



National Coalition Board Highlights New Focus on Collaboration and Future Success

#TogetherWeCanFixThisSystem

The National Coalition Board met recently in Dallas for its bi-annual meeting. This was an important gathering, coming at a time when relations between franchisee and franchisor have been strained. The Executive Board had an important message for all franchisees: This organization is committed to improving the long-term success of the 7-Eleven brand and the profitability of its store owners. While the National Coalition has been forceful in its efforts to publicize certain terms of the 2019 Franchise Agreement that are troubling to franchise owners, the Executive Board wanted all FOAs and industry observers to know its mission is not to cause harm to the 7-Eleven brand. Instead, the Executive Board made it clear, its actions have been aimed at helping level the playing field that exists in the 7-Eleven system.

Among the most important parts of this gathering was the chance to talk directly to vendors and inform them the National Coalition is working to help them better understand what franchisees need at the store level. At the same time, the Executive Board made it clear franchisees across the system want to engage directly with vendors, to learn from them what today's c-store customers want and how to satisfy them. We are confident, as franchisees and vendors improve their communication, the results will be seen on store owners' bottom lines.

Communication was a major theme running throughout the two-day meeting. Executive Board leaders discussed a pivot in the National Coalition's overall communications strategy, with the goal of fostering a more collaborative relationship with SEI corporate leadership. Over the past 18 months, the coalition has demonstrated its ability to work with the news media to highlight negativity within the system, but the Executive Board recognizes that a combative approach can only take an organization so far. For 7-Eleven to remain a top national brand and continue earning healthy profits, it needs to have a better relationship with its store owners. As the voice for 7-Eleven franchise owners nationwide, the National Coalition recognizes the importance of working collaboratively and cooperatively to achieve our ultimate goals.

Five-time NFL Pro-Bowl player Roy Williams – a former Dallas Cowboy – was the keynote speaker. His message of overcoming adversity resonated soundly with those in attendance. Williams detailed how the change in NFL rules banning the horse collar tackle became known as the “Roy Williams Rule.” Williams said the rule didn't stop him from working to perform at his highest ability, but rather made him adapt his style of play. As franchise owners with 7-Eleven we are often faced with having to conform, adapt and change, much like Williams did. The challenge before us is to continue working hard to meet each new challenge head on.

Of course, a system that has been battered by mistrust and bad publicity cannot be repaired overnight. The Executive Board made it clear during the Dallas meeting that it is committed to doing its part to repair the system, and unveiled the new hashtag #TogetherWeCanFixThisSystem, which epitomizes the focus going forward. We invite you to embrace the hashtag and all it stands for.

As the Dallas meeting demonstrated, when franchise leaders can get together in one room and discuss issues that matter to the entire system, real improvements can be made. This is a time to be optimistic—even as we hold onto the values that drive us in work every day. We want to recognize that the success of this brand is in the hands of the store owners and the corporate leaders. Only by working together can success be sustainable.