



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
District Lodge 66
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Union Herald Article from the desk of:



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TPP Watch

Once again, the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) is making its way into the news. Most analysts agree that congress may look at trying to pass this legislation in the lame duck session this fall. The election will be done, and those that opposed it in congress may have nothing to lose if they change their stance to get it through.

Ron Kind is still in support of the TPP. The IAM and the AFL-CIO are against the TPP, and any other disastrous trade deals. I know on the District 66 level of the IAM this is why Kind was not endorsed in his run against Myron Buckholz. We want to see fair trade, not free trade. Trade with countries that don't have fair labor laws, safety laws, or environmental laws are not in the best interest of American workers.

On September 14th the IAM is having a call to action. This publication will not likely be released before that date. However, this does not take away your ability to take action after that time. Call 855-712-8441 to tell your representative to publicly oppose the TPP.

The TPP's backers are twisting arms and calling in favors, trying to scrounge up enough congressional support to schedule a vote on the dangerous deal.

They know their only chance to get the TPP approved is to hold a vote after the election when representatives' political accountability to constituents is at its absolute lowest. But we can foil that plan if we force members of Congress to take a public position before Election Day.

That is because they know they cannot be for the TPP and then face the voters. Americans are furious about the influence corporations have over governments and the decisions that shape our daily lives – and the TPP is a horrifying example of corporate influence gone wrong.

The TPP was hatched with 500 official U.S. trade advisors representing corporate interests involved in years of closed-door negotiations while the public, press and Congress were locked out. The core TPP provision grants thousands of corporations' new rights to sue the U.S. government before a panel of three corporate lawyers that can award unlimited sums, including for loss of future expected profits, to be paid by American taxpayers when the corporations claim U.S. policies violate the new entitlements the TPP would provide them.

Take action. Kind needs to hear from us.

Labor Day 2016

I was on my way home from Chicago during our festivities here in La Crosse for Labor Day. From the sound of things, it was a great success. I want to thank our Administrative Assistant Carla Easterday, her husband and Lodge 21 member Phil Easterday, Lodge 21 member Curt Hanson, and everyone else who helped to make the day a success.

I look forward to assisting next year.

2016 IAMAW Grand Lodge Convention



International President Bob Martinez kicked off the 39th IAM Grand Lodge Convention in Chicago with an impassioned keynote address to the more than 1,200 delegates in attendance.

“Are you ready to put the fight back into the Fighting Machinists?” Martinez challenged the delegates early in his address.

With organizing new members an essential task to grow and sustain the IAM, Martinez spoke of the IAM's new approach to bringing in new members.

“We must be bold enough and confident enough to come up with new organizing strategies,” said Martinez. “Our life blood and our future depend on organizing.”

To better service members at the negotiating table, he announced the program to deliver the union's negotiations prep training to the field for locals and districts that are unable to travel to the Wimpisinger Center.

"One of the best suggestions from members has been to make our negotiations prep training available to more bargaining committees," said Martinez. "It's also designed to strengthen the critical link that shop stewards play in the bargaining process. Stewards are truly the backbone of this union."

In closing, Martinez thanked the member delegates for being a vital part in the IAM's future.

Amtrak's Next Generation Trains to be Built by IAM Members

You'll soon be able to take Amtrak up and down the northeast corridor in plush high-speed trains. The best part? They'll be made by IAM members.

The proposed \$2.45 billion deal between Amtrak and Alstom Transport to build the trains is finalized, Vice President Joe Biden recently announced. Alstom expects the deal to provide more than 500 new IAM Machinist jobs to its Hornell, NY plant.

"I'd like to thank International President Martinez, the IAM Legislative Department, IAM District 19 and the skilled IAM workers at Alstom for making this happen," said Transportation General Vice President Sito Pantoja. "This is the kind of thing that not only changes the lives of current and future IAM members, but it also changes entire communities."

"This is a major deal that will create about 500 high quality IAM jobs in Hornell, New York," said International President Bob Martinez. "I'd like to thank the IAM's Legislative and Transportation Departments for their dogged determination over many months to get this done."

Part of the \$2.45 billion in federal loans will be used to upgrade the passenger railroad's current fleet. Amtrak will contract with Alstom to build 28 next-generation high-speed train sets that will replace the trains used as part of Amtrak's Acela Express service. The trains will be built at Alstom's Hornell and Rochester, NY facilities.

"This loan is a key step to providing investments needed to help keep high-speed trains moving throughout the region, and to help all commuters in the northeast corridor," said Biden. "We need these kinds of investments to keep this region — and our whole country — moving, and to create new jobs."

Election Watch 2016

I just wanted to point out a few more things about Libertarian Party candidate Gary Johnson that I have learned since writing my last article. Judging by these things, he does not seem to be a labor-friendly candidate.

1. When Johnson was a small-business owner in 1991, a jury penalized his construction company \$600,000 for dismissing an employee who reported safety concerns to OSHA. Once in office, Johnson enacted spending cuts that caused the state to eliminate its toll-free hotline for reporting similar safety violations.
2. He has rejected minimum-wage increases and backed “right-to-work” bills.
3. In 1999 when public employee unions’ right to collectively bargain was set to expire, Johnson vetoed a bill to extend it. Thanks to that action, ten thousand government workers saw their wages frozen.

Buyer beware.

District Lodge 66

Once again, on the third Monday of the month, our delegates met at the district office for their regular monthly meeting. The delegates reconvened after a much-deserved break in July. On Monday August 15, 2016, our delegates took care of the regular business of the lodge. In addition to the regular business, our delegates took action to approve the purchase pocket planners for our delegates at the district as well as stewards, and executive board members within the locals.

Also in the district, we are looking to prepare for negotiations for our new members out at Fort McCoy. This contract should be done before early next year. This will allow the contractor to give any price increase negotiated through collective bargaining to the contracting officer to be reimbursed by the government.

I will be taking some time to write a brief for an arbitration hearing that was done on August 18th. As with any arbitration, it will all lie in the hands of an arbitrator. For the most part, we do what we can to reach an agreement on our differences with companies before reaching that point. Sometimes it takes a neutral third party to decide.

In addition, I will be out of the office for a brief time in late September through early October. I can be reached, but I will have a Grand Lodge Representative taking my place for that time. His name is Geny Ulloa (first name pronounced Henny). I have complete confidence that Geny will do a great job in my absence when I have some time away to get married to my wonderful Fiancé Tasha. Thank you Geny for giving me some relief. Thank you Tasha for understanding the workload that comes along with doing my job as Directing Business Representative for District Lodge 66.

Until next time...