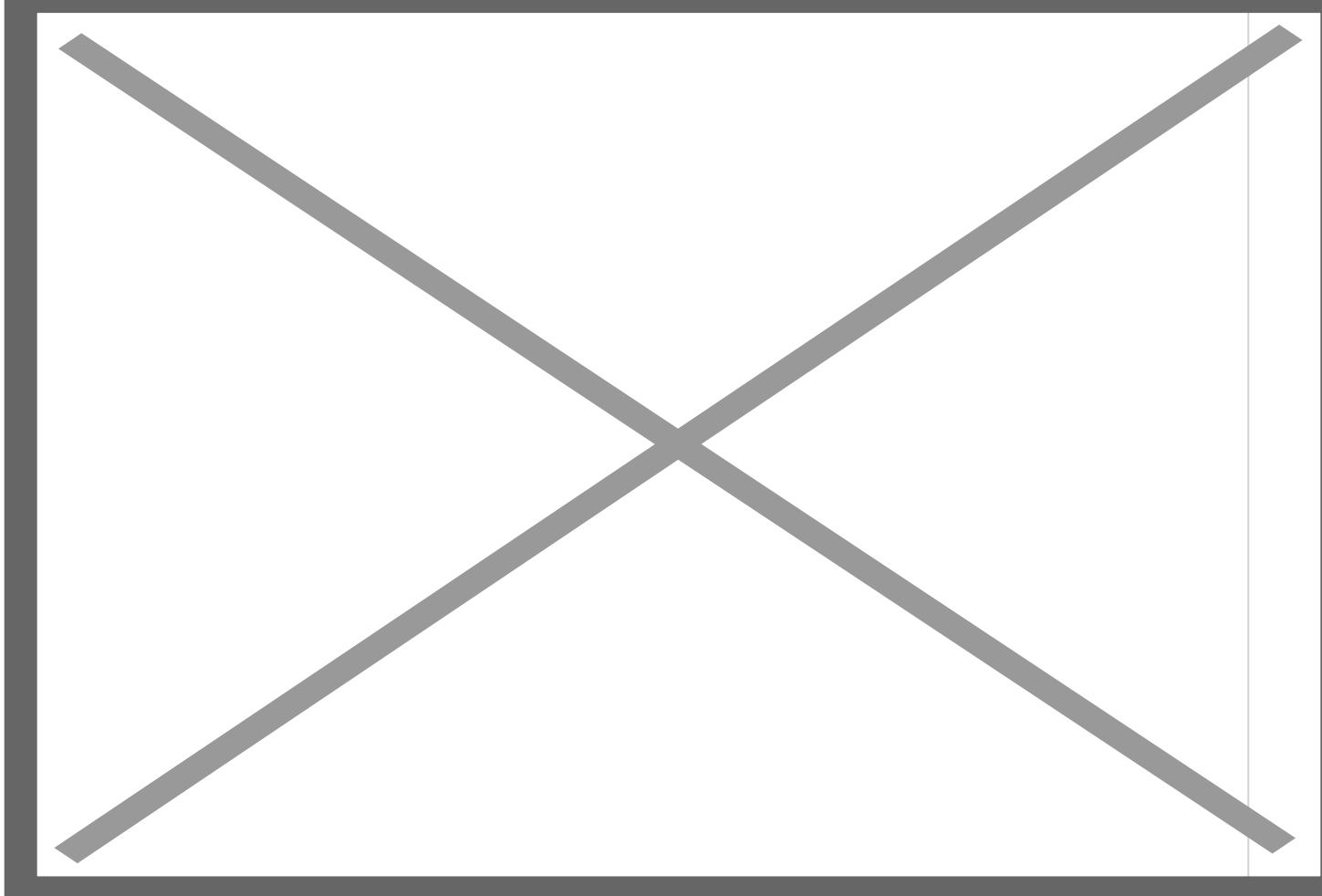


Teamsters union says won't endorse Harris or Trump in U.S. presidential elections

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Sean O'Brien, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, speaks during the Republican National Convention in July in Milwaukee [Photo> Morry Gash/AP] Influential union backed every Democratic presidential candidate since 2000, but declines to make endorsement this year

New York, September 19 (RHC)-- The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, one of the largest labour unions in the United States, has said that it will not endorse any candidate in the upcoming US presidential election.

In a statement, the influential union of about 1.3 million members said that it would not endorse either Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris or Republican former President Donald Trump.

“The Teamsters thank all candidates for meeting with members face-to-face during our unprecedented roundtables,” Teamsters General President Sean O’Brien said in the statement. “Unfortunately, neither major candidate was able to make serious commitments to our union to ensure the interests of working people are always put before Big Business.”

The move breaks with decades of precedent: The Teamsters have endorsed the Democratic candidate in every election for nearly a quarter of a century -- since 2000 -- and the union has not declined to endorse a candidate since 1996.

It also comes as both the Democratic and Republican parties have been courting organized labor ahead of the November 5th election, which is expected to be hard-fought between Trump and Harris.

The Teamsters said that polling of its members showed a preference for Trump over Harris by a margin of more than 25 percent, but no “universal support” for either candidate.

The Trump campaign said that the polling shows that the “vast majority” of the group’s members supported the ex-president and wanted to see him return to the White House.

In a statement to U.S. media outlets, a spokesperson for Harris said the Democrat has won the support of Teamsters locals across the United States, along with other labor unions.

“While Donald Trump says striking workers should be fired, Vice President Harris has literally walked the picket line and stood strong with organized labor for her entire career,” Lauren Hitt said. “The Vice President’s strong union record is why Teamsters locals across the country have already endorsed her — alongside the overwhelming majority of organized labor.”

Labor unions have been a traditional constituency of the Democratic Party in the U.S., with Republican overtures met primarily with scepticism as the party has historically taken a harsher line on workers’ rights.

Most large U.S. labour unions, such as the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), have voiced their support for Harris ahead of the upcoming election.

[SOURCE: AL JAZEERA]

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