



## **The New York Call Center Jobs Act: Key Messaging & FAQs**

The New York Call Center Jobs Act prevents companies that move call center jobs out of the state from receiving any public taxpayer money.

### **The Facts**

- There are over 260,000 call center workers in New York. Over the last 12 years, we've lost nearly 40,000 call center jobs in New York. CWA represents about 4,000 of these workers, mostly at Verizon.
- This legislation aims to prevent the outsourcing of jobs from New York State to other locations.
- Call center employers with more than 50 employees that move 30% or more of their operations out of the state would no longer be able to get tax breaks or other state incentives.
- The bill would also require state agencies to use New York call centers for their customer service.

### **Key Messaging**

- Call centers are easier to move than other jobs, making them a prime outsourcing target for CEOs.
- Working class families in New York can't get ahead if companies continue to outsource jobs abroad.
- It's corporate greed at its worst. Without this legislation, more jobs will be shipped elsewhere.
- Any time an employer cuts hundreds of jobs it is difficult not only for those workers but also for the families they support and our regional economy.
- The Trump administration's tax plan has incentivized corporations to offshore even more jobs, so Albany must act immediately to protect working-class families who depend on these jobs.

- Offshoring also suppresses wages.
- We can't be giving tax breaks to companies that are shipping good jobs out of the state.
- This is the kind of bill that can and should get done this year.
- Last year, the Assembly passed the bill overwhelmingly and it had 42 sponsors in the Senate. With the new leadership in the Senate, it's time to finally pass this bill.

## FAQs

- **Why Now?**

CWA has been fighting for this bill for years, but today it's more important than ever. The 2017 GOP tax bill actually **incentivizes** offshoring, in large part by taxing offshore profits at half the normal rate: only 10.5%. Need proof?

AT&T recently received **\$20 billion** in corporate tax breaks from the GOP tax bill. And yet, **AT&T has eliminated more than 10,700 union jobs in 2018 alone**. On January 7, they announced they plan to close a call center in Syracuse, putting the lives of 150 workers in peril, plus three more call centers in the Midwest.

Verizon still has 10 call centers in New York, which is why we need to pass legislation immediately that prevents them from following AT&T's example of boosting profits at the expense of jobs and communities. And then asking taxpayers to foot the bill!

- **Are the Governor and Legislature on board?**

CWA has had preliminary conversations with the governor's office, which has signaled it wants to work with us on the issue. In the legislature, the bill has broad support: The Assembly passed the bill twice in the last two years with significant Republican votes, and in the Senate it had 42 co-sponsors in 2018.

- **Has this bill passed anywhere else?**

Yes. Louisiana passed a version of the bill in 2018 by a vote of 83 to 8, and Governor John Bel Edwards signed it into law. The bill punishes all employers that utilized state tax dollars and then moved jobs out of state, by allowing Louisiana to "claw back" money from the employer. One helicopter company was recently fined under the law and now owes the state \$16 million in previously received tax breaks.

In 2019, 28 states have filed similar call center bills. In New Jersey, the bill is headed for a floor vote after the Assembly passed it in 2018, and the Senate just passed it through the final committee.

- **Will the bill prevent businesses from coming to New York?**

Any business receiving tax breaks from the state should commit to keeping their jobs here. The bill creates transparency where there currently is none, so as long as companies honor their commitments to New Yorkers, they have nothing to worry about.

- **The Business Council has a different job number – they say the industry is growing.**

Our data all comes from the Federal Department of Labor and takes into account a comprehensive definition of call center work, including bill collectors and insurance claims clerks. While we recognize that there is job growth in “customer service representative” jobs, the number of offshore call center jobs for US companies is actually growing at a faster rate. Overall, we’re concerned that the downward pressure on wages caused by outsourcing means that many of the new jobs being created will be less than livable.