

USW@Work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

A Powerful Voice for Workers

BUILDING UNION POWER 04

BILL SUPPORTS VETERANS 18

STANDING UP FOR STEEL 22



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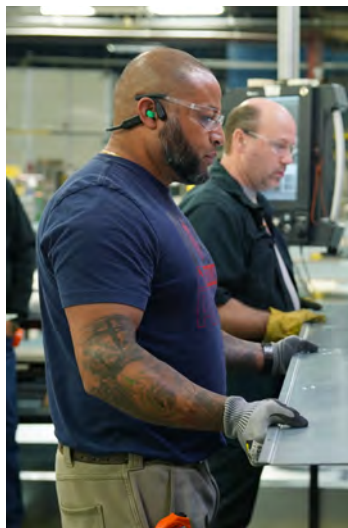
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"Providing veterans with better access to the support they need will undoubtedly save lives. I know Tom would be honored to continue to be a part of this vital work."

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT DAVID McCALL, JAN. 7, 2026, ON THE THOMAS M. CONWAY VETERANS ACCESS TO RESOURCES IN THE WORKPLACE ACT

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Minnesota Protesters Standing Up for Justice

As a resident of the Minneapolis area, I feel a responsibility to share with my USW family my firsthand account of what was happening on the streets here during the protests over ICE.

I attended and participated in these protests. If you haven't seen them in person, it might be challenging to fully grasp the situation. Many news outlets either provide a superficial view or a distorted narrative of the actual events.

My fellow citizens, neighbors, brothers, and sisters are not paid agitators; they are peacefully protesting and defending individuals who are being victimized. The principles they fight for are no different from the principles we hold as a union – principles that emphasize representation, ensuring equal treatment, defending due process, and more.

Most citizens in Minnesota support common-sense immigration laws, but these laws must be accompanied by due process. Forcing someone off the street, assaulting them, depriving them of their civil rights, and deporting them without due process violates the 5th Amendment of the Constitution.

This same principle applies to employers terminating or disciplining employees. A unionized employee is entitled to due process, which allows them to present their case to an arbitrator. In the United States, everyone has the right to present their case in court before being deprived of life, liberty, or property.

ICE isn't targeting violent criminals; they're targeting brown people, regardless of their citizenship status – whether they're born here, arrived legally or illegally. Their actions are intended to intimidate, instill fear, and violate our rights.

In Minneapolis, we didn't remain quiet. We acted in the spirit of Minnesotans, protecting our neighbors. We've peacefully protested – to stand up for those who can't. This is no different from what we do every day in our union.

This isn't political in the sense of Democrat or Republican; it's about what's right and what's wrong. So, as you watch the news or read comments on social media, don't fall for the rhetoric. We are not paid agitators – we are your friends, brothers, sisters, siblings, and coworkers who've decided not to stand by and let this happen on our watch.

*Justin Recla
USW Staff Representative
Minneapolis, District 11*

Unions Stand Together in the Face of Challenges

Members of Local 1010 in north-west Indiana faced a difficult time this past year with the shutdown of our Cleveland Cliffs Riverdale plant for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Initially, we faced a loss of 244 employees, which we were able to reduce to 79. To assist those employees during this challenging time, we distributed gift cards to all 79 affected members at Thanksgiving.

In addition, we organized a fundraising initiative in December. The Local 1010 executive board proposed to the membership that we match the donation, and members generously agreed. Our members showed up. We ended up collecting more than \$10,000, which ultimately was raised to \$21,000.

This initiative reflects our commitment to stand strong when our siblings are in need. We hope that this demonstrates the fact that nobody has to face hardship alone. As a union, we face our challenges together.

*Terra Samuel and James Thomas
Local 1010
Hammond, Ind.*

ICD Coordinator Took Program to the Next Level

I'd like to congratulate our site's Institute for Career Development (ICD) coordinator, Nelson Franco, on receiving the first Tom Conway Trailblazer

Award at the 2025 national ICD conference in Cleveland.

Our late USW International President Tom Conway championed the ICD and advocated for Steelworkers to always be able to learn new skills. This award is a way to honor President Conway and the hard work he put into the ICD, helping members reach their educational goals.

Our coordinator Nelson was chosen from among many coordinators around the country for his vision and leadership and for expanding the program's direction to benefit our members. Thank you, Nelson, for taking our ICD program to the next level.

I'd encourage members to check out the good work of the ICD and our members by visiting the website - icdlearning.org.

*Lonnie Asher
Local 1011
East Chicago, Ind.*

On Social Media

During the past holiday season, the USW asked members on social media to share what they were most thankful for. Here are a few of the responses.

"I am thankful for how much our local supports our community and members through our training programs and efforts to reindustrialize our area to continue to bring in new business with union jobs."

*Crishanna Williams
Local 689
Piketon, Ohio*

"I am most thankful for the people in this union that I have met and learned from. Knowledge is power! I have become a person who never wants to stop learning and sharing that knowledge."

*Jimmy Shelton
Local 7-209
Lowell, Ind.*

STAY CONNECTED

The USW welcomes correspondence from members, retirees and their families, and encourages members to interact on the union's social media networks. Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length. You can reach us via email at editor@usw.org or by mail at 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh PA 15222.



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UNION POWER

MEMBERS IN MISSOURI PRODUCE ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION UNITS

Brad
Dalton

Brad Dalton first walked through the door at Milbank Manufacturing Co. in Kansas City at the age of 20, expecting that he would work there for a few years and then move on.

Nearly 30 years later, he is a fixture at the family-owned operation and a leader in his local union, mentoring the next generation of USW members at the nearly century-old Missouri company.

“It’s been very consistent,” Dalton said of his work at Milbank, noting that he only experienced one layoff in three decades, and even that was for less than a week.



Yamilet
Camacho

Making Connections

The 200 members of Local 13-07 at Milbank manufacture electrical distribution units used mostly in commercial and residential construction. The company, among the top electrical connection producers in the world, provides components for thousands of customers in the United States and thousands more across about three dozen other countries.

Dalton, who has worked at Milbank for 29 years, is in his fourth year as the recording secretary for his unit and the amalgamated local to which it belongs. He started his career in the final assembly department and now works in the factory's press room.

Through it all, he said, USW members in Kansas City have consistently fought for core Steelworkers' values including fair wages, secure

retirement, safety and health, and affordable health care.

Local 13-07 members ratified a new contract with the company last fall that held the line on those priorities.

"That's what it's all about," Dalton said.

Member Engagement

Local 13-07 is one of 10 units of USW Local 13 in the western Missouri area. Delbert Ogle, who has worked at Milbank for 35 years, serves as the president both of his unit at the factory and the 660-member amalgamated Local 13.

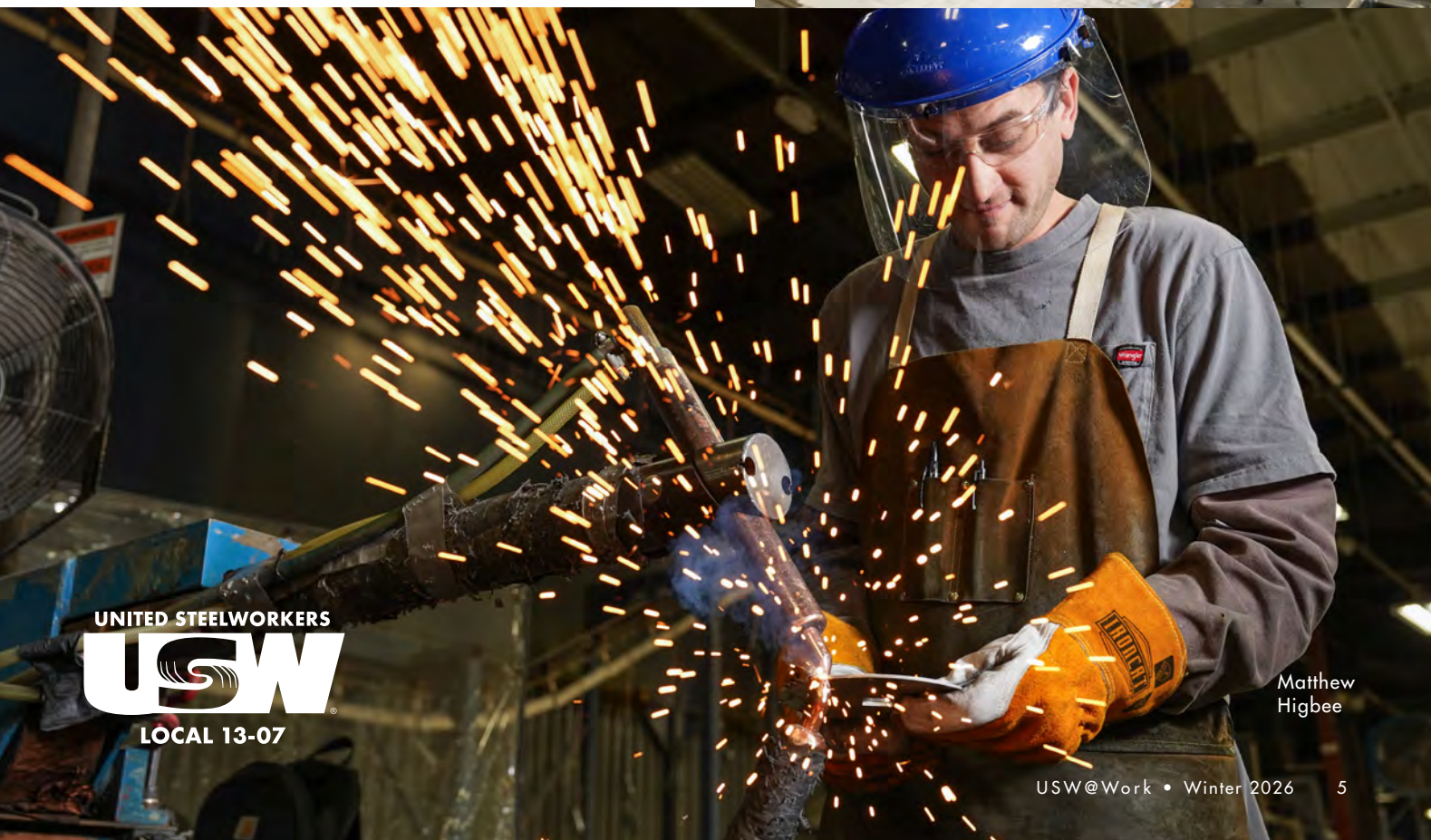
Ogle, who held numerous other leadership positions in the local before becoming the local president about five years ago, said the key to maintaining the unit's success in bargaining strong contracts is keeping members informed and engaged.



Phillip
Boyd



Cecilia
Kweji



Matthew
Higbee



Rosa
Fuentes



Gabriela
Castillo
Contreras



Delbert
Ogle

“It’s important to bring people together,” he said, noting that he, Dalton and other local leaders make an effort to plan fellowship events for members and their families, as well as other activities like food drives and fundraisers to help struggling members of their community.

“We’re really out in the community a lot more,” Ogle said. “People look forward to us showing up, and members really love to come together.”

Ogle said that when members have positive interactions with their neighbors, it can lead to organizing opportunities that grow the union.

“We’re trying to set an example and get a lot more visible and active,” he said. “There’s a lot of misinformation in the community about what unions are and what we do. We need to combat that.”

Ogle said that the key to success as a local union lead-

er is communicating directly and honestly with rank-and-file members. The ability to do so quickly in the age of text messaging and social media, he said, “makes bargaining so much easier.”

Safety First

Whether in bargaining or during their day-to-day tasks, the issue that the members of Local 13-07 put first – for themselves and their customers – is safety.

With potentially millions of people around the world relying on their products to function properly, quality control is paramount. Members take pride in the quality of the products they make, knowing that any flaws in an electrical-delivery unit could be a disaster waiting to happen.

When he’s out and about at a grocery store or restaurant, Dalton said, he often checks to see if the establish-

ment has a Milbank electrical box on the property.

“It makes you feel proud to know that you’ve added to the local economy,” he said.

Likewise, the workers inside the factory make sure their own health and safety is also a top priority, Dalton said.

Working in an industry with numerous potential hazards, members of the local safety committee keep close track of every incident in the workplace, constantly looking for root causes and monitoring equipment and workstations throughout the facility.

“We keep pushing, and the company hasn’t given us any issues,” Ogle said. “We want to see where every Band Aid is being used.”

Next Generation

The fact that the local has a large number of workers who are relatively new to



Bernabe
Arredondo

Luis
Tarelo

Nathan
Looney



Maribel
Ramirez

Rosa
Sosa



Emily
Ellison

Guadalupe
Grande



the job makes it important to mentor the next generation of USW members, Ogle said.

One of those is Matthew Higbee, who landed his first union job at Milbank nearly five years ago.

Higbee said he appreciates the work-life balance that the union provides to members through the union contract.

“The union does all of the complicated work, so we don’t have to do it on our own,” he explained.

A USW Team

Fueled by their USW solidarity, members bring the concept of teamwork to the production process at Milbank, with members often pairing up to handle the shaping and stamping of particularly large jobs.

Milbank, approaching the 100th anniversary of its founding next year, has been owned by the same family for its entire existence. That consistency has helped the local union build a strong partnership with management, members say.

Over those years, production has evolved from building meter sockets in Milbank’s earliest days and producing landing mat clips during World War II to, today, making components for use in the emerging electric vehicle, solar, and telecom-

munications industries.

No matter what they are making, members pride themselves on being able to deliver customized products that fit each buyer’s specific needs.

“We go out of our way to make the product that customers want,” said Dalton, who noted that workers at the plant turn out about 700 units in a typical day.

In addition, the company prides itself on utilizing American-made materials whenever possible, purchasing much of its raw metal from nearby Ryerson, also a USW employer.

“The USW members at Milbank Manufacturing and throughout the Kansas City area have a long history of standing up for good jobs and strong communities,” said Cathy Drummond, director of District 11, which includes the states of Missouri and Kansas as well as Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

As the company closes in on a century in business, Ogle said he is confident that USW members at Milbank will continue to build on their strength and solidarity.

“We take a lot of pride in being USW members,” he said. “It’s always good to know that you have an advocate that is on your side.”

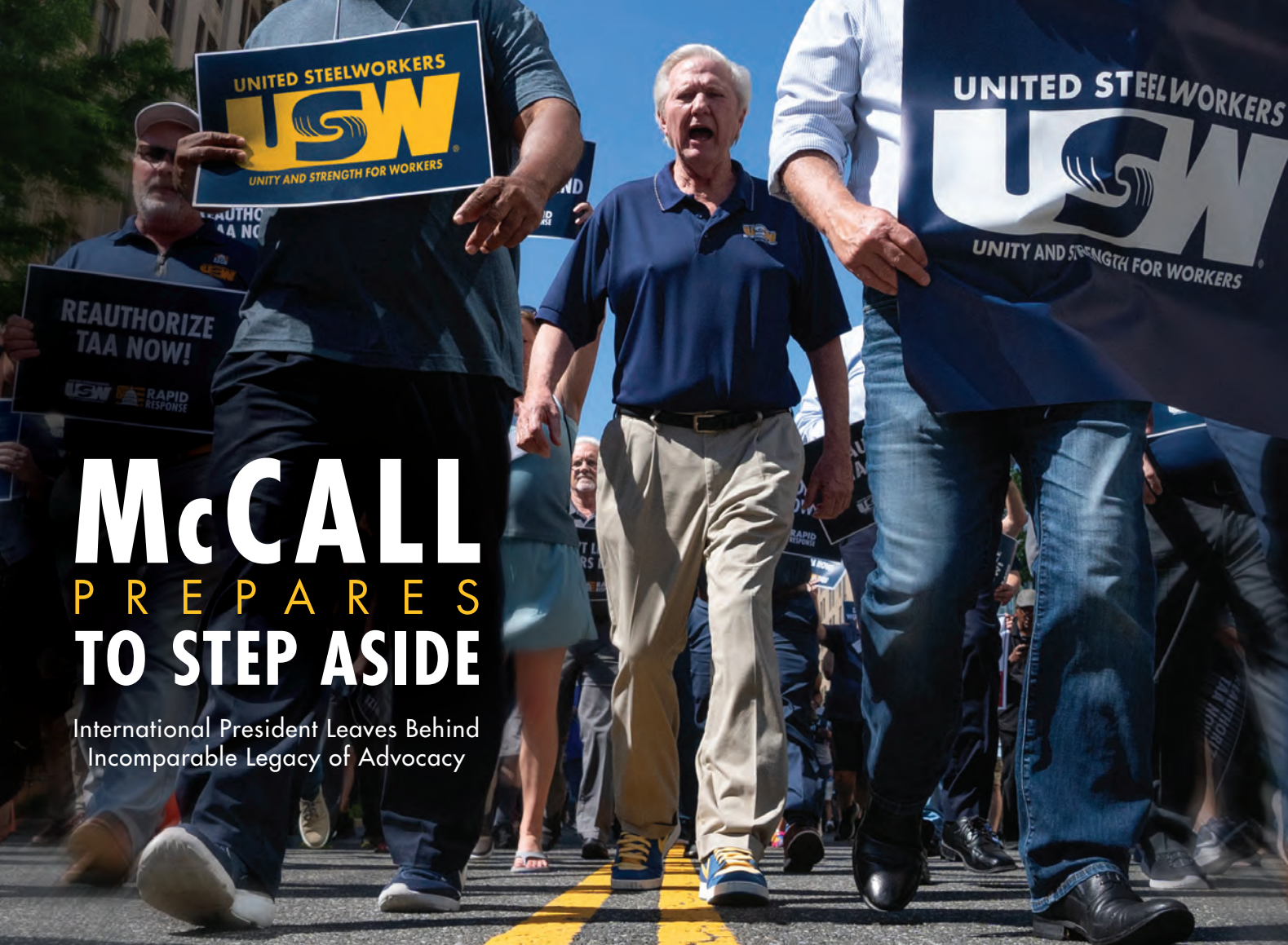


Robert
Stewart



Eric
Howell, Jr.

Thomas
Sayers



McCALL PREPARES TO STEP ASIDE

International President Leaves Behind
Incomparable Legacy of Advocacy

David McCall was 18 years old when he joined Local 6787 and went to work as a millwright at Bethlehem Steel's sprawling Burns Harbor Works in Northwest Indiana.

As he prepares to step down as the USW's ninth international president on March 1, McCall leaves a nearly six-decade legacy of activism and advocacy on behalf of workers and an indelible mark on the lives of countless USW members.

"It's impossible to overstate the impact that Dave McCall has had on the Steelworkers' union and the labor movement," International Vice President Roxanne

Brown said as she prepared to succeed McCall. "Dave has been fighting for justice and fairness since the day he went to work, and he's given his heart and soul to our movement."

Early Activism

His calling as a USW activist began to take hold when McCall was still a boy. A fourth-generation Steelworker born and raised in Gary, Ind., McCall walked his first picket line at age 7 during the USW's 116-day industry-wide strike in 1959.

When his employer fired him and other union members during a wildcat strike early in his career, the

union helped the workers regain their jobs. And when the local staff representative mentioned the need for a new shop steward, McCall accepted the challenge.

"He handed me a contract book and a set of grievance forms," McCall said. "I took the job seriously, and we started addressing a bunch of problems."

Grateful co-workers put McCall on the grievance committee in 1971, then elected him committee chairman in 1975 and Local 6787 vice president in 1985.

Steel Crisis

His rise through the ranks coincided with a crisis

in the steel industry brought on by a flood of imports into the U.S. market. In response, McCall organized Local 6787's food bank to assist families devastated by layoffs.

Those experiences helped to prepare him for future battles as he joined the USW staff, serving first as a staff representative and then as sub-district director in Gary, and later as assistant director of District 7. In 1999, McCall took office as director of District 1, representing tens of thousands of Steelworkers in Ohio.

In his 21 years in that role, McCall worked alongside USW members to



negotiate contracts with hundreds of employers across every industry. He bargained innovative agreements that gave workers a stronger voice and delivered on priorities like pay increases, job security, retirement and health care for tens of thousands of workers.

Members First

As the steel industry struggled again in his early days as director, McCall led members through the resulting layoffs, shutdowns, bankruptcies and other issues the way he always did –

by building strength and solidarity from the grassroots level and making sure Steelworkers' voices were always heard.

"I've always believed that the rank-and-file members, the workers on the shop floor, must be the ones to lead this union," McCall said. "We are there to listen to them, to amplify their voices, and to fight for the core values that they hold dear, like workers' rights, economic justice, fair trade, retirement security and affordable health care."

In April 1998, McCall and now-District 7 Director Mike Millsap helped lead a sit-in at the Canton, Ohio, headquarters of Republic Engineered Steels to protest the company's plan to cut hundreds of union jobs and open a \$300 million non-union mini-mill in the South.

A judge threatened McCall and others with arrest, saying he'd taken an oath to enforce the law and had

no choice but to have them removed.

"We took an oath, too, Your Honor, an oath to our members," replied McCall, who was leading negotiations. "We're not leaving."

Police ultimately slapped handcuffs on McCall, Millsap and other union officials, all of whom spent the night in jail. The judge suspended the rest of their sentences, however, and plans for the non-union mill fizzled.

Victories like those at Republic cemented McCall's reputation and led to his appointment as director of District 1.

A Steady Hand

The choice ensured steady, pragmatic leadership during turbulent times. McCall worked with employers to save jobs and protect benefits while tirelessly fighting

those who dared to exploit workers.

Amber Miller was a 21-year-old member in northwest Ohio, still finding her footing as an activist, when she met McCall. Over the years, he became a trusted mentor and friend to the future USW international vice president, who is set to take the oath of office March 1 alongside Brown.

"One of the most powerful lessons Dave

taught me is that everyone has a place in this union," Miller said. "He taught me that no challenge is too great to overcome if we keep the members at the center of our hearts, we listen to them, lift them up, and remind them of their collective strength."

McCall was just several months into the director's job when Armco locked out about 500 members of Local 169 in a dispute over unlim-



Workers pass night in jail

Sentence suspended for Republic protest

By BRAD DAVIS
Repository staff writer

CANTON — Twelve hoarse and exhausted Steelworkers stood, for the most part, before Stark County Common Pleas Judge John Haas Wednesday morning to receive their sentences for voluntarily violating his order to leave Republic Engineered Steels' headquarters the night before.

REPLINE RESULTS show support for Steelworkers. / **A-3**
EDITORIAL: Time to emphasize teamwork approach. / **A-4**

belongings from the Stark County Jail, where they had just spent about six hours under arrest, and then they were free to go, Haas said. He sentenced each of the protesting Steelworkers to 10 days in jail and fined each \$100 for contempt of court, but suspended both orders.

One worker fell asleep standing up

John R. McCall, secretary of the United Steelworkers negotiating team, could not respond when his name was called; he had lost his voice.

"I wonder how," Haas joked, sympathizing with the workers' long night. Haas spent three hours trying to broker a deal between the workers and management Tuesday evening.

"A lot of effort went into trying to resolve this issue without even this (court hearing) taking place," he said. "It did not work out. You took your position, and the court took its position."

The workers had staged a sit-in at



USW@Work
Winter 2026

UNDER ARREST. Mike Millsap (foreground), staff representative for Steelworkers District 7, and David R. McCall, secretary of the negotiating team for the union, are arrested early Wednesday morning in the lobby of Republic Engineered Steels.

ited mandatory overtime and other issues in Mansfield, Ohio.

The lockout continued for 39 agonizing months, even after Armco's acquisition by AK Steel. Working alongside his friend and Local 6787 brother Tom Conway, McCall built community support, organized rallies, advanced negotiations and shined a light on the company's reprehensible conduct.

Local 169 President Steve Ackerman credited McCall and Conway with keeping the local together.

"It was clear that their vision was what kept our membership united, focused, and strong," Ackerman said. "Local 169 is forever grateful."

AK Steel eventually capitulated, not only ending the lockout in December

2002 but firing two top executives who bungled the dispute. The USW continues to represent workers at the Mansfield plant, now part of Cleveland-Cliffs.

Solidarity in Steel

While the battle with AK Steel raged, McCall and other USW leaders confronted a broader crisis as 50 steel companies filed for bankruptcy between 1998 and 2002 amid continuing dumping of imports that drove prices to record lows.

The failing companies included LTV, which laid off thousands of union workers and closed mills in Ohio, Illinois and Indiana. McCall worked with the newly formed International Steel Group (ISG) to purchase LTV's assets, reopen mills and return USW



members to work under an innovative contract.

The agreement boosted job security and ensured the company's commitment to investing in aging facilities, a lean management structure and worker involvement in problem-solving.

McCall also took unprecedented action to save the health benefits of 70,000 LTV retirees and spouses, persuading ISG to invest in a voluntary employees' beneficiary association (VEBA) that continues to this day.

The contract with ISG served as a blueprint for USW-ISG rescues of other union-represented steel companies – including Georgetown Steel, Acme Steel and Bethlehem Steel – and the extension of VEBA coverage for those

companies' retirees.

For members of Local 979 in Cleveland, their deep respect for McCall and his work led them to name their local union hall after him.

Local 979 President Dickie Peskar lauded the outgoing USW president for his "expertise, experience, dedication and talent."

Tireless Fighter

USW members in Ohio repeatedly reelected McCall from 2001 to 2017. Among other achievements during that time, he led the union's negotiations with Arcelor-Mittal, won the union a first-ever seat on Good-year's board of directors, and organized thousands of new members.

And McCall, remem-

bering how he handed out groceries to laid-off members at Burns Harbor, highlighted the ever-growing dangers of offshoring and unfair trade in testimony before Congress and the International Trade Commission.

“We must ask ourselves at what point does it threaten national security?” McCall warned a congressional trade panel in 2004, presaging the shortfalls of the COVID-19 pandemic.

McCall worked to build relationships with like-minded leaders in District 1 and across the country, most notably with U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, a tireless fighter for fair trade and workers’ rights.

Still, he never lost touch with his rank-and-file roots and never forgot the people he represented.

“When I sit at the negotiating table across from an employer, they need to know that they’re not just talking to Dave McCall,” he once said. “They’re talking to the one million members and retirees that are part of our union.”

A New Role

When Conway took the reins of the USW as international president in 2019, McCall won election as international vice president, and longtime activist Donnie Blatt stepped in to direct District 1.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better mentor, friend, or union brother than Dave McCall,” Blatt said. “The members of District 1 couldn’t have asked for a better leader.”

As vice president, McCall led negotiations with major employers and helped to ramp up the union’s organizing efforts.

In 2021, McCall led nearly 1,300 members at nine ATI locations through a three-month-long unfair labor practice strike during the pandemic, beating back demands for unnecessary concessions and achieving a contract with wage and benefit improvements.

The following year, his negotiations with Cleveland-Cliffs yielded a four-year agreement with record wage increases, millions in capital investments and other enhancements for 12,000 members at 13 locations.

He continued fighting for fair trade and helped the union push through legislation that preserved failing multiemployer pension funds and allocated \$1.2 trillion to rebuild infrastructure with union-made materials, components and products.

When Conway died on Sept. 25, 2023, McCall stepped in to serve out his term, telling union members, “We’ll move forward the only way we can: together.”

New Generation

As he prepares to step aside to make way for the next generation of USW leadership, McCall will remain part of the USW team, working with members to bargain contracts with major steelmakers

and other employers.

“I couldn’t be more proud or more excited to see Roxanne take the helm of this great union,” McCall said. “She brings integrity, skill, knowledge, toughness and empathy to the job. She will represent the members of this union well.”

McCall believes the future can be bright for Steelworkers as they build on the principles of unity and solidarity that have sustained them for more than 80 years.

“As a union, it’s our job to think about the long-term safety and security of working people and their families,” McCall said. “As long as we understand that technology is here to stay and we make sure we stay on top of the rapidly changing landscape, I think we can shape a better future for workers.”

Dave McCall





BUILDING A STRONGER UNION AROUND SAFETY

USW Activists Work Hard to Identify and Eliminate On-The-Job Hazards

In July 2025, Kerry Halter, president of Local 752L at the Cooper-Goodyear plant in Texarkana, Ark., invited a USW team to participate in a thorough inspection of the tire factory in hopes of addressing health and safety concerns at the place where he has worked for more than 30 years.

Along with representatives of Goodyear who happened to be at the plant the same day, Halter and other USW members conducted a walk-through of the sprawling factory, taking note of numerous potential hazards and reviewing the facility's compliance with safety protocols and best practices for the site's 1,800 union and salaried workers.

Identifying Hazards

The process resulted in a 23-page USW report filled with corrective measures to address the hazards. For Halter, the visits came at exactly the right time – with company and union representatives all on site working together.

“I could not have scripted a better plan,” he said. “It just lined up.”

As a result, with top corporate management present, the local was able to identify safety concerns throughout the plant, including slip and trip hazards and issues with machine guarding, lockout-tagout of equipment, evacuation plans, alarm systems, work organization factors, and many other potential risks. They even had to use stop work authorization on some of the items found.

“It was just a big red flag,” Halter said.

In the months since that July visit, third-party inspectors have conducted two additional audits.

“It was disturbing,” Halter said. “If you could lay all three audits side by side, you could see all the same deficiencies in safety.”

Ownership Change

The Texarkana plant was a Cooper facility acquired by Goodyear as part of the \$2.8 billion deal that the two companies finalized in 2021. The site remained under the direction of former Cooper management while working to adopt Goodyear's corporate practices, which led to some internal growing pains, Halter said, including struggles related to safety and health.

Now, the plant has a new director who is working with USW leaders to institute best practices and make sure all workers prioritize a safer workplace over production.

“If it's not the same message from the top down and the bottom up, then it gets distorted and it gets lost,” Halter said. “Anybody can say, ‘safety first,’ but it's the action that you put behind those words that really tells the tale.”

USW HSE Conference

This May, Halter will be one of more than 1,800 USW members working to put those words into action at the USW Health, Safety and

Environment (HSE) Conference, scheduled for May 17 to 22 at Pittsburgh's convention center.

The conference, held every 18 months, gives members the opportunity to attend scores of educational workshops, hear from experts, share industry trends and solutions and network with each other in an effort to reduce workplace fatalities and injuries.

Vera Passmore, president of Local 1133L at the Bridgestone-Firestone plant in Gastonia, N.C., will be attending the conference for the first time along with several co-workers, after her local negotiated new health, safety and environment language into their contract.

Passmore, Local 1133L Vice President Leonard Flack and other USW leaders at the plant worked with management to implement the hierarchy of controls, a method that prioritizes eliminating hazards rather than focusing on worker behaviors and personal protective equipment.

“We were able to come together to create a different path for us to improve health and safety,” Passmore

said. “It’s going to improve the lives of our members.”

Flack noted that the new agreement in Gastonia contains language from the Bridgestone-Firestone master agreement that Local 1133L members now have for the first time. Gastonia workers produce tire cord and industrial fabrics.

“It’s simple,” Flack said. “When somebody goes to work, you want them to be able to go home the same way.”

Workplace Committees

It was that goal – having a safer workplace so workers go home in the same condition in which they arrive at work – that inspired Chris Schonhut of Local 419M to work to establish a new safety committee in his shop, which produces iconic Fiestaware table settings at the company’s factory in Newell, W.Va.

In the past, there “wasn’t much teeth” to the health and safety language in the union’s contract, Schonhut said. That changed during the most recent

round of contract talks, when the union pushed for stop-work authority language and an expansion of the plant-wide health and safety system.

As a result, members will receive intensive training in lockout-tagout procedures, hazard mapping and other important safety initiatives.

The age of the factory and the equipment members use were among the reasons for the new push to make a safer workplace, he said.

“We wanted to start being more proactive and reduce any chances for something to happen,” said Schonhut, whose local represents about 250 workers at the last commercial dinnerware manufacturer in the United States.

When local leaders were polling members on the issues of importance to them prior to bargaining, health and safety showed up time and again, Schonhut said.

“Health and safety has to be a part of the conversation,” he said.

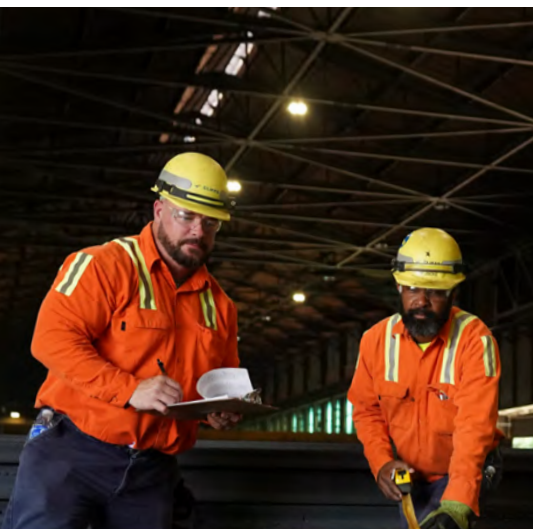
Staying Active

Maintaining an active union health and safety committee is one of the most important and foundational ways in which USW members can leverage their collective strength to make their workplaces safer and healthier, said USW Health, Safety and Environment Director Steve Sallman.

Members who want more information about the union’s upcoming health, safety and environment conference or about how the union can support HSE programs on the local level can visit usw.org/hse.

Halter encouraged his USW siblings to never stop pushing to make sure every workplace puts safety first, even in the face of resistance from management.

“It’s not something that is unfixable,” he said. “It’s a large undertaking, but it’s not impossible when you have union solidarity.”



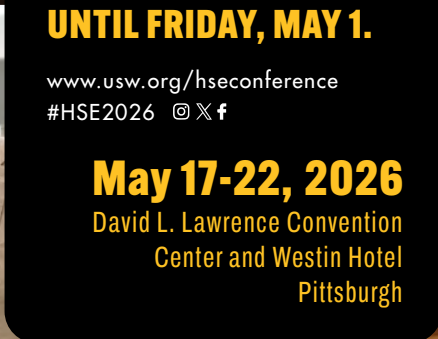
USW HSE CONFERENCE

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May 17-22, 2026

David L. Lawrence Convention
Center and Westin Hotel
Pittsburgh



NEW CONTRACT AT DOMTAR

MEMBERS VOTE OVERWHELMINGLY TO RATIFY FOUR-YEAR AGREEMENT

USW members voted overwhelmingly this winter to ratify a new four-year master agreement that provides significant annual wage increases and additional benefits for about 2,400 members of nine local unions at Domtar paper facilities across the United States.

The contract, which runs through December 2029, followed months of member preparations and bargaining during a period of major changes in the company and across the paper industry. It was the first time USW members bargained a new agreement since Paper Excellence acquired Domtar in 2021 and then Resolute in 2023. As members prepared for negotiations, they faced market slowdowns and downtime that reduced production.

“With new ownership and leadership at the table, we knew this round of bargaining would be challenging,” said International Vice President Luis Mendoza, who oversees the union’s paper sector. “It wasn’t easy, but with working families seeing expenses rising across the board, and the industry in a time of uncertainty, members should be proud of the progress they made in this agreement.”

The contract, which USW members negotiated alongside their co-workers in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and International Union of Operating Engineers, included a signing bonus, a boost in pension payments, wage increases of more than 12 percent over the life of the contract, and continued affordable health care coverage.

“By standing together, members achieved a fair agreement that rewards their hard work but also positions the company for success and protects workers’ future in a changing industry,” Mendoza said. Domtar acquired several USW-represented facilities from Resolute Forest Products in 2023, but those plants are not yet part of the union’s master agreement with the company.

Nationwide Solidarity

Rank-and-file leaders said the agreement – which includes the best wage increases the USW has ever achieved with Domtar – was the result of strong communication and unwavering solidarity across the country.

“Building a strong relationship with members at the other locations is vital to getting a good agreement,” said Eric Pulliam, president of Local 1261 at the company’s integrated pulp and paper mill in Hawesville, Ky. “Communication is the key.”

Members got an early start on strengthening that foundation, meeting several times during the months leading up to bargaining to discuss their approach and share ideas. In addition, USW leaders conducted detailed surveys and had numerous meetings and conversations with members about their priorities.

“We had a feel for what the population wanted,” said Mike Kilgore, president of Local 1329 at Domtar’s mill in Ashdown, Ark. “We used

that information to build our proposal. Those were the key priorities we pushed for.”

Domtar Council

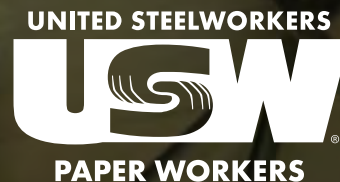
The solidarity that led to the agreement was nothing new for the members of the Domtar Council, which consists of leaders from each USW-represented facility. In addition to building solidarity for contract negotiations, the group meets regularly in non-bargaining years to address health and safety, fair trade, and other issues affecting the industry.

“We’re all on the same page, fighting for the same things,” said Tim Brewer, president of Local 266 in West Carrollton, Ohio.

DOMTAR 4-YEAR MASTER AGREEMENT COVERAGE:

LOCAL	LOCATION
1327	Ashdown, Ark.
1329	Ashdown, Ark.
1329-01	Ashdown, Ark.
319	Rothschild, Wis.
1356	Plymouth, N.C.
1423	Plymouth, N.C.
59	Nekoosa, Wis.
1261	Hawesville, Ky.
1261-01	Owensboro, Ky.
10-701	Johnsonburg, Pa.
12943	Kingsport, Tenn.
266	West Carrollton, Ohio

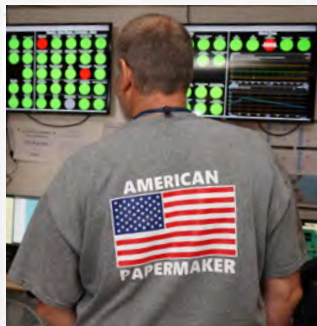
The group works together to reach a master contract, which covers major issues such as wages, benefits and retirement, while members at each location also bargain individual agreements that cover rules and working conditions specific to each plant.



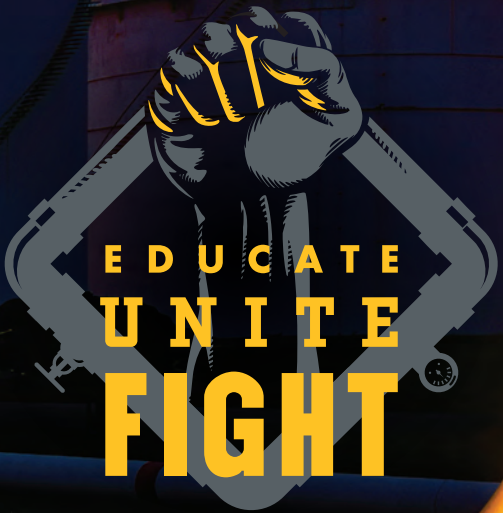
Communication Key

Jennifer Beard, president of Local 1327 in Ashdown, Ark., said the ability of council members to quickly communicate and organize activities in their locals and across the company is a major factor in the success of the bargaining committee.

"We get to know each other and build a rapport," she said. "That solidarity between plants is valuable."



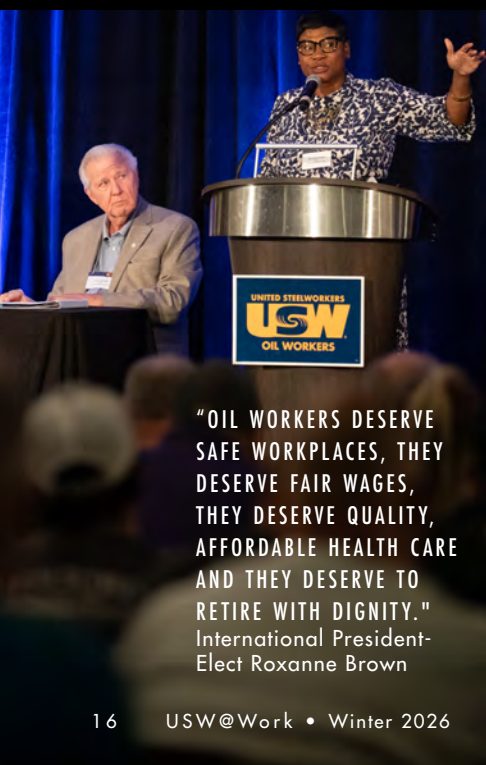
From left,
Tim Brewer,
Mike Kilgore,
Eric Pulliam
Mike Kelly



EDUCATE UNITE FIGHT

OIL BARGAINING GETS UNDER WAY

**New Agreement
Will Cover 30,000
Members Across
the United States**



**"OIL WORKERS DESERVE
SAFE WORKPLACES, THEY
DESERVE FAIR WAGES,
THEY DESERVE QUALITY,
AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE
AND THEY DESERVE TO
RETIRE WITH DIGNITY."
International President-
Elect Roxanne Brown**

USW members were in negotiations with the oil industry this winter as USW@Work went to press, bargaining a new contract that will cover more than 30,000 oil and petrochemical workers at 200 facilities.

The USW's four-year national pattern agreement with the oil industry expired on January 31, and USW members were working under a rolling extension as the bargaining team sought a new agreement that delivered on the priorities that members identified during the National Oil Bargaining Program (NOBP) conference last summer.

"Oil workers deserve safe workplaces, they deserve fair wages, they deserve quality, affordable health care and they deserve to retire with dignity," International President-Elect Roxanne Brown said as negotiations got underway. "It's our job to make sure that we can reach an agreement that provides workers with the contract they earned and that they deserve."

Rank-and-File Leaders

Brown was helping to lead the USW's bargaining committee alongside International President David McCall and Mike Smith, who has chaired the USW's NOBP policy committee since 2019.

The committee consists of elected rank-and-file representatives from five U.S. regions, who are tasked with crafting proposals that will set national standards on health and safety and wages and benefits. As it did in 2022, Marathon Petroleum is leading negotiations for USW employers in the oil industry.

Policy committee members have been meeting with members from USW workplaces over the past few months to gather input and build solidarity as bargaining ramps up.

"As always, the final agreement will be the result of our unity and our collective power," Smith said. "That takes every oil worker across the United States standing together to send a clear message to management that we are strong, united and willing to fight for fairness."

National and Local

USW oil workers negotiate their collective bargaining agreements on two levels, beginning with a national agreement that covers issues such as wages, benefits and safety and health language. Each local union also negotiates with its employer on issues specific to each site, such as scheduling, work rules and job classifications.

Brown noted that the U.S. oil industry is not only massively profitable, but that oil workers continue to break production records each year. In September 2025, U.S. oil production rose to a record 13.84 million barrels per day.

Workers deserve their fair share of that success, she said.

"The jobs that Steelworkers do every single day at oil and petrochemical sites across the country quite literally power the economy," Brown said. "This industry has more than enough resources to give workers their just due."

History of Wins

By harnessing their strength and solidarity over the past 60 years through the NOBP, union oil workers have won contracts that have delivered strong wages, benefits, and retirement security, while keeping workers safer and healthier, and protecting their jobs from contracting out or facility sales.

Smith noted that while the industry often focuses on profits, USW members' goals go beyond simply providing short-term gains.

"We know our employers are making investments in the future of this industry, and we need to ensure that workers share in that future, whatever it looks like," Smith said. "This industry can be a roller-coaster, and we know there are challenges ahead. But our nation will always need fuel; it takes workers to produce that fuel, and those workers deserve fair treatment."



BUILT TO HOLD UP

California Paper Workers Produce Top-Quality Plates

When Alex Amaro, chief steward for Local 819 at the Huhtamaki factory in Sacramento, Calif., walks around the grocery store, he keeps his eyes peeled. Every so often, he gets to witness one of his neighbors purchasing a product that he and his fellow USW members had a hand in making.

“When I see our product in people’s baskets, or as a guest at a party, I’m excited to see it,” Amaro said. “It gives you a sense of pride. They want quality, and we take a lot of pride in that.”

Amaro and his Local 819 siblings manufacture Chinnet lunch and dinner plates used at backyard barbecues, holiday gatherings, tailgate parties and other events across the United States.

About 100 Steelworkers at the factory in California’s capital city also produce cardboard lunch trays used in

schools throughout the Golden State.

The Chinnet company was established in the 1930s, and the Sacramento factory has been in operation since the 1960s. Over the years, Amaro said, the factory has become a fixture in the community and regularly donates its products

to local schools and nonprofit organizations to use in community and fundraising events.

“Everybody knows this place,” he said, noting that, thanks to the USW, the jobs at the plant are among the best in the region.

Amaro, who has worked at the factory for about 12 years, said that many companies try to mimic the quality of Huhtamaki’s products, but their plates don’t have the same qualities of strength and durability.

“They might look similar, but if they don’t have the Chinnet logo in the middle, it’s not the same,” he said. “They can’t match the quality.”

Chinnet



Alex
Amaro

Follow the USW on social media and visit usw.org/uswmade for more products made by USW members that consumers can purchase in stores or online. If your local makes a product that you would like to feature in USW@Work, send an email to: editor@usw.org.

WHERE THEY ARE
SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

AFL-CIO
UNION **USW** LABEL
819

WHAT THEY DO
MANUFACTURER OF
CHINET PAPER PLATES AND
LUNCH TRAYS FOR
HUHTAMAKI

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USW@Work • Winter 2026

NO VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

Bill to Aid Former Service
Members Named for
Late President Conway



VETERANS
OF STEEL USW

Veterans of Steel from across the country stood with USW leaders and U.S. Rep. Chris Deluzio this winter in Washington, D.C., as the former Steelworkers organizer introduced a bill that would help veterans gain access to the benefits they earned through their service.

“Anyone who ever served, you wrote this country a blank check,” said Deluzio, himself a U.S. Navy veteran who served in the Iraq War. “In return, our government makes a sacred promise that you will have the care and the benefits that you earned and that you need.”

Making sure veterans can gain access to those necessary benefits is the goal behind the Thomas M. Conway Veterans Access to Resources in the Workplace Act, sponsored by Rep. Deluzio, along with Rep. Nick LaLota of New York. Sens. Angus King of Maine and Jim Banks of Indiana are co-sponsoring the bill in the U.S. Senate.

The legislation – named in honor of the USW international president and

Air Force veteran who died in September 2023 – would require employers to post notices in plants, offices, and other workplaces outlining the numerous benefits and services available to veterans.

The bill mirrors workplace poster laws that USW members already helped to enact for veterans in 15 states in recent years.

Saving Lives

USW activist Marcelo Assis, who served for four years as a U.S. Army medic before becoming president of Local 12000 at Southern Connecticut Gas, sees the nationwide measure as a potential lifeline to veterans who are struggling after they return home.

“One life being saved is priceless,” Assis said.

While the difficulties veterans face can be numerous and diverse, Assis said, the nation must do a better job of reaching out to those who served and providing them with the assistance they need.

Some veterans may simply be

unaware of the benefits and services available to them, Assis said, noting the government doesn’t always do a good job of preparing service members for life after discharge.

Others may not want to discuss mental health challenges or other needs with family, friends or co-workers, he said, and they may not want to ask someone where to seek help or know where to look for it.

Promises Kept

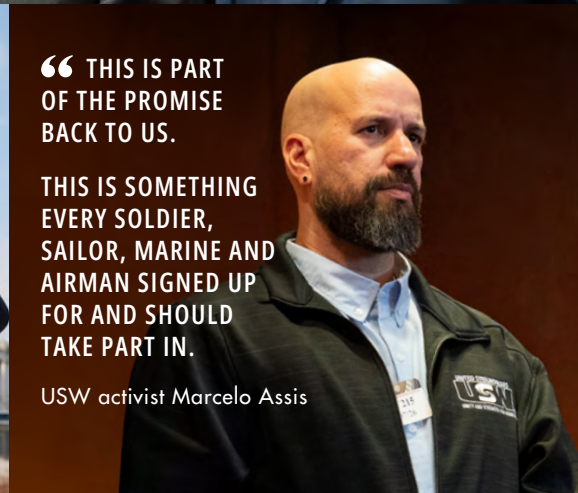
That’s where the legislation – and the workplace posters it requires – can make a crucial difference.

“If you see something on a poster, you view it as information you found, and you take care of it yourself,” Assis said, stressing that it makes no sense for veterans to walk away from benefits the government owes them in exchange for their service.

“This is part of the promise back to us,” he said. “This is something every soldier, sailor, Marine and airman signed up for and should take part in.”

“...OUR GOVERNMENT MAKES A SACRED PROMISE THAT YOU WILL HAVE THE CARE AND THE BENEFITS THAT YOU EARNED AND THAT YOU NEED. U.S. Rep. Chris Deluzio





Clockwise from left, U.S. Rep. Chris Deluzio, Phil Conway, International President David McCall, Justin Conway, Marcelo Assis, Chris Frydenger, Don Teets

“THIS IS PART OF THE PROMISE BACK TO US.

THIS IS SOMETHING EVERY SOLDIER, SAILOR, MARINE AND AIRMAN SIGNED UP FOR AND SHOULD TAKE PART IN.

USW activist Marcelo Assis

THE BILL WOULD

- **REQUIRE** the Department of Labor and the Department of Veterans Affairs to create printable notices containing state and federal veterans' resources for employers to post in workplaces. The notices will include information on the Veterans Crisis Line, information on how to apply for VA benefits, and state benefits available to veterans.
- **REQUIRE** both government and non-government employers with more than 50 employees to post this info prominently in each workplace.

'Vital Work'

International President David McCall, a close friend of Conway's for decades, joined USW members in Washington in January for Deluzio's unveiling of the bill, along with International President-Elect Roxanne Brown and members of the Conway family.

McCall said his longtime colleague and friend would be proud to be associated with the effort to help those who served.

"Providing veterans with better access to the support they need will undoubtedly save lives," McCall said. "I know Tom would be honored to continue to be a part of this vital work."

Vets of Steel

Conway, a USW activist for 45 years, was instrumental in establishing the Veterans of Steel program in 2019 and enshrining it in the USW constitution at the union's 2022 convention.

"Tom Conway never forgot where he came from," McCall said. "He understood the unique challenges facing

working-class veterans and created the USW's Veterans of Steel program in response to the growing crisis of veteran suicide. His vision continues to inspire us today."

The USW's Veterans of Steel program aims to build solidarity and provide support for current and former military service members and their families. Through Vets of Steel, the USW offers educational resources for veterans and their families and advocates for veterans at the federal, state and local levels.

While the Conway bill is a crucial step forward in bridging gaps for those returning from military service, there is still more work to be done even after the bill passes, Deluzio said. Increased funding and staffing of the Department of Veterans Affairs also are crucial steps toward providing the services veterans need.

"We still have work to do there," Deluzio said. "But we're all in for that too."



RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM DELIVERS WINS FOR WORKERS

Members Prepare for 2026 Conference, Lobby Day in Washington, D.C.

Five years ago, as the world was slowly beginning to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States was in dire need of a comprehensive federal program to upgrade its crumbling infrastructure. Leaders in Washington had promised one for several years but failed to deliver.

That's when USW members – led by the union's legion of Rapid Response activists – spoke up in huge numbers and demanded that Congress pass the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Thousands of Steelworkers' phone calls, e-mails, letters and postcards were punctuated by the USW's 2,300-mile "We Supply America" caravan.

That activism paid off in November 2021 when President Joe Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion legislation, providing upgrades to the nation's roads, bridges, public transit, water, internet, and energy systems, while creating tens of thousands of jobs at USW workplaces and elsewhere. While the current administration has since tried to claw back some of that funding, the law still stands as one of the most important pieces of legislation for workers in recent history.

"It was a pretty big deal for us," said Chuck Perko, president of Local 3267 at the Rocky Mountain Steel mill in Pueblo, Colo., where the infrastructure bill fueled demand for the type of high-speed rail products USW members produce at the Pueblo mill.



Chuck Perko
Local 3267 President

In addition to fighting for those infrastructure investments, members in recent years have helped to save the pensions of more than a million American workers, including 100,000 Steelworkers. They've helped to enact legislation in at least 15 states to support military veterans, and they fought for the Inflation Reduction Act and the CHIPS and Science Act, which provided investments in research, development, and manufacturing while reducing the cost of health care and other necessities for American families.

Activists also fought for paid leave during the pandemic, pushed back against attacks on workers' rights at the state and federal levels, and lobbied to protect vital public services. Last year, members helped to pass the Protect America's Workforce Act to restore collective bargaining rights to federal employees, and they fought to

restore safety and health agencies threatened by the administration's deep budget cuts.

"The union's Rapid Response activists consistently deliver victories for working people," said International Vice President-elect Amber Miller, who has overseen the program since 2019. "This team makes sure union members' voices are heard loud and clear in Washington and across the country."

Established in 1995, Rapid Response is a nonpartisan, grassroots network of activists in every corner of the United States who lobby local, state and national lawmakers to support pro-worker initiatives that align with USW members' core values.

This summer, the group will gather for the 2026 Rapid Response Legislative and Policy Conference from July 12 to July 15 in Washington, D.C. The event provides members with a chance to learn from each other about issues of importance to workers, and to visit Capitol Hill to speak directly with their elected officials about those issues.

Perko, who has attended all but one of the union's legislative conferences over the past 12 years, said the annual lobby day visit to the U.S. Capitol is consistently one of the most important and productive gatherings of USW members.

"Our legislators want to talk with us," he said. "We've been in these fights for 30 or 40 years. People listen to us because we do



our research, and our conversations are all very fact-based.”

This year, those conversations will take on a sense of urgency as members confront attacks on bargaining rights, health and safety, and retirement security, and greedy corporations driving up costs.

As Rapid Response activists geared up for the upcoming conference, they were taking part in the union’s “Balancing the Scales for Workers” petition drive, delivering letters to lawmakers laying out the USW’s priorities. Members can find more information on that and other Rapid Response initiatives by visiting usw.to/rapid.

“The decisions elected officials are making in Washington, in our statehouses, and in our communities have never mattered more,” said International President-Elect Roxanne Brown. “USW members’ voices must be louder, more organized, and more united than ever before.”

Making those voices heard is what members like Perko and his fellow activists do best. Perko, who oversees the Rapid Response program in his home state of Colorado, said direct contact with lawmakers, whether it’s in person, by phone, mail or email, is the best way for working people to hold their leaders accountable.

“Steelworkers are a presence, and we get things done,” Perko said. “And when we come together, we speak with a much larger voice.”



2026

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JULY 12-15

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RAPID RESPONSE

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONFERENCE

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW



MILLSAP: CONGRESS MUST SUPPORT STEEL INDUSTRY

Leaders in Washington, D.C., must work with USW members and their employers to revitalize the American steel industry by modernizing trade laws, securing federal investments in domestic manufacturing, and protecting workers' rights to unionize.

That was the core message that District 7 Director Mike Millsap delivered on Jan. 14 when he testified before the Congressional Steel Caucus, calling on lawmakers to support American manufacturers.

"We want to work with this caucus on balancing the scales to make it easier for Steelworkers to fight for their jobs, invest in our communities, and create the next generation of high-paying manufacturing jobs," said Millsap, who spoke to the group along with a handful of other steel industry representatives.

A second-generation Steelworker who has led District 7 since 2014, Millsap represented the USW at the hearing, entitled "State of the Steel Industry."

Millsap noted that he has played a key role in negotiations with major steel producers like U.S. Steel and Cleveland-Cliffs, two companies whose labor agreements with USW members expire this summer.

"We will negotiate agreements that will employ tens of thousands, and pump billions of dollars into local economies across the country," said Millsap,

who noted that more than 1,000 new members who work in the steel industry have joined the USW in the past year. "These workers are independents, Republicans, and Democrats, and they are ready to work together to make their workplaces safer, to have a voice on the job, and to make the steel our country needs to drive the future."

The steel caucus is a bipartisan group of more than 100 federal lawmakers who represent regions with connections to the steel industry. U.S. Rep. Rick Crawford of Arkansas chairs the group, while Rep. Frank Mrvan of Indiana serves as vice chair.

Millsap called on the members of the caucus to address the problems that have plagued steelmakers in recent years, including global overcapacity

and unfair trade practices such as illegal dumping, subsidization and currency manipulation, particularly from China.

"Congress has a role to play here by updating our trade laws and ignoring all the tariff rhetoric," Millsap said. "We need to improve our trade agreements to have strong rule of origin policies in steel."

Congress can also strengthen the industry through policies like Buy America and legislation like the Ships for America Act, which would help to ensure that the demand for steel remains strong domestically.

"We cannot let our market be the dumping ground of other countries' steel in an effort to keep their unemployment rate low," Millsap said. "We will defend the American steel industry from anyone who seeks to close our plants and make our country less secure."



District 7
Director
Mike
Millsap

USW URGES STRONGER PROTECTIONS IN MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT



USW leaders offered oral and written testimony last fall on how the United States could update the USMCA, the nation's trade agreement with Mexico and Canada, to strengthen protections for workers and American manufacturers.

"The USMCA's six-year review is a critical opportunity to fix what isn't working and show that trade agreements must adjust to new challenges," International President David McCall wrote in a 15-page letter to the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR).

Protecting Workers

McCall urged negotiators to make key improvements to the agreement, particularly in the areas of labor rights, rules of origin and environmental standards, "so the USMCA can finally live up to its promise of fair trade that protects workers, strengthens supply chains, and upholds shared environmental commitments."

The USMCA is in the process of a mandatory review to be completed by July 1, at which point the three nations could formally agree to extend the agreement for a 16-year term.

McCall, writing on behalf of the Labor Advisory Committee on Trade Negotiations and Trade Policy, noted that American labor unions strongly opposed the original trade agreement among the three nations, known as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). That deal resulted in a massive shift of jobs and manufacturing production to Mexico and did not contain strong or enforceable labor standards protecting American or Canadian workers.

Shortcomings Remain

NAFTA, McCall noted, also failed to live up to its promise to improve the lives of workers in Mexico. The replacement agreement, the USMCA, was meant to correct those mistakes, but still falls short, he said.

"USMCA contained important advances over NAFTA," McCall said, including stronger rules of origin, a commitment by Mexico to overhaul its labor laws and the creation of

the first-ever facility-specific labor enforcement tool through the agreement's Rapid Response Labor Mechanism.

"Unfortunately, these changes have had a limited positive impact while the deleterious effects of NAFTA continue to afflict North American communities," McCall wrote, noting that the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico and Canada has widened to a projected \$263 billion in 2025 from \$125 billion in 2020. Meanwhile, Mexican workers still make a tiny fraction of the wages that American and Canadian workers take home.

Proposed Changes

Among the improvements to the USMCA that McCall proposed were to strengthen labor protections, particularly for workers in Mexico, where employer-dominated "protection unions" continue to represent most workers; to shorten the timeline of the Rapid Response Mechanism; to improve standards related to products made with forced labor; and to close loopholes in rules of origin, particularly for auto parts.

In addition to McCall's detailed written testimony, USW Legislative Director Roy Houseman provided oral testimony at a USTR hearing in December, where he called for stronger rules of origin and environmental protections in an updated USMCA.

Strengthening the rules of origin in the agreement will boost North American producers of auto parts and other critical goods, while strengthening supply chains and curbing the continent's reliance on adversarial nations like China for essential products, Houseman said.

"The USMCA six-year review is a logical and sensible opportunity to address past policy mistakes," Houseman said, "and to further evolve trade policy toward one that decreases the incentives to outsource, improves working conditions for hundreds of millions, and improves the quality of life for all participant countries."

If the United States does not take the necessary steps to correct the shortcomings in the USMCA, the administration should withhold its support for extending the agreement, Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, said in his own written comments to the USTR.

China, Paul said, uses Mexico as a "staging ground" to evade U.S. trade enforcement, allowing Chinese products to enter the U.S. market duty-free.

"Left unchecked, this trend undermines the agreement's intent, distorts North American supply chains, displaces U.S. jobs, and erodes the foundation of U.S. manufacturing and national security," Paul said.

GRANITE CITY WORKERS CELEBRATE PLAN TO RESTART BLAST FURNACE

USW members in Granite City, Ill., celebrated the announcement in December that U.S. Steel would restart blast furnace operations at the company's historic Granite City Works, a facility that dates to the 19th century.

International President David McCall said the announcement reflected the skill, efficiency and commitment of the union workforce.

"USW members have proven for generations to be among the most efficient and productive steelworkers anywhere in the world," McCall said. "We take tremendous pride in our work, and we understand what these jobs mean for our families and for the future of our communities."

Steelmaking in Granite City dates to 1895 and has played a central role in the economy of the region.

"We look forward to seeing production return and our members doing what they do best – safely producing high-quality American steel," McCall said.

District 7 Director Mike Millsap, who chairs the USW's negotiations with U.S. Steel, said the restart demonstrates the continued value of union-represented manufacturing to the national and regional economies.

"These jobs support families, strengthen local businesses and sustain entire communities," Millsap said.

"Our members have always delivered for this company and for the customers who rely on Granite City steel."

"We're ready to get back to production and ensure this facility continues to play a vital role in the region's economy," he said.

The restart, tentatively set for April 1, also will mean the return of many of the USW members who were laid off when blast furnace operations at the mill were idled in November 2023.

Local 1899 President Craig McKey estimated that about 400 workers would be needed to bring the furnace back online.

"It's a huge deal for the whole community," McKey said. "After two and a half years of wondering what the future is, for this day to come is unbelievable."

U.S. Rep. Nikki Budzinski, who represents the Granite City area in Congress, praised the hard work of USW members who never gave up on lobbying for the resumption of blast furnace operations.

U.S. Steel, she said, now must make long-term commitments to ensure a bright future for the community.

"Advocacy and collective action make a difference," she said. "We need more than short-term fixes. We need a long-range commitment and investment."

International President David McCall and President-Elect Roxanne Brown led a 10-member USW delegation last fall to the IndustriALL Global Union Congress in Sydney, Australia, where more than 1,000 union activists from around the world worked to strengthen their solidarity.

“One, two, three, power! Do you feel powerful?” Brown called out to members from the stage during a session on gender equality. “That feeling in your gut, that’s what we need to remember. That’s what our global labor movement is about. That’s what we have in IndustriALL.”

A worldwide labor organization, IndustriALL represents more than 50 million workers in 140 countries in the mining, energy and manufacturing sectors. The organization works to strengthen global solidarity among workers, improve working conditions for all, and defend labor rights across the globe.

Building Solidarity

Through global company councils and other collaborative efforts, USW members have built solidarity across borders and oceans to push back against efforts to silence workers.

That collective strength has led to stronger contracts at chemical, rubber and tire, steel and aluminum facilities, and other USW workplaces. Over the years, USW members have stood up against the oppression of their siblings in places like Bangladesh, Guinea, Indonesia and Madagascar. In turn, workers around the world have helped the USW take on employers like ArcelorMittal, Firestone, Goodyear, Rio Tinto, Vale and others.

New Leadership

Christiane Benner, of Germany’s IG Metall union, was elected the new president of the global federation in November.

Brown, who was elected IndustriALL vice president for North America, will be sworn in as the USW’s 10th international president on March 1. The IndustriALL Congress was preceded by a global mining conference, where District 11 Director Cathy Drummond was elected co-chair of the IndustriALL mining sector.

The congress also discussed and adopted its 2025-2029 action plan, which will guide the work of the organization in the coming years, including strategies to strengthen unions,

fight economic and social injustice, hold multinational corporations accountable, and ensure that industrial transitions don’t leave workers behind.

Keeping with the theme of the 2025 event, “Organizing for a Just Future,” IndustriALL members vowed to step up the fight for workers’ rights and climate justice, even as technology remakes the future of the workplace.

“We live in a time of rapid change,” said outgoing IndustriALL President Marie Nilsson, who also serves as the leader of the Swedish industrial union IF Metall. “When I look out over the congress hall, I feel hopeful. I see our joint strength to face these challenges. We are determined to build a more sustainable future.”

Michele O’Neil, president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, reminded IndustriALL members that solidarity – across borders and oceans – is the only effective way to push back against the power of multinational employers who try to exploit workers.

“There’s only one response to organized capital,” she said, “and that is organized labor.”

During plenary sessions, breakouts and action plan debates, delegates returned again and again to one central principle: only strong, democratic and inclusive unions can win justice for workers.

‘A Better Future’

IndustriALL General Secretary Atle Høie reminded members that unions do more than fight for workers inside factory and office walls – they fight to protect the core values of economic and social justice in their nations and communities.

“We work to remedy violations of fundamental union rights, and to secure a better, more sustainable life for workers,” he said.

Høie reminded the delegation of its successes in those fights over the past four years, including reaching a legally binding collective

bargaining agreement to improve wages and working conditions for thousands of workers in Cambodia; the Hong Kong Convention, which mandates safer and more environmentally sound ship recycling; and the creation of dozens of new youth groups and women’s groups around the world that have recruited tens of thousands of new members to the labor movement.

“Building trade union power is not just our strategy — it is our survival,” Høie said. “Only by organizing every worker in every workplace can we shape a future where labor stands stronger than capital.”



Why the NLRB Matters

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is one of the smallest government agencies, with overhead that amounts to less than 0.01 percent of the federal budget. Still, the impact that the board can have on the lives of workers far outweighs its relatively small stature.

The NLRB was established in 1935 to protect the rights of workers to organize unions and collectively bargain with their employers. The rules laid out by the board affect almost every private-sector worker in the United States, whether they are in a union or not.

The agency, which consists of a five-member Washington, D.C.-based board and dozens of regional offices across the country, oversees union organizing votes, works to resolve labor disputes, and investigates and prosecutes unfair labor practices.

That's why, when politicians and corporate titans take aim at the NLRB and try to weaken the effectiveness of the agency, as they have over the past year, it should raise major red flags for anyone who works for a living.

"The rich and powerful have always tried to silence workers and undercut their attempts to organize and exercise their collective strength," said International President David McCall. "The reason is simple — unions are one of the only avenues that workers have to fight back."

On the whole, the administration's deliberate gutting of the NLRB has hindered union organizing and led to a rollback in regulations that had raised the standard of living for working Americans.

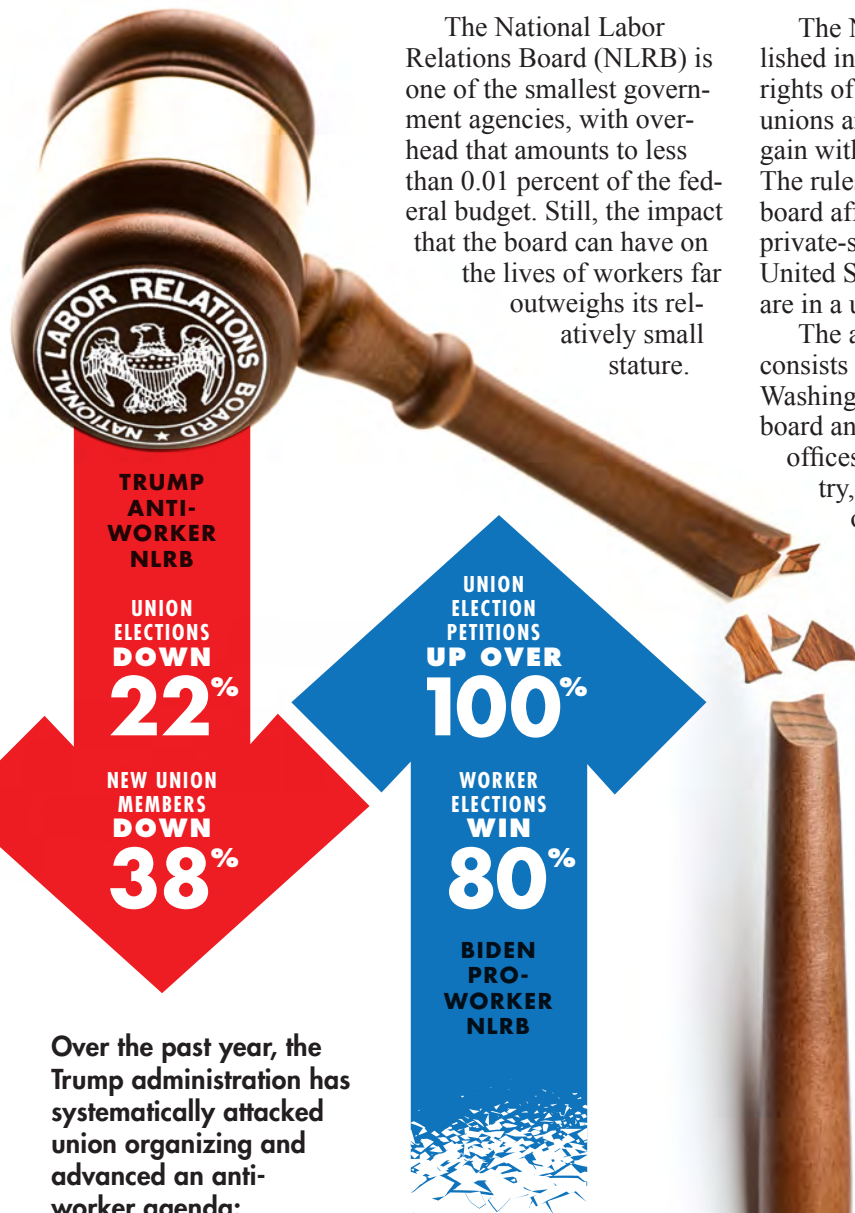
The attacks have resulted in fewer workers joining unions, weakening the labor movement and undermining the power of workers to gain fair wages and benefits.

The numbers tell the tale: Under the Biden administration's pro-worker NLRB, union election petitions surged, more than doubling from 2021 to 2024, and workers won nearly 80 percent of their elections.

Under the second Trump administration, union elections fell 22 percent, and the number of new union members dropped by 38 percent, in just one year.

While the NLRB was established as an independent agency, its members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, offering a clear example of why workers need to flex their political muscle at election time, so they have a chance to reverse the current anti-worker trend in Washington.

"Everything that we do as a union — from organizing to collective bargaining to representing members during disputes — is derived from a decision made in Washington or in our statehouses," said International President-Elect Roxanne Brown. "That's why we need to make our voices heard at the ballot box. That way, the people we elect know they are there to represent us."



Over the past year, the Trump administration has systematically attacked union organizing and advanced an anti-worker agenda:

FIRED NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo, who, in her four years, worked to reinvigorate workers' rights and expand access to collective bargaining.

LEFT the NLRB without a quorum for nearly a year, halting its ability to decide cases.

FIRED board member Gwynne Wilcox, a lifelong advocate for workers, whose term was set to run through 2028. It was the first time a president took the step of firing a member of the NLRB.

APPOINTED two pro-corporate board members, shifting what had been a pro-worker board to one likely to side with employers.

REDUCED the agency's budget by \$14 million and cut its staff by about 100 workers.



Former District 4 Director Was Retiree Group's Longest-Serving President

After 13 years as president of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees – the longest tenure of any SOAR president – Bill Pienta was preparing to step down as USW@Work went to press.

Pienta, who retired as the union's District 4 director in 2012 and stepped back into a leadership role a year later to take the reins of SOAR, worked hard to expand the organization's focus and foster increased activism among USW retirees during his tenure.

"I'm proud that SOAR has been and continues to try to reinvent itself and become more relevant to the issues that we have today," Pienta said. "Any active worker should be interested in retiree issues, and retirees should be involved in current workers' issues, too."

Using that synergy to make the union stronger was one of his proudest accomplishments as SOAR leader, said Pienta.

Working with Rapid Response Director Amber Miller, Pienta began to schedule the summer SOAR meetings to coincide with the union's Rapid Response and Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., allowing retirees to

participate in lobby days and to mentor young activists.

"We have a lot of experience and a lot of knowledge," Pienta explained.

In addition to partnering with Rapid Response, Pienta worked to get SOAR members involved in other USW groups, such as Women of Steel and Next Gen, and to make the organization an integral part of the USW as a whole.

The work of building unity and solidarity among diverse groups of workers was a task that Pienta was familiar with, thanks to his years as a leader in USW District 4. Pienta said some of his most memorable moments came during lobbying trips to Washington, where District 4 members and SOAR activists were always well represented under his leadership.

Buses would leave the Buffalo area at night and arrive in Washington, D.C. in the morning, he said. It was on one of those trips that Pienta first met a young local union activist named David Wasiura, who now serves as District 4 director.

"I saw something in him very early on," Pienta said. "I knew he would be a great leader in this union."

Wasiura recalled the trip clearly, noting that Pienta took the time to answer questions and get to know him as the hours passed.

"I was brand new to the labor movement. But he listened and he gave me his insights," Wasiura said. "There are a few people you run into in your

life that you can say, 'I wouldn't be where I am without them.' Bill was one of those people for me."

Pienta joined the Steelworkers in 1966 when he went to work at the former Allegheny Ludlum steel mill in Dunkirk, N.Y., southwest of Buffalo on the shore of Lake Erie. He was just 18 years old, but quickly became an activist, and, over the years, stepped up every time USW members called on him for help.

"I don't ever want to say no to my union," Pienta said. "The more people we have doing the work of the union, the better."

Pienta joined the USW staff in 1990 and was elected District 4 director in 2004.

"The district was like a family. We all felt we were one," Pienta said, noting that everyone from rank-and-file members to staff representatives and sub-directors always called him "Bill."

Retired National Director for Canada Ken Neumann is expected to be sworn in March 1 as the new SOAR president along with a slate of newly elected USW officers.

Pienta said he was pleased to be leaving the SOAR presidency on his own terms and was looking forward to the next chapter in his USW story.

"I am so grateful for the opportunities and the benefits that the Steelworkers have provided for me," Pienta said. "I would rather leave a little bit early than stay a little bit too long."

PIENTA TO STEP DOWN AS SOAR LEADER



Agreement Follows 5-Month Strike in Toledo

USW members who work at Libbey Glass in Toledo, Ohio, voted overwhelmingly this winter to ratify a new contract, ending an unfair labor practice (ULP) strike that stretched more than five months.

The 650 workers at the plant – including members of USW Locals 59M, 700T and 65T, as well as members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local 1297 – launched the ULP strike in August 2025 as man-

agement refused to pull back from its insistence on unnecessary concessions.

Dave Nelson, president of Local 59M, said workers at the factory took pay cuts and accepted other concessions in 2020 and 2021 to help pull the company out of bankruptcy. The cost of those sacrifices was about \$32 million.

When Libbey management came back to the bargaining table in 2024, Nelson said, workers expected the now-profitable company to negotiate a fair agreement. Instead, management demanded more concessions.

“It was a total slap in the face,” said Nelson,

who has worked at Libbey for 19 years. “Their goal was to totally rewrite the contract and give members no control over anything, not scheduling, days off, or overtime.”

Despite Libbey’s demands, a difficult holiday season and a series of winter storms, members stood strong on the picket line thanks to their unwavering solidarity, he said.

“We took care of each other. We had donations from other locals. We had support from the international union. All of that got us through,” Nelson said. “Our motto from day one was ‘one day longer, one day stronger.’”

In February, members of Local 59M and Local 700T ratified new agreements, following successful votes by Local 65T and IAM members in January. Members gained significant wage increases and resisted Libbey’s concessionary demands.

Local 700T President Joyce Marland said pushing back on the company’s demand for forced overtime, while preserving premium pay for weekends and holidays, were major victories for USW members.

“We stuck together,” Marland said. “The members showed that they believe in each other.”



FREDERICK TAPPED FOR VIRGINIA LABOR POST

Virginia Governor Abigail Spanberger appointed James Frederick in January as commissioner of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry.

Frederick spent 25 years working with USW members in the union’s Health, Safety and Environment Department and worked with members in all of the union’s sectors.

International President David McCall noted Frederick followed his work at the Steelworkers “by serving with distinction in the Biden administration as Deputy Assistant

Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, continuing to advocate on behalf of workers and their families.

“Simply put, I can think of no stronger champion of working families to serve the people of Virginia as commissioner of Labor and Industry,” McCall said. “The USW congratulates Jim on his appointment. We are proud to call him a friend, and we look forward to collaborating with him to make Virginia a better place for everyone to live and work.”

International
President-Elect
Roxanne Brown



Photo by
Tyrone
Hunter

USW'S BROWN DELIVERS CIVIL RIGHTS KEYNOTE ADDRESS

International President-Elect Roxanne Brown delivered the keynote address this January at the 2026 AFL-CIO Martin Luther King Human and Civil Rights Conference in Baltimore.

In a rousing call to action, Brown challenged the delegation to start working with each other now to build a better labor movement for the future.

"We were built for moments like this," Brown said, calling on workers to identify allies to join forces with them and create a broad coalition. "Do not let them break your spirit. Do not let them convince you that you are alone."

Joining Brown at the four-day conference were International Vice Presidents Kevin Mapp and Luis Mendoza, Secretary-Treasurer Myles Sullivan and more than 200 other USW members and staff.

A total of more than 1,000 union activists representing more than 60 international unions attended the event to honor the life and legacy of Dr. King and continue to work toward

his dream.

Panel discussions, addresses and workshops focused on topics such as the effort to resist the administration's mass deportation agenda, the impact of artificial intelligence on workers, nonviolent civil resistance, and more.

Other leaders addressing the conference included AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, American Federation of Teachers Executive Vice President Evelyn DeJesus, and SEIU California President David Huerta.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer and longtime USW leader Fred Redmond was unable to attend the conference in person but delivered opening and closing remarks via video, calling on union members to come together and fight back against anti-worker politicians and business leaders.

"We know what it's like to stand up to a bad boss, to corporations, to authoritarians," Redmond said. "We can't just be a part of the resistance. We have to lead the resistance. So many people are depending on us."

NIOSH WORKERS RECALLED FROM LAYOFF

In a major victory for American workers and for workplace safety and health, all workers at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) who were laid off last year were reinstated to their jobs in January.

The reinstatement came after months of intense lobbying and collective action on behalf of the workers, by USW members, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), and other labor and environmental organizations and public health experts.

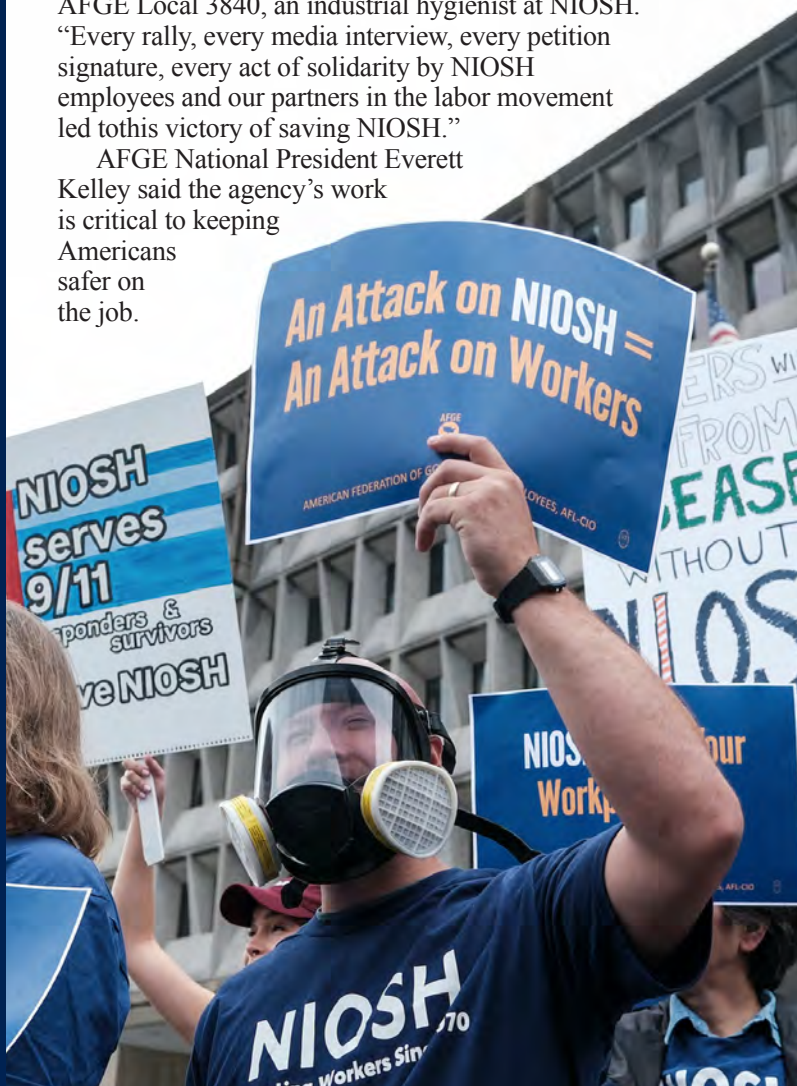
In April 2025, the Trump administration's Department of Health and Human Services sent layoff notices to about 1,000 NIOSH employees whose expertise has been critical to the nation's workplace safety and public health.

This January, the department called those employees back to work.

Workers at the institute conduct research and investigations into workplace hazards and recommend remedies to prevent workplace illnesses and injuries. NIOSH also provides training and certification that helps to keep workers safer and healthier across all industries.

"This moment belongs to every single person who refused to stay silent," said Dr. Micah Niemeier-Walsh of AFGE Local 3840, an industrial hygienist at NIOSH. "Every rally, every media interview, every petition signature, every act of solidarity by NIOSH employees and our partners in the labor movement led to this victory of saving NIOSH."

AFGE National President Everett Kelley said the agency's work is critical to keeping Americans safer on the job.





INDIANA CANPACK WORKERS VOTE TO JOIN USW

Workers at the Canpack facility in Muncie, Ind., are now proud union members after voting decisively this winter to join the USW.

The 280 workers, who produce aluminum beverage cans, will now turn their attention to negotiating a first contract with the company that employs about 8,500 workers at more than two dozen container plants around the world.

The organizing campaign at the Canpack plant got a boost from USW members in Fort Wayne, about 75 miles north of

Muncie. Workers at the BFGoodrich tire plant in Fort Wayne, members of Local 715L, made phone calls and wrote postcards of support to the Muncie workers, urging them to cast “yes” votes.

“For me, it’s personal. I strongly believe that being a union member changed the trajectory of my life and provided me with opportunities that I could never have imagined,” said Anna Bueker of Local 715L. “It’s a passion project for me to let other people know that these

options are out there.”

Bueker, who has contributed to the USW’s member-to-member organizing efforts since 2023, worked with her local’s organizing committee to write about 175 postcards to Canpack workers touting the benefits of union membership.

“Having a postcard handwritten and hand-signed by a local union member makes a difference,” Bueker said. “We know exactly what a difference a union job can make.”

MEMBERS REACH NEW AGREEMENT AT CORNING

About 1,400 members of Local 1000, who work at Corning facilities in New York state, were preparing to vote in February on a new agreement as USW@Work went to press.

Local 1000, the largest USW local at the iconic glassmaker, has historically set the pattern for wages and benefits in the company’s talks with the USW’s other local unions in Kentucky, New Jersey, North Carolina and Virginia, which will bargain new contracts later this year.

Members of those locals collaborated with the Local 1000 bargaining committee as negotiations took place this past winter so all USW members at the company were on the same page throughout the process.

“We all have the same goal – to make sure every USW member at Corning has a fair deal that provides them and their families with strong wages, health care and retirement security,” said District 4 Director David Wasiura. “The members of Local 1000 are proud to stand with their fellow USW members throughout the company as this process continues.”

WOMAN OF STEEL HELPS YOUNG GIRLS FIND STRENGTH

About 75 young girls in Southern California’s North Tamarind Elementary School received lessons in empowerment, positivity and solidarity during a Girls’ Empowerment Day organized by Local 8599 Woman of Steel Trisha Garcia and her co-workers.

Garcia, a clerk typist with Fontana Unified School District and a USW activist with the union’s Women of Steel and NextGen programs, worked closely with school counselor Zachery LaRue to help put together the program in conjunction with International Women’s Day last year.

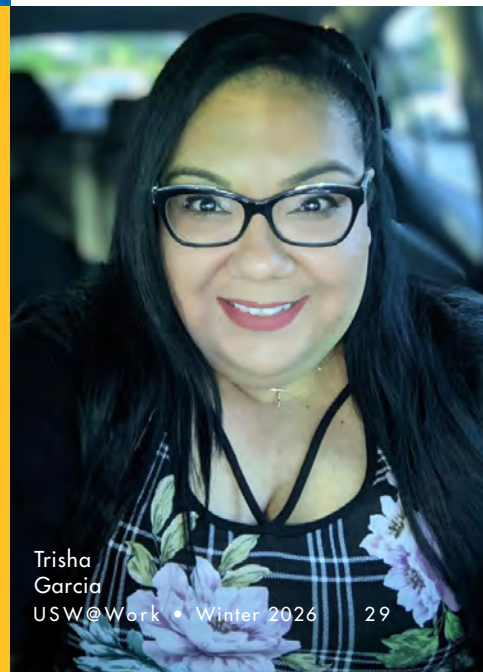
“We’ve really seen a change in our girls

who attended,” Garcia said as she reflected on the positive lessons of the event, held for fourth- through sixth-grade girls. “It’s helped them become more confident, and it’s helped them to learn that they can rely on each other.”

The program, which included an appearance via Zoom by Women of Steel Director Randie Pearson, was meant to help girls build strength and emotional well-being through their relationships and interactions with other women of all ages, Garcia said.

Garcia said she hopes to make Girls’ Empowerment Day an annual event in the district and is already planning another program for March of this year.

“It provides our students with the opportunity to learn how women can help other women,” she said.



Trisha Garcia



RAMIREZ CALLS ON LAWMAKERS TO SUPPORT WORKERS

International Vice President Emil Ramirez joined hundreds of workers at the Kansas State Capitol in Topeka in January, calling for legislative action to support workers as part of a rally organized by the Kansas AFL-CIO.

“Change does not come from standing on the

sidelines,” Ramirez said. “It comes from hard work and standing together.”

Too many lawmakers are putting the interests of the rich and powerful ahead of workers, he said, by trying to deny workers the right to organize, workplace safety and health, affordable health care and higher wages.

“They are choosing corporations over communities,” Ramirez said. “They are choosing power over people. And they are hoping we do not notice.”

But every gain workers have made – whether a contractual or policy win – has come as a result of collective action, he said, noting that workers can beat back attacks on their rights by relying on that principle.

“We are organized. We are paying attention. And we are not going anywhere,” he said. “Solidarity is not just a word we use. It is how we win.”



MISSOURI CHEMICAL WORKERS JOIN USW

About 380 workers at 3M’s Springfield, Mo., chemical facility voted in December to join the USW, a major victory for the plant’s workforce and a strong addition to the union’s growing chemical sector.

The Springfield facility produces adhesives, sealants, and other specialty products that supply industries such as automotive and aerospace manufacturing.

OHIO STREET NAMED FOR MORRISSEY BROTHERS

The city council of Oregon, Ohio, voted unanimously last fall to name a section of the town’s Starr Avenue in honor of Max and Ben Morrissey.

The two men, brothers by birth and by virtue of their membership in USW Local 1-346, died in a tragic fire at the former BP-Husky oil refinery in the Toledo suburb of Oregon on Sept. 20, 2022.

Friends and family members of the brothers attended the vote on the proclamation, which noted that the actions the brothers took on the day of the fire saved the lives of many of their co-workers.

“We thought it was a great way to honor these two gentlemen,” said council member Dennis Walendzak. “It’s the least that we can do for this family.”

The “Max and Ben Morrissey Memorial Mile” is part of a main thoroughfare through the city, an area that family members said the brothers enjoyed visiting.





The Springfield workers join thousands of USW-represented 3M workers nationwide.

“The union has long been a leader in the chemical industry, and the addition of these new members further strengthens the USW’s ability to advocate for safer workplaces, consistent training, improved staffing, and long-term job security across the sector,” said International Secretary-Treasurer Myles Sullivan, who oversees bargaining for the USW’s chemical workers.

STEELWORKERS RAISE MONEY FOR COLLEGE PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

Steelworkers joined forces with Steelers in December to raise funds and awareness on behalf of the National College Players Association (NCPA).

Pittsburgh Steelers alumni greeted fans and signed autographs at the annual NCPA fundraiser in Pittsburgh. The USW has supported the association’s work since 2001 as the organization has advocated for the rights and well-being of college athletes.

The NCPA and Executive Director Ramogi Huma have fought for more than two decades to improve health and safety standards, increase athletes’ freedom to transfer, improve medical coverage, and allow athletes to receive compensation for the use of their names and likenesses, among other changes.

Over the years, the NCPA, which includes more than 20,000 athletes at more than 150 campuses, has been successful in pushing the NCAA to make changes to all of those policies.

NOTICE TO ALL EMPLOYEES COVERED BY A UNION SECURITY CLAUSE

All USW represented employees covered by a union security clause have the right, under *NLRB v. General Motors*, 373 U.S. 734 (1963), to be and remain a nonmember subject only to the duty to pay the equivalent of union initiation fees and periodic dues. Further, only such non-member employees have the right, under *Communications Workers v. Beck*, 487 U.S. 735 (1988), to limit payment of union-security dues and initiation fees to certain moneys spent on activities germane to a union’s role as collective bargaining representative. This latter statutory right is embodied in the USW’s Nonmember Objection Procedure. The Procedure is available to any USW represented employee who is subject to a union security clause but who is a non-member and who objects to his or her union security fees being expended on nonrepresentational activities. Paragraph 1 of the Procedure states: “1. Any individual, who is not a member of the United Steelworkers and who is required as a condition of employment to pay dues to the United Steelworkers pursuant to a union security arrangement but objects to supporting ... political or ideological expenditures by the United Steelworkers which are not necessarily or reasonably incurred for the purpose of performing the duties of an exclusive collective bargaining representative shall have the right upon perfecting a notice of objection to obtain an advance reduction of a portion of such individual’s dues obligation commensurate with expenditures unrelated to collective bargaining as required by law.” An eligible employee who objects to the USW expending monies for nonrepresentational activities such as charitable or political activities may choose to perfect a notice of objection under Paragraph 2 of the Procedure, which states: “2. To perfect a notice of objection, the individual must send an individually signed notice to the International Secretary-Treasurer during the first thirty days following either the individual’s initial date of hire into the USW represented unit or an anniversary date of such hiring: provided, however, that if the individual lacked knowledge of this Procedure, the individual shall have a 30 day period commencing on the date the individual became aware of the Procedure to perfect a notice of objection; and, provided, further, that a member who resigns membership shall have the opportunity to object within the 30 day period following resignation.” 1 Any right of a resignee to pay a reduced amount under this Procedure may or may not be superceded by the resignee’s check-off authorization.” Objectors are not USW members and have no right to vote in union elections or to be a candidate, no right to participate in union meetings or activities, and no right to vote on contract ratification. Upon perfecting properly a notice of objection, the objector is entitled to an advance reduction of a portion of his or her union security obligation commensurate with expenditures unrelated to collective bargaining, as required by law. International Secretary-Treasurer Myles Sullivan has determined, based upon expenditures for the calendar year 2024 that the reduction percentage under the Procedure is 14.70% (22.98% if organizing expenditures were to be included). There are court decisions holding that organizing activities are non-representational activities. The USW does not agree with those rulings. However, without intending to waive its position that its organizing expenditures are not subject to objection and without intending to waive its right to assert its position if there is a challenge to the reduction percentage, the USW has deemed it expedient to apply the 22.98% figure to most current and future objectors. Therefore, an objector will be charged 77.02% of the regular dues amount. Each objector will be given a detailed breakdown between representational and non-representational activities with a report by an independent auditor. The Procedure contains an appeals system under which challenges to the reduction percentage determination must be filed within 30 days of the Notice of Determination and are to be decided by an impartial arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association. Disputed amounts are escrowed pending appeal. While a notice must be individually signed and timely mailed, there is no form for a notice. Processing is faster, however, when the notice contains the objector’s name, address, local union number, and employer.



Have You Moved?

Notify your local union financial secretary, or clip out this form with your old address label and send your new address to:

USW Membership Department,
60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Name _____

New Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

You may also email the information to membership@usw.org

