogue on wage theft and the serious problem that it is in our city. I am also committed to looking at ways to collaborate with the community, labor, and business organizations to help guide the discussion on possible solutions for this issue.

Rex Richardson is a Long Beach city councilman representing the 9th District.