Carrier workers Lobby Congress for help

TJ Bray
Hello from Washington, DC!

My name is TJ Bray and I am a 14-year employee at Carrier.

I am also the Media Communications Representative for our union, United Steel Workers Local 1999/Carrier Unit.

I was nominated by our union leadership, along with three other workers for this week, Eric Cottonham, Ray Graham and Larry Linville and three workers that went last week, Vickie Burrus, Frank Staples and Ron Terry, to go to Washington, DC and lobby on Capitol Hill about what Carrier workers are going through.

We're here to show these politicians that we are the faces of the people that work at the Indianapolis facility.

Steelworkers from Carrier in Washington DC. From Left: TJ Bray, Ray Graham, Eric Cottonham and Larry Linville.

We are being the voice for the 1,400 employees that are losing their jobs.

We want these lawmakers to understand the situation that we are facing concerning our future, our families, our community, and in our country.

We have been working with United Steel Workers Legislative Representative, Roy Houseman, who has been assisting us in lobbying these congressional leaders.

We are lobbying congressional representatives concerning a bill that is being sponsored by representative Bill Pascrell Jr. (D-NJ) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI).

The bill is called Bring Jobs Home

See DC Page 7
Brothers & Sisters,

I will start off by congratulating our Financial Secretary Allen Johnson on his retirement. Allen began working at Carrier about 5 weeks before I was born. 47 plus years Allen has given to Carrier. Allen has also given many years of service to his union. Allen will be missed as a financial officer of Local 1999. Allen enjoy your retirement, you deserve it.

Congratulations to Vickie Burrus our Treasurer who is stepping into the vacancy that Allen's retirement created. She has some pretty big shoes to fill. I wish her luck in her new position.

Edwin Johnson has been appointed as the newest Treasurer for the local. Congratulations Ed on your new position.

I want to congratulate the membership at Gatorade on the ratification of their new 3 year agreement. The committee did not achieve everything they were after in this round of bargaining. Several gains were made in the new contract. The grievance procedure now includes guarantees of having two second step and at least one third step meeting a month. Also requiring the Company to give at least 2 hours prior notice to not report to work for reporting pay. The 24 hour notice requirement for taking a full or 1/2 day vacation was reduced to 16 hours. The Letters of Agreement on Alternative Schedules and Alternating Weekends for the first time include language that guarantees days off to employees who vote those types of schedules in. Line 8 was eliminated as a department which should eliminate many of the temporary transfer and overtime issues that were experienced over the last 3 years as a result of Line 8 being a separate department.

The membership took a stand and rejected the Company's final offer. After another tense round of bargaining between the committee and the Company a strike vote was taken and the new contract was ratified by the membership.

Last month Vertellus Specialties Inc. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. This could not come at a more inopportune time for the membership there. The current contract at Vertellus expires on October 2, 2016. Bargaining a new agreement that make economic gains will be difficult to say the least. It is looking like we could be in bargaining with the Company the first week of August.

We have still been fighting Carrier on their decision to move the plant to Monterrey, Mexico. On April 29 we held a Keep it in America rally at the Indiana Statehouse. Speakers at the rally included Senator Joe Donnelly, State Representative Karlee Macer, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, Gubernatorial Candidate John Gregg, Carrier member Eric Cottonham, USW International Vice President Fred Redmond, District Director Mike Millsap, Sub District 3 Director Wayne "Crash" Dale and Presidential Candidate Senator Bernie Sanders. At the conclusion of the rally we marched down Washington St. and up around Monument Circle.

We also crashed the Bryant dealers 500 race party on Memorial Day weekend. The party was sponsored by Carrier and we were there to let them know how we felt. We were forced to protest on the sidewalk outside the hotel entrance. Some of the dealers came out to talk to us and give us there support. Patrick Young from the Strategic Campaigns Department in Pittsburgh brought the "batlight" to Indianapolis and put "Carrier Keep it in America" on the side of the plant that night.

In July we sent two contingents of Carrier employees to Washington DC to talk to our representatives in Congress. Vickie Burrus, Ron Terry, Frank Staples, Ray Graham, Eric Cottonham, TJ Bray and Larry Linville volunteered to go and lobby on behalf of all the Carrier employees. The committee has met with the Company twice for effects bargaining. The Company initially offered a severance package very similar to what was given to IBEW members in Huntington. In the second meeting the Company did not substantially add to the severance package. The Union has proposed a severance package that is substantially more than what the Company proposed. The two packages were shared with Carrier members at their last Unit Meeting. The committee meets with the Company again on July 26.
Allen Johnson Retires as Financial Secretary

Local Union 1999 Financial Secretary Allen Johnson is retiring from Carrier on August 1st. Allen has been a Steelworker for over 47 years. Allen hired in at Carrier in November of 1968.

Allen has also served as Chairman of the Local Legislative Committee and Coordinator of the Rapid Response Committee. Allen is also served as a delegate on the Central Indiana Labor Council, the District 7 Political Education Committee Executive Board.

Allen led Local 1999 to receive the award given by District 7 for the top Rapid Response participation in the district. Allen also coordinated the letter writing drive for the Local that received the National Award for Participation from the International Union. He has also been elected as a delegate to the International Constitutional Convention.

Allen worked meticulously over the years to maintain the local’s finances and to remain in compliance with the many statutory regulations. Allen worked many hours, many on his personal time to accomplish this.

Allen was very active with local and state politics. He worked to elect many labor friendly candidates over the years. Many members of the local have been recruited by Allen over the years to be inside poll workers, hand out literature at the polls and provide rides for voters to the polls.

Allen was presented with a retiree watch by President Chuck Jones on behalf of the local union at the local union meeting on July, 17th. Allen received well wishes and congratulations from the members in attendance. Allen thanked everyone and promised that he would still be active in his retirement and we have not seen the last of him.

Executive Board Appoints New Financial Secretary & Treasurer

In June the Local 1999 Executive Board voted to appoint current Treasurer Vickie Burrus as the new Financial Secretary filling the vacancy created by Allen Johnson’s retirement. This created a vacancy for Treasurer which the Executive Board filled in July by appointing Edwin Johnson to the position. Edwin was serving as a Local Trustee. The Executive Board will vote to fill the Trustee vacancy in August.

Edwin had the following to say about his recent appointment. "I would like to graciously thank the Executive Board members for selecting me as the treasurer of Local 1999. I will do everything in my power to fulfill the duties appointed to me. I am so thankful for the opportunity to move from a trustee to the treasurer."

Photo: Pam Presley

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Photo: Pam Presley
Every day I am dealing with more and more people choosing to opt out of the Union. I would like to say this on the subject. First and foremost if this is something that you have given thought to, then give me a call. I would like to have the opportunity to sit down and talk about why it is that you feel the way you do.

We are an amalgamated Local with twelve different facilities, with very diverse manufacturing and production jobs among them. But with the exception of all but one of these facilities (ASC), the rest of us have inherited our Union. We didn’t have to go through the organizing process. We don’t remember what it is like to work without a contract.

In the state of Indiana, the only two laws that any employer has to abide by are “they must pay minimum wage ($7.25 hr.) and time and half after 40 hrs.” Everything else is considered “fringe benefits” No employer has to provide fringe benefits.

So over the years each of these contracts has continuously improved. Your rate of pay has increased each year some more than others depending on the economy or the stability of the company. Your vacation time generally increases depending on your years of service. You may have a pension plan or a 401k program. Some of you receive time and a half after 8hrs. And your overtime is distributed in a fair manor. You are given the opportunity to establish Health Insurance through your employer. There are many more examples that I can give to make my point but I think you probably get the meaning. The Company you work for does NOT provide these benefits to you because they are such great people.

The Company you work for provides these benefits because the Union has bargained for them for years and years. The men and women that came before us fought and in many cases died to establish a union within your plant so that they could have a voice in the work place and be treated fairly by the company.

The Union is only as strong as their “people” because the people are the Union. Every contract has to be voted on and accepted by the majority of the people. Without these contracts how many of these “fringe benefits” do you think you would maintain?

The business of the Union, such as arbitrating grievances, educating the members, conducting grievance procedures (2nd and 3rd step meetings), and providing representation to the membership, this is all made possible from the dues that we pay.

If you belonged to a gym you pay your dues in order to utilize the services provided by said gym. The union is no different. We all pay dues in order to utilize the services that allow us to file and arbitrate grievances, bargain our contracts, educate our membership and so forth. The Right to Work law has changed that, it allows members to opt out and stop paying their union dues but yet the union representatives are still by law obligated to represent them. The strength of the union is determined by the solidarity of the membership. For every person that chooses not to pay dues it places a heavier burden on the ones that choose to remain strong. After the loss of enough members the Company will again have the ONLY VOICE in the work place because the Union will cease to exist.

Now, how do you feel about the fact that many of your coworkers chose to stop paying union dues but they still expect to receive the same benefits that you do? These people are scabs. It is no different than being on strike and watching someone cross the picket line. They are affecting your bargaining power! And before long you will see just how much these Companies truly care for you. So before you make a rash decision, please afford me the opportunity to explain this to you.

SCABS – They are affecting your Bargaining Power
Chuck Jones, President
Carrier Statehouse Rally
April 29, 2016

Photos: Lisa Duncan
AFL-CIO, Teamsters mourn shooting death of Philando Castile
Barb Kucera, Workday Minnesota

ST. PAUL
The Minnesota AFL-CIO (link is external) and Teamsters Local 320 (link is external) have issued statements mourning the shooting death of Philando Castile, who was killed Wednesday night after his car was stopped by police in Falcon Heights.

Castile was a member of Local 320 since 2002 and worked as a nutrition services supervisor at J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School in St. Paul.

“The 11,000 members of Teamsters Local 320 are saddened and grieving the loss of Teamster brother Philando Castile,” Local 320 said in a statement. “This is a tragedy on every level and all Teamsters are encouraged to keep the Castile family in our thoughts and prayers.”

Secretary-Treasurer and Principal Officer Brian Aldes said, “Last night, Teamsters Local 320 lost a union brother and my deepest condolences are with his family in their time of grief.”

Teamsters Local 320 President Sami Gabriel said, “I have known Philando ‘Phil’ Castile since he joined the Teamsters back in 2002 and he was an amazing person who did his job at St. Paul Public Schools because he loved the children he served. He will be deeply missed by his colleagues and his community.”

The union also said that, while it represents law enforcement personnel in some jurisdictions in Minnesota, it did not represent the officer involved in the shooting.

Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bill McCarthy issued the following statement:

“Words cannot even begin to describe what Philando Castile’s family and friends must be going through right now. Minnesota’s labor movement grieves for the loss of yet another young African-American man.

“While our thoughts and prayers are with Philando’s family and friends, we know that thoughts and prayers aren’t enough.

“We need to begin by giving state and federal authorities time to do their jobs, conduct impartial investigations, and let due process take its course.

“However, we must acknowledge that a double standard exists for African-American men when interacting with law enforcement. Whether the bias is intentional or not, too many African-American men find themselves on the receiving end of deadly force.

“There are no quick and easy solutions to this all too familiar incident. These are complex problems that will require tough conversations and decisions.

“Minnesota’s labor movement remains committed to helping address the racial inequalities, in both the economic and criminal justice systems, that continue to persist in our state and nation.”

The Minnesota AFL-CIO is the state labor federation made up of more than 1,000 affiliate unions, representing more than 300,000 working people throughout Minnesota.
This bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code to: Grant business taxpayers a tax credit for up to 20% of in sourcing expenses incurred for eliminating a business located outside the United States and relocating it within the United States. And deny a tax deduction for outsourcing expenses incurred in relocating a U.S. business outside the United States. It also would require an increase in the taxpayer's employment of full-time employees in the United States in order to claim the tax credit for in sourcing expenses.

We were lobbying to these congressional leaders to cosponsor this bill that would go after these corporations' tax write offs and incentives.

We feel that these meetings were very productive and most of the Congress members seemed supportive of this bill.

The delegation that I am with for the week is a good mixture of the workers that we are representing.

Larry is No. 1 on the seniority list with 51 years of service, Eric is a military veteran, Ray has been with Carrier for 23 years and has two kids that work at the factory. I am the young guy with two small children and have had a lot of family that work(ed) there.

We felt that it was very important that these leaders heard our personal stories so that they understand that we're not just a statistic, but that we are ordinary American middle class workers.

Tomorrow, we will be lobbying more congressional representatives about this bill and to gain more support for our cause. We are very honored to be getting this opportunity to come to Washington and to speak with our leaders.

We met with Senator Joe Donnelly. He has been a huge supporter since day 1. He welcomed us with open arms and we had a very successful conversation. He showed a lot of anger and is doing what he can to go after Carrier.

Today we had conversations with Congressman Mark Takano (D-CA), Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici's (D-OR) Legislative Assistant Sarah Round, Congressman Ron Kind's (D-WI) Economic Policy Advisor Hana Greenberg, Congressman Mike Thompson's (D-CA) Legislative Counsel Erin Helling and a legislative assistant for Congressman John Lewis (D-GA).

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Boycott Outsourced Oreos, Laid-Off Workers Urge

Steven Wishnia

Chicago, IL - In his four and a half years at the Nabisco plant on the city’s Southwest Side, 40-year-old Anthony Jackson worked “in every department except sanitation.” He mixed icing for Oreos, mixed dough on the main bakery floor, and was “all over packing.”

That ended on March 23, when Mondelez, Nabisco’s parent company, laid off 600 workers—half the plant’s staff—as part of a plan to shift production to Mexico. Bakery-floor workers in Chicago could make $25-26 an hour, Jackson says. Mondelez did not answer questions about how much workers in its Mexican plants make, but the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, whose Local 300 represents the Chicago workers, believes it’s about $60 a week.

Since then, Jackson has joined the Nabisco 600 National Consumer Education tour, a campaign organized by the BCTGM to advocate a boycott of Nabisco products made in Mexico, to put pressure on Mondelez to bring the jobs back to Chicago.

“In order for these business plans to work, they need the U.S. consumer. That’s where the breadbasket is,” says BCTGM strategic campaign coordinator Ronald Baker. “If we cut off that revenue, it doesn’t make sense to make [the product] down there, because people there can’t afford to buy it.”

“Right now, my focus is to get our jobs back,” Jackson tells LaborPress over the phone from Chicago. “We’ve been trying to get word out about the boycott and teach people how to read the label.”

To tell where the Oreos, Fig Newtons, and Chips Ahoy cookies and the Ritz and Honey Graham crackers on the supermarket shelf were made, explains Baker, you have to read the fine print on the label like a vegetarian trying to find out if a can of soup was made with meat stock. First, the package will say “Made in Mexico” above the Mondelez logo. Second, if the two-letter code after date stamp is MM or MS, that signifies the Monterrey or Salinas plants in Mexico. If the code starts with A or X, it was made at one of Nabisco’s six U.S. plants; AE is Chicago.

Teams of laid-off workers and union staff have been traveling around the country to talk about the boycott, Baker says, and the AFL-CIO endorsed it in April. Michael Smith, 59, a utility worker who was also laid off in March, has appeared on a radio show in Atlanta, testified before a Democratic platform committee in Washington, and handed out flyers to supermarket buyers in Orlando, Florida, urging them to buy only American-made Nabisco products. Forklift driver LaDonna DeGoiyer
gave out similar leaflets at Walmart stores in Georgia and the Chicago area, and participated in Fight for $15 and Jobs for Justice rallies. “They’re on our side, We need to be on theirs,” she says.

The campaign is also asking people to post comments on Nabisco’s Twitter feed and the Oreo Facebook page, to get the company to “see that there’s a lot of discontent with what they’re doing,” says Smith. “We’re not trying to be malicious,” he adds, saying he’d be happy if people bought American-made Nabisco products.

The layoff is the “second go-round” for Smith, who lost a job at DHL during the 2008-09 recession. He used a retraining program to get a commercial driver’s license, and hopes to get a new job as a trucker. But when he spoke to Mondelez CEO Irene Rosenfeld at a shareholders’ meeting in May, he says, she “clearly had no empathy for the workers.”

“We’re a large, multinational company operating in a very challenging macro environment,” Mondelēz vice president for global communications Russell Dyer told LaborPress in an email. “Creating a best-in-class integrated supply chain to support our global business is essential to driving our competitiveness and growth.”

The Chicago bakery “is NOT closing,” he emphasized. It will stay open with the remaining 600 employees, and three U.S. bakeries will continue to make Oreo’s. The company, he adds, has “invested almost $450 million to modernize and upgrade our U.S. manufacturing” since 2012, well above the $130 million it announced it would spend on the Salinas plant in July 2015.

Mondelez (rhymes with bees) International, based in the Chicago suburb of Deerfield, owns several brands more than 100 years old, including Philadelphia creamcheese and Toblerone and Cadbury’s chocolate. However, the company formed only four years ago, when Kraft—which had acquired Nabisco in 2000—split its snack and grocery divisions into two separate companies. It’s the world’s leading manufacturer of biscuits, chocolate, and candy, and ranks second in chewing gum.

Before the layoffs, Mondelez demanded $46 million in annual concessions from the Local 300 workers to make the Chicago plant’s labor costs competitive with those in Mexico. “It was impossible for us even to think about accepting them,” says LaDonna DeGooyer. They included a 60% pay cut, taking away pensions, and ending the “Golden 80” policy, in which workers could retire with a full pension if their age and the number of years they had on the job added up to 80.

“We were still making them money,” she says.

DeGooyer, a 58-year-old mother of three, had worked in the plant for six and a half years, loading and unloading trucks on the midnight shift in its distribution center. She was happy to get the job. It had taken her five years to find good-paying work since the Kraft plant she’d been at for 13 years moved to Mexico, it was near her home, and because of Nabisco’s ties to Kraft, her old pension plan carried over.

Since the layoffs, she says, her 20-year-old daughter has had to drop out of college, and all her hair has fallen out from the stress. She worries that looking like a chemotherapy patient is hurting her chances of getting another job.

“If we don’t win this, who knows what they’ll do to the other five plants,” she says. “It’s gotten way bigger. It’s like we’re fighting for all American jobs.”

“This is not America versus Mexico,” Anthony Jackson says. “We’re also trying to stop the exploitation of Third World countries.” But he sees a “direct correlation” between the disappearance of good working-class jobs and the violence that has given Chicago the epithet “Chiraq.” The city has had more than 320 murders so far this year, more than twice as many as New York, with 40 of them in the West Englewood and Englewood neighborhoods, which begin about 20 blocks east of the Nabisco plant.

“When people don’t have jobs, they tend to go to the underworld, the underbelly of society,” he says. “It leads people to be in a mode of desperation.”
If you bribed a politician, you’d go to jail.

ALEC shouldn’t get away with it.

Join us for a

RALLY & MARCH

against the American Legislative Exchange Council’s Annual Meeting

Wednesday, July 27th
Indiana State House Lawn
3:30pm-5:30pm

TJ Bray from Carrier will be speaking at the rally.

To learn more, check out:
www.facebook.com/alecindy2016
What is ALEC?
ALEC is not a lobby; it is not a front group. It is much more powerful than that. Through the secretive meetings of the American Legislative Exchange Council, corporate lobbyists and state legislators vote as equals on ‘model bills’ to change our rights that often benefit the corporations’ bottom line at public expense. ALEC is a pay-to-play operation where corporations buy a seat and a vote on ‘task forces’ to advance their legislative wish lists and can get a tax break for donations, effectively passing these lobbying costs on to taxpayers.

Along with legislators, corporations have membership in ALEC. Corporations sit on ALEC task forces and vote with legislators to approve “model” bills. They have their own corporate governing board which meets jointly with the legislative board. (ALEC says that corporations do not vote on the board.) Corporations fund almost all of ALEC’s operations.

Participating legislators, overwhelmingly conservative Republicans, then bring those proposals home and introduce them in statehouses across the land as their own brilliant ideas and important public policy innovations—without disclosing that corporations crafted and voted on the bills.

ALEC boasts that it has over 1,000 of these bills introduced by legislative members every year, with one in every five of them enacted into law. ALEC describes itself as a “unique,” “unparalleled” and “unmatched” organization. We agree. It is as if a state legislature had been reconstituted, yet corporations had pushed the people out the door.

Who funds ALEC?
More than 98% of ALEC’s revenues come from sources other than legislative dues, such as corporations, corporate trade groups, and corporate foundations. Each corporate member pays an annual fee of between $7,000 and $25,000 a year, and if a corporation participates in any of the nine task forces, additional fees apply, from $2,500 to $10,000 each year. ALEC also receives direct grants from corporations, such as $1.4 million from ExxonMobil from 1998-2009. It has also received grants from some of the biggest foundations funded by corporate CEOs in the country, such as: the Koch family Charles G. Koch Foundation, the Koch-managed Claude R. Lambe Foundation, the Scaife family Allegheny Foundation, the Coors family Castle Rock Foundation, to name a few. Less than 2% of ALEC’s funding comes from “Membership Dues” of $50 per year paid by state legislators, a steeply discounted price that may run afoul of state gift bans.

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), brings corporate lobbyists and out-of-touch lawmakers together at lavish vacation junkets to write harmful model bills under cover of darkness. ALEC is coming to Indianapolis from July 27-29 for yet another one of these junkets. Please join us for a rally and march on July 27 from 3:30pm-5:30pm on the State House Lawn to show ALEC they’re the not welcome here!

The Indianapolis 2016 ALEC protest is organized by a coalition of groups including the Central Indiana Labor Council, Citizens Action Coalition, SEIU Local 1, SEIU Healthcare, Teamsters Local 135, UAW Local 933, AFT Indiana, Northwest Indiana Area Labor Federation, Jobs With Justice, Indiana State Assoc. of Letter Carriers, Indiana Moral Mondays, North Central AFL-CIO, AFSCME, and United Steel Workers Local 1999.
Hello Union Brothers and Sisters:

Hope everyone is having a good summer.

Just to keep you up to date on grievances. The Union has 5 grievances slated to go to arbitration. We have 4 grievances that have been written to present to the company for the use of FACEBOOK, and we have 4 more grievances slated to go to the grievance committee. There are 2 suspensions pending, BOTH FOR ATTENDANCE.

I talked with Kevin Wise in our weekly meeting on July 13th. He told me that the work load for the rest of the second quarter was going to be the same as it has been since the 1st of June. The OSS parts are still coming in. 362 is trying to find places to put the parts.

Please don't forget to get all your wellness requirements done before SEPTEMBER 1ST. If they are not completed they could have you paying the full price for the insurance until you get it done. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE SEE KELSEY OSWALT.

I have been very PROUD of ALL the UNION BROTHERS AND SISTERS here at Rexnord. Since RIGHT TO WORK was voted in here in Indiana, we (1999-00) have maintained STRONG with 100% participation. At this time though I have some VERY DISAPPOINTING NEWS TO TELL ALL OF YOU. I was notified by the company on July 11th that PAUL COPE, in department 131, requested to get out of the Union and no longer PAY UNION DUES. Paul and I had a 45 minute conversation on what the issues were and what I could do better. I asked him to think about it and let me know. I called him about a week later and asked him if he made a decision. He said that he still wanted to get out. So with that being said PAUL COPE WILL BE ADDED TO THE LIST OF SCABS FOR USW LOCAL 1999.

In Solidarity,
Don Zering
Unit President

UNIT 07
UTC CARRIER

To my fellow workers:

February 10th is a day we all will never forget. That’s the day that Carrier told us our career would be over soon. The day we were stabbed in the back by a sharp, corporate greed infested knife. The day a piece of our soul was ripped out. And it’s a day that Carrier showed its workers it’s true colors.

Now, we are all concerned about our future. The majority of us have spent a large chunk of our lives here. Where do we go from here? How will we live our lives? Unfortunately, I can’t answer that. But one thing I do know, is that the people that work here are some of the toughest around. I have faith that we all will land on our feet and prevail from this awful situation that Carrier bestowed upon us.

The company has shown that it has very little concern or care for what happens to us. But I think it says a lot about the people here that we continue to get up everyday and build a great product for the world. We all could’ve easily given up and walked out that front door. But we stood together and continue to stand together as a family. That’s what a Union does. We’re brothers and sisters.

Carrier’s move to Mexico is devastating to everyone involved, except shareholders and top tier management. From eliminating 1400 American jobs to exploiting Mexican slave labor to the economic ramifications, we all lose. This is why this issue is so important.

We have 70+ military veterans who served this nation that work here. They’re being thrown on the street while Carrier’s parent company, United Technologies Corporation, continues to receive government contracts worth billions of dollars. It’s this type of corporate greed that has to stop!

I can’t stress enough how important it is that we continue to fight to do all we can to keep these jobs in America. We must unite as Americans let
Hello to all my fellow USW brothers here at RSR:

The summer season is upon us which as you all know means very hot conditions inside the plant. So let's all remember to stay hydrated, know your bodies and learn to recognize the symptoms of heat stress & heat exhaustion. Let's all remember to continue to look out for each other at all times.

Changing gears we have an upcoming arbitration for Jeremy Swopes & we have upcoming meeting with the company about proposed new drug policy. Rest assured that all pertinent information will be discussed. Please do not rely on break room experts. Get your facts from the committee.

Also we have a policy if any one needs help, don't wait. Contact myself or any grievance committeeman. Be safe. Be vigilant. Continue to support Union friendly candidates.

In Solidarity,
Derrick Morris
Unit President

We have Ratified a new Contract. The Committee Unanimously rejected the 1st Proposal. Members supported the Committee with a 68 % reject from 72% percent of the Membership. This was for the opportunity to resume further Negotiations with the Company to request the Company work with the Committee to achieve resolution to the Wages, Benefits, and issue's brought forth by the Members from the survey process. We did not ask for things that would disrupt the business or create more overhead. The issues we asked for resolution on was to improve Life/Work Balance, Moral, Overtime and Scheduling issues and better Relationship with the Company.

In Solidarity,
TJ Bray
Media Communications Representative
United Steel Workers Local 1999/Carrier Unit

I urge all USW Local 1999 members to get involved and help us in this fight. We understand it is an uphill battle, but it's a battle worth fighting. I'll end with this quote, "Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength!"

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Rapid Response Reflections:
District 7 SOAR Member Scott Marshall

This year’s Rapid Response conference wasn’t the first for District 7 SOAR member Scott Marshall, but in his eyes, it was one of the most productive.

Meetings with several representatives on the Hill led to obtaining some additional cosponsors on a few of the bills the USW is fighting for, including the Protect America’s Workers Act.

That kind of grass roots work is exactly the type of campaigning Scott knows to be vital to our union’s continued success and for the prosperity of American workers.

“We have to be politically involved, and we have to fight for the whole working class,” Scott said. “We also have to build broad coalitions with all of labor, including new labor forms.”

Back home at his local, Scott works hard with his fellow brothers and sisters on issues like the stopping the TPP and promoting labor rights. He’s also always encouraging younger retirees to become more involved in SOAR because he knows how important it is for everyone to come together.

This determination is one of the things Scott loves about the USW and is honored to be a part of the camaraderie the union exudes.

“I’m proud to be a Steelworker because of our fighting spirit and our forward-looking approach to international and labor solidarity.”
Steelworkers Ratify Agreement with ArcelorMittal USA

Washington, DC - USW members have overwhelmingly ratified the new contract with ArcelorMittal USA, setting the terms and conditions of employment for the nearly 14,000 union-represented hourly production, maintenance, office and technical workers at 15 of the company’s U.S. locations through Sept. 1, 2018.

“We have settled our differences with management at the table, so together now we can focus on addressing the industry’s real problems, such as global overcapacity and the unfair and often illegal foreign trade practices that depress prices, close plants and cost jobs,” said USW International President Leo W. Gerard. “The USW negotiating committee, activists and members at each of the facilities deserve our thanks and credit for staying united throughout the long, difficult process.”

USW District 1 Director David McCall, who chairs the union’s negotiations with ArcelorMittal, said that the union understood the challenges facing the company and the rest of the domestic steel industry and expected this round of negotiations to be tough when bargaining began just over a year ago.

“Even though negotiations took much longer than anyone anticipated, the solidarity of USW members within and between each of the facilities enabled our committee to fight for and win a fair agreement that works for all of us,” McCall said. “Thanks to many months of hard work and dedication from everyone involved, the new contract preserves our wages, benefits and other contractual protections without lowering the standard of living for current or future retirees.”

USW District 7 Director Mike Millsap, secretary of the ArcelorMittal committee, said that the union is proud that the tradition of steel making at these facilities will continue.

“For generations, our families have worked in these plants and established a way of life,” Millsap said. “We are confident that as long as we work together and fight for fair trade instead of free trade, the steel industry will continue to provide good jobs that support families and sustain communities with fair pay and benefits.”

Photo: Sarah Dolph Smith
Bryant Dealer Rally
May 27, 2016

Photos: Patrick Young
AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka released the following statement in response to the shooting of police officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana:

Our hearts are again heavy with grief.

On Sunday, three of our brothers at the International Union of Police Associations (IUPA) were killed in another senseless act of violence: Mathew Gerald, 41, an ex-Marine and father of two daughters; Brad Garafola, 45, who had served three tours in Iraq and was the father of two sons and two daughters; and Montrell Jackson, 32, a new father of a baby boy whose last post on Facebook said: "Please don't let hate infect your heart."

This happened one day after the last slain Dallas police officer, Patrick Zamarripa, a 32-year-old Navy veteran and father of a two-year-old daughter was buried. The other Dallas officers laid to rest last week included Lorne Ahrens, 48, a 14-year veteran and father of two; Michael Smith, 55, an Army veteran who had served 27 years on the Dallas police force and father of two daughters; Michael Krol, 40, nine years on the police force; and Brent Thompson, 43, a transit police officer, father, grandfather and newlywed. We honor the commitment of all these men to public service.

We mourn their loss to their families and our community. We pray for the swift recovery of our wounded brothers in Baton Rouge and Dallas. And we condemn the appalling and indefensible acts of violence that are devastating families and communities across our country.
Donations will be accepted

On a continuous basis in order to help as many children as possible.

See your...

Women of Steel Representative or Unit President

**PAPER – CRAYONS – PENCILS – RULERS – MARKERS – FOLDERS – etc.**

[Image of school supplies and a group of women]
WASHINGTON—The U.S. International Trade Commission’s report on the projected economic impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership validates the United Steelworkers union’s position that the trade agreement is “not worth passing,” the union said.

“This report as mandated by law indicates the TPP will produce almost no benefits but inflict real harm on so many workers,” USW International President Leo W. Gerard said in a statement issued May 18, the same day that the U.S. International Trade Commission issued its report on the TPP.

The full report is nearly 800 pages and will take some time to digest, Gerard noted.

“But the executive summary paints a grim picture for domestic manufacturing producers and workers,” he said. “While proponents have sung the agreement’s praises, the report estimates that output in manufacturing, natural resources and energy would be lower as a result of the TPP. That’s just totally unacceptable.”

The USW passed a formal resolution urging rejection of the TPP in December 2015, just after Congress granted President Obama fast-track authority on the trade agreement. Fast-track authority means that Congress may vote to approve or reject the TPP, but it may not amend the agreement.

A total of 12 nations, together accounting for 36 percent of global Gross Domestic Product in 2014, are party to the agreement, according to the ITC report.

“The overall impact of the TPP agreement would be small as a percentage of the overall size of the U.S. economy,” according to the report’s executive summary. Countries that do not currently have free trade agreements with the U.S.—Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Vietnam—will benefit more, the report said.

ITC estimates in the report show U.S. real income growing by 0.23 percent in 2032 on account of the TPP. That growth becomes 0.28 percent in 2047, according to the report. A Real GDP will grow 0.15 percent by 2032 and 0.18 percent by 2047 because of the TPP, the report said. U.S. employment will grow 0.07 percent by 2032 and 0.09 percent by 2047 from the agreement, it said.

“The TPP rules of origin could have a negative impact on U.S. production of certain auto parts, but also facilitate U.S. vehicle exports,” the report said.

It estimated that U.S. passenger vehicle output would increase $1.6 billion or 0.3 percent higher than the baseline estimate in 2032. Output of auto parts, however, would fall $1.4 billion or 0.3 percent by 2032, it said.

The TPP includes several labor provisions not included in any previous U.S. trade agreement, according to the report. These include requirements for workplace health and safety regulations, work hour limits and minimum wages, it said.

“TPP labor obligations would not require changes in U.S. law, so would likely have little effect on working conditions in the United States,” it said.
UNION HITCHHIKER

Have you ever driven down the road and run upon a hitchhiker? Most of the time, their thumb is giving a clear message:

“If you furnish the car, the gas, the time and do the driving, I’ll ride with you. But if you think I’m going to pitch in for gas, you’re out of your mind. By the way, if you have an accident and I’m hurt, I’ll sue you for all you got.”

We have hitchhikers in our Union too. In one way or another they’re saying: “If you supply the protection of a contract, negotiate that contract, protect me at work, get me fair and decent wages, health benefits, and hours of work, I’ll ride. But you’re crazy if you think I’m going to get involved and help you make this better place to work. And by the way, if anything happens that irritates me, you’ll hear from me”.

Think about it – Are you just thumbing a free ride? Or can you do a little more to help us all out?