

THE

COMMUNICATOR

Volume 4 Number 3 | Printing Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America | July-Aug.-Sept. 2026

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 Makes Clear
 Workers Have
 Labor Rights



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‘Yes!’ to PPPWU-IAM Union Merger

By Fred Bruning
The Communicator

Members of the Printing, Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America voted last month to merge with the 600,000-strong IAM Union ending four years of uncertainty following an abrupt decision by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters to scuttle the alliance forming the GCC/IBT, predecessor of the PPPWU.

The vote – conducted in June by electronic balloting – brings the PPPWU and its more than 15,000 active members in the United States and Canada into the realm of IAM Union, one of the nation’s leading labor organizations, first as an affiliate and, in two years, a fully merged partner as IAM/PPPWU District P1.

PPPWU President Israel Castro and IAM Union International President Brian Bryant hailed the victory as a historic development that would assure the PPPWU’s autonomy while allowing the kind of cooperation and solidarity certain to benefit both unions.

“We have protected our independence and joined forces with one of the most prominent unions in North America,” Castro said. “And we have shown to those who thought we would buckle under pressure that the PPPWU is here to stay, strong, proud and united.”

Addressing the PPPWU at a special convention in May that cleared the way for last month’s rank-and-file vote, Bryant celebrated the spirit of common purpose, respect and mutual support that led to a positive election outcome.

“This vote is a victory for both our unions,” Bryant said. “It shows that when we stand together, we build power together and gain an even greater voice.”

continues on PAGE 8



IAM UNION PHOTO



A STRONGER FUTURE
Built TOGETHER

Standing in solidarity at PPPWU convention in May were, left-right, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, PPPWU President Israel Castro, PPPWU Secretary-Treasurer James Santangelo, IAM Union General Secretary-Treasurer Dora Cervantes and IAM International President Brian Bryant.

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PPPWU President Israel Castro presided and emphasized a theme of unity.

Delegates at Convention Hail a ‘Truly Great Moment’

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IAM UNION PHOTO

Moving Ahead With High Purpose and an Outstanding Partner

LAST MONTH, WE MADE HISTORY.

PPPWU members across North America voted to merge with IAM Union, a highly-respected, 600,000-member international labor organization with a record of strength, integrity, innovation and accomplishment.

The importance of this moment can't be exaggerated.



We have shown our spirit and determination after the Teamster administration of Sean O'Brien – without reason – ended a partnership that had served both unions well for nearly 20 years.

We have fought back against raiding attempts and disruption – and efforts by O'Brien to undermine the June merger election with false claims and outrageous accusations.

We have made clear that we are strong, united, and here to stay.

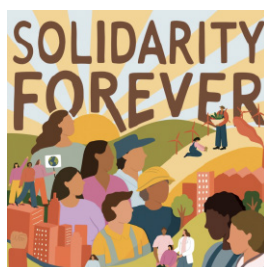
Our 100-year-old union is moving forward with high purpose.

And now we have a worthy ally offering support and solidarity.

In return, we offer the same – a hand extended in friendship, unity and cooperation.

At the PPPWU special convention in Maryland, IAM Union officials welcomed delegates as equals and noted that our members and theirs work together in many industries. In partnership, IAM representatives said, a promising future based on mutual respect is assured.

"This is workers coming together," IAM International President Brian Bryant told delegates. "This is unions building power together. And this is a room full of leaders and members who are committed to creating a stronger future for working people all across the United States and Canada."



In a few words, Dora Cervantes, general secretary-treasurer of IAM Union, captured the spirit of mutual trust and comradeship.

"You are home," Cervantes said.

That's what it felt like – at the convention hall, IAM headquarters in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, and the union's remarkable Winpisinger educational facility in Hollywood, Maryland.

We were home.

It took work. PPPWU leaders laid the groundwork and, before the vote, local leaders did an outstanding job of answering questions and outlining the advantages of an alliance with IAM Union.

A sidebar in this edition's extensive merger coverage highlights some of those benefits – training opportunities, employee assistance programs, a well-financed strike fund, access to IAM organizing, bargaining, safety and legal services, to name only a few.

Important, too, is that by partnering with IAM, we renew our alliance with the AFL-CIO – a benefit lost when the Teamsters withdrew in 2005. With the help of the IAM, we sent two representatives – Jim Longerbone, president of

Local 11-M, St. Paul, and Mountain Region General Board member Marty Hallberg – to the AFL-CIO convention in Minneapolis last month as special guests. And at our own Maryland convention, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler stopped by to wish us well. "There's power in standing together," she said.

All good – absolutely terrific.

Here's the big point, though.

We are joining forces with a large and respected labor group, IAM Union, without losing our autonomy and while gaining power and bargaining strength.

In a joint letter before the vote, IAM Union International President Brian Bryant and I told members the merger agreement had been crafted "to protect the autonomy of the PPPWU."

From the convention podium, Bryant said he was awed by "the passion, the pride and the commitment this union has to its members."

With the IAM, we have a great partner.

The days ahead never looked more secure or promising.

At the convention, that spirit of optimism was expressed in words emblazoned on banners and a sea of blue t-shirts: "A Stronger Future – Built Together."

Let's get started.

OUTLOOK

HAROLD MEYERSON

Car Shopping? Good Luck at These Prices

LET'S TALK CARS. IN PARTICULAR, THEIR PRICES.

The average sticker price for a new car today is roughly \$50,000. Only four cars on the market can be purchased for \$25,000 or less.

That's doubly true for American electric vehicles despite the fact that they are cheaper to run and maintain. Even the small hatchback Chevy Bolt starts at more than \$28,000 – and production is apparently only going to continue for a year or so.

For middle-class and working-class Americans, most new cars and homes – two foundations of what we've long regarded as a middle-class life – are now out of reach.

Ironically, the American auto industry has historically played a key role in scaling supply to demand and was the first to match prices to the financial capabilities of consumers.

Initially, Henry Ford's Model Ts came in one size, one color, and sold at one price. During the 1920s, however, General Motors, under the leadership of Alfred P. Sloan, started making a variety of brands, each scaled to the consuming capabilities of different portions of the public. Sloan decreed that GM would make "a car for every purse and every purpose."

Today, GM is surely even more able than in Sloan's time to assess Americans' finances in order to maximize its profits. Which is precisely why it now sells new cars that only upper-middle-class or wealthy Americans can afford to buy.

Looking at the particular numbers, the monthly payment on a \$50,000 new car – assuming a 60-month car loan and an average



THE AMERICAN PROSPECT

down payment – would come to roughly \$975. A median-income American household with a yearly income in 2025 of approximately \$84,000 could afford a monthly payment of just \$750.

So much for buying the average new car unless you're in the richest 10 or 15 percent of our fellow Americans – those whose buying power is less a function of work than stock ownership. Data from the Federal Reserve shows that the wealthiest 10 percent of Americans own 93 percent

of the publicly traded stocks held by U.S. households.

Decades ago, Robert Reich, who served as labor secretary in the Clinton administration, began to document what he called the secession of the rich – that is, the withdrawal of the ultra-wealthy from civic life and responsibility.

Like the expanding universe the gaps between the super-rich and everyone else is growing wider. Just look at the price of automobiles.

Wealth taxes, anyone?

Harold Meyerson is editor at large at The American Prospect magazine. This piece first appeared on The American Prospect website, prospect.org, and is reprinted with permission of the author.



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Resounding Voices Are Lifted in a Chorus of Solidarity

RALPH CHAPLIN, AN ORGANIZER FOR THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE World, wrote, "Solidarity Forever," in 1915 during a period of labor turmoil. The words were set to the old abolitionist tune, "John Brown's Body," and meant to inspire workers battling for their rights often in violent circumstances.

Many artists have recorded, "Solidarity Forever," including one of America's most notable activist folksingers, Pete Seeger.



It was the Seeger version that brought delegates to their feet in the closing session of the May special convention in Maryland – especially moving because 86-year-old PPPWU president emeritus George Tedeschi stepped out of the motorized mobility scooter he used to get around the hall and led the crowd with his cane serving as baton. (Page 5)

Convention delegates had been hard at work over three days and taken a decisive step – to authorize the rank-and-file vote that led to last month's approval by rank-and-file of a merger with IAM Union. (Page 1, 8-10)

Three years of uncertainty following the abrupt move by Teamster General President Sean O'Brien to trash the 2005 agreement forming the GCC/IBT were over. The PPPWU had emerged strong, united and with a future of unlimited potential.

Advantages of the PPPWU-IAM alliance are manifold but perhaps most encouraging is the welcoming spirit shown PPPWU members by IAM colleagues.

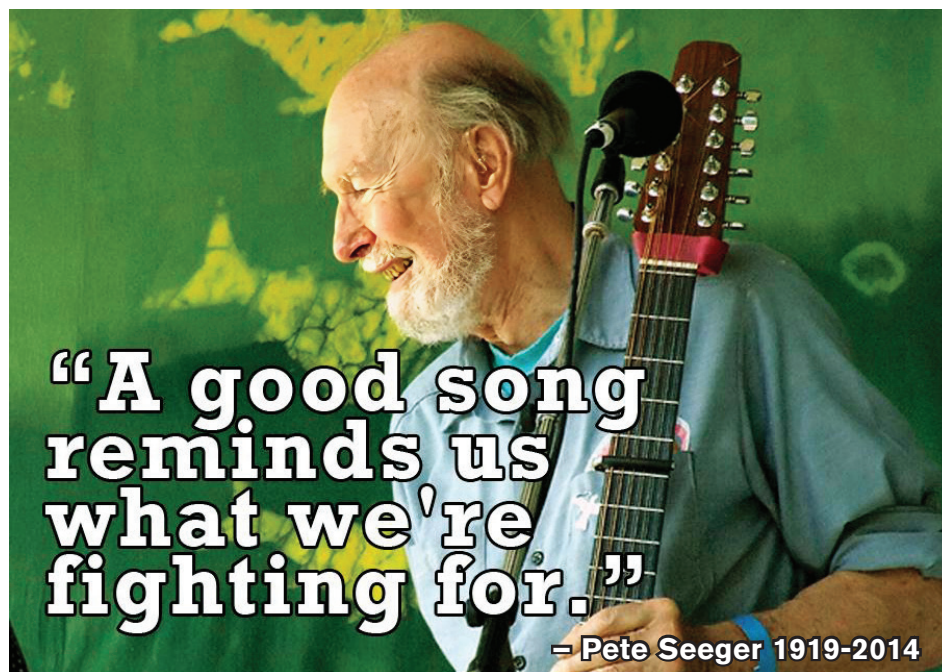
International IAM Union President Brian Bryant said "this victory is a victory for both our unions" and General Secretary Treasurer Dora Cervantes told delegates: "You are home."

PPPWU President Israel Castro hailed the merger in his "Straight Talk" column – a perfect partnership, he said, that assures continued autonomy and a bright future in association with a highly respected international labor organization. (Page 2)

Also important, Castro said, is the PPPWU's renewed affiliation – by way of IAM Union – with the AFL-CIO, a relationship that had been lost when the Teamsters broke away from the large labor coalition. Thanks to the IAM, two PPPWU officials attended the AFL-CIO national convention in June – another sign of unity and progress. (Page 11)

Aside from the consequential merger vote that linked the PPPWU and IAM, these have been busy times.

In Local Stops, Dawn Hobbs reports on an outstanding contract settlement by Local 406-C officials at Newsday on Long Island, a union basketball tournament in Chicago and an IAM women's conference attended by PPPWU representatives. (Page 11)



Zack Dowdy writes about a young Georgia mayor – relative of Eddie Williams, president of Local 527-M, Atlanta – who made a point of assuring workers at a local business they had the right to vote for union representation if they chose. And the employees did – another PPPWU victory. (Page 4)

On policy matters, analyst George Kraw offers an insightful examination of how consumers have been clobbered by the U.S. war with Iran and President Trump's tariff schemes – a point emphasized by Bottom Line columnist Jerry Morgan who said Trump has gone "out of his way to send costs skyward." (Pages 4, 7)

At the PPPWU special convention, surprise guest AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler also denounced Trump policies but celebrated the future of organized labor, the PPPWU-IAM merger and power of solidarity. (Page 8)

That spirit soared at the final convention session, delegates on their feet, George Tedeschi brandishing his cane, Pete Seeger setting the pace. "Solidarity forever, solidarity forever." The old tune boomed around the convention floor, its words as true now as when Ralph Chaplin wrote them more than a century ago. "For the union makes us strong." ■

COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

Workaday Rebellion Against Oligarchs of AI

Other than the fact that they are so outrageously greedy, why have today's multibillionaire, high-tech barons of AI become so despised by so many grassroots Americans?

By "so many," I mean they've sparked a hell-raising mass revolt, originating in farm country, spreading through working-class suburbs, into community colleges, and other centers of Middle America – now including environmental, religious, and democracy movements.

This is a genuine populist rebellion of workaday families against the corporate oligarchy of Musk, Zuckerberg, Altman, Bezos, and other "geniuses" of artificial intelligence.

The billionaires are racing to install millions of supersmart AI robots in nearly every workplace, from manufacturing to health care, farming to finance.

Amazingly, the tech elites consider themselves to be "humanitarians," for they say turning work over to AI would free humans to... well, do what?

Geniuses can't be bothered with such mundane details, so they're not interested of soon-to-be displaced masses of people who'll be "made redundant."

So – hello – people are revolting (in the very best sense of that term). Interestingly, some of the strongest backlash is coming from a huge group generally assumed



to be politically apathetic or enthusiastic about all technology: Young people.

New York Times columnist Michelle Goldberg reports that several tech honchos who've given college commencement speeches this month were startled when they launched into gushing praise for the glorious future promised by AI. They were practically driven off-stage by roaring cascades of boos from the students!

The pain that AI profiteers are imposing is one thing, but an even greater cause of this spreading revolt is the arrogance and stupidity of royal elites who think ordinary people don't matter. Did these oligarchs ever hear about the revolution of 1776?



Do something!

To stay on top of the rapid development of AI and its impact on the public interest, check out the work of the AI Now Institute, ainowinstitute.org. ■

Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower chronicles the ongoing fight by America's ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Subscription rates for Hightower Lowdown commentary available at <https://jimhightower.substack.com/>

Trump is Prying Money From Workers' Wallets

By George M. Kraw

The Trump Administration claims its embrace of tariffs is a victory for working people and will bring back lost manufacturing jobs and improve the standard of living for all Americans.

But the whole scheme has been revealed as just another tool for influential economic groups to increase their clout and, incidentally, pry more money out of the wallets of workers. No surprise that a string of court defeats has shut down many tariffs and required refunds.

Along with tariffs, the Trump administration has been pursuing a “weak dollar” policy that drives up the cost of imports by making our currency less valuable.

Trump doesn’t care about traditional Republican economic policy – or the effect of his approach on working Americans.

Asked by reporters on the White House lawn recently how much he worried about the Iran war affecting average Americans finances, he answered, “Not even a little bit.”

The Supreme Court ruled that broad tariffs imposed by President Trump under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act were illegal. In a separate development, a federal trade court struck down a 10 percent global tariff replacement for exceeding executive authority.

The huge \$166–\$175 billion tariff refund process shines a blazing light on the influence of large corporations and well-connected actors in the American political economy.

The refunds go to the “importer of record” – that is, the company that paid the tariff. Consumers who bore the ultimate cost get nothing back.

Large retail and manufacturing giants like Costco, Walmart, and Home Depot are set to receive the biggest direct refunds, even for costs they had already passed on to consumers.

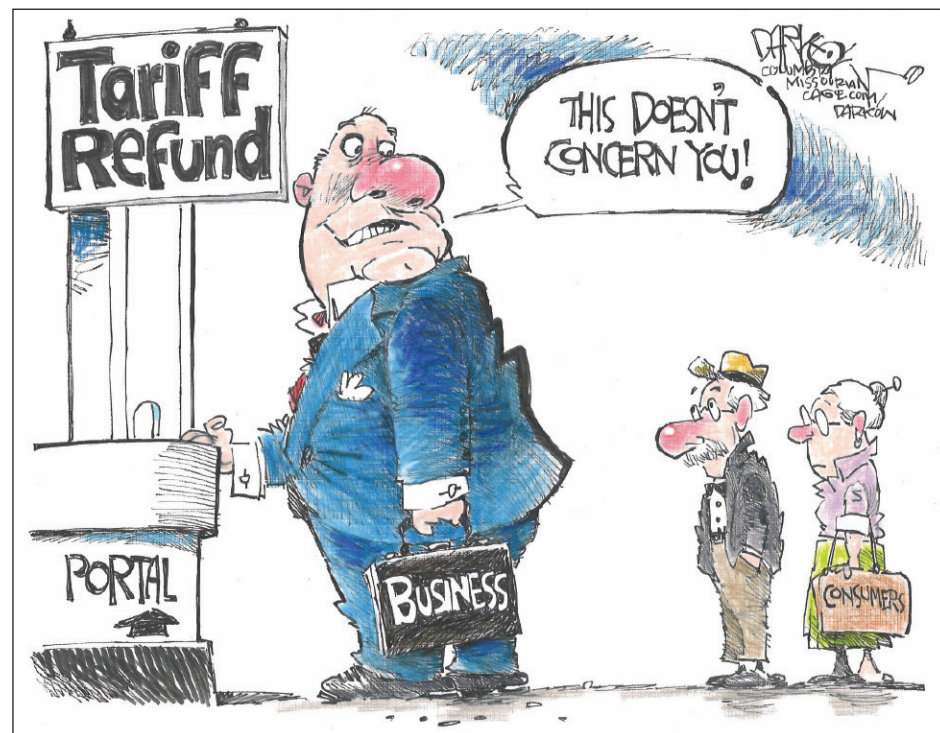
This is another example of how our legal system prioritizes corporate interests over consumer protection in the context of tariffs.

Of course, the refunds are a result of Supreme Court rulings, not any policy aimed at relieving consumer costs.

The situation highlights a “winner-take-all” dynamic where the entities closest to the federal government’s policy levers – the importers – get the money rather than consumers who were forced to pay higher prices.



George M. Kraw



JOHN DARKOW VIA CAGLE CARTOONS

While some corporations may pass on savings, there is no guarantee they will, meaning the “social advantage” of the refund stays within the corporate sector.

On top of everything else, the refunds will likely create a new wave of class-action lawsuits, where consumers try to reclaim money from companies that were compensated.

However these cases turn out, this type of legal maneuvering further highlights the ongoing tension between consumers and large corporations.

The tariff refund process shows that while the costs of economic policies are paid by consumers, benefits go to major economic players with political and legal influence. Meanwhile, the weak dollar strategy keeps prices high for consumers.

More broadly, the Trump Administration is developing an economic policy that puts government in an interventionist role instead of acting only as a regulator.

It is an approach that produces greater wealth for the most fortunate Americans and much more pain for everyone else.

George M. Kraw is a benefits lawyer in Silicon Valley and was a labor representative to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Advisory Committee from 2002-2005.

Mayor ‘Steps Up to Plate’ for Union Rights

By Zachary Dowdy
Special to the Communicator

Veteran PPPWU organizers Ryan Janota and Jarrod Skelton got a little help from a highly placed friend in their recent successful drive to unionize workers in a suburb of Atlanta.

Mayor Jayden L. Williams of Stockbridge, Georgia, learned of the PPPWU’s campaign to organize a local body care establishment and “stepped up to the plate,” with a letter to employees emphasizing their right to decide on affiliation, said PPPWU President Israel Castro.

Williams added that the City of Stockbridge – at least during his tenure, which began in January – would be one that “stands in support of workers seeking a voice and a seat at the table.”

Aestheticians and massage technicians at Massage Envy in Stockbridge voted to unionize and were certified in May.

Janota and Skelton – who were aided by Local 527-M Secretary-Treasurer Precious Hunter – said that was no coincidence.

“The letter helped tremendously,” Janota said.

The mayor’s gesture of support came as Local 527-M fought management attempts to defeat an organizing drive emblematic of the PPPWU’s drive to find members beyond the print, packaging and production trades.

The result may reflect a trend in Georgia’s employment landscape.

Since 2024, the number of unionized workers in the state rose from 174,000 workers or 3.8 percent of all workers, to 236,000 workers, or 5.1 percent, in 2025, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Nationally, unionized workers represent 10 percent of all workers, the agency reported.



YELP VIA GOOGLE IMAGES



BALLOTPEDIA VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

Mayor Jayden Williams of Stockbridge, Georgia, issued a notice on labor rights and said, ‘Every worker deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.’

Still, Georgia remains one of the country’s 26 Right-to Work states making the victory at Massage Envy particularly encouraging.

“Any organizing story is really about the members stepping up,” Castro said, “but Jayden’s role, saying that city is a labor-friendly city, played a huge role.”

Williams, elected at 22 and now the youngest African-American mayor in Georgia, said his role was small in comparison to the courage Massage Envy workers demonstrated in following through.

“As Mayor, I believe every worker deserves to be treated with dignity and respect,” he said. “My letter was not about taking sides in a dispute, but rather about supporting the right of workers to make their voices heard and participate in a process protected by law.”

Janota said the workers have already begun preparing to negotiate for their first contract.

A Roaring Good PPPWU Convention

By Fred Bruning
The Communicator

The soulful 70s favorite, “Lean on Me,” boomed over the convention hall sound system as PPPWU delegates gathered to consider an historic PPPWU-IAM Union merger and Precious Hunter prayed for guidance in an invocation that stopped the music and hushed the crowd.

“Father God, we thank you for IAM, for allowing us to have a place to land,” said Hunter, secretary-treasurer of Local 527-M, Atlanta.

Liz Shuler, the highly-regarded AFL-CIO president, made a surprise appearance to support a PPPWU-IAM partnership.

“There’s power in standing together,” she said in brief remarks to delegates.

Hours later, delegates at the Live! Hotel in Hanover, Maryland, voted unanimously to authorize rank-and-file balloting – the next step in approving an alliance between the PPPWU and IAM Union.

On a jumbo video, the convention theme flashed.

“A Stronger Future – Built Together.”

Chris Sclafani of Local 1-L, New York, made a motion to approve the referendum and merger.

Mike LaSpina, Local 406-C, Long Island, seconded Sclafani’s motion.

Lui Tangaro Jr. Local 747-M, Seattle, added his voice.

Larry Best, 527-M, Atlanta, came next.

“I truly believe in this union and my desire is to see this union grow and we stay alive,” said Best, who joined the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants’ Union in 1969. “I support this merger with all my heart.”

It was time to vote – or maybe not quite.

George Tedeschi, PPPWU president emeritus, 86, lifted himself from the motorized scooter he used to navigate the expansive Live! convention site.



Delegates to the PPPWU special convention in May spent three days discussing a merger with IAM Union and in rousing fashion gave approval for the June rank-and-file vote that approved the alliance. The meeting was a celebration of solidarity and echoed the soulful Bill Withers song, ‘Lean on Me,’ that echoed through the convention hall in Hanover, Maryland, before one session. ‘We all need someone to lean on.’

He would not tell delegates how to vote, Tedeschi said, but left no doubt about his sentiments.

Tedeschi said IAM Union was a “wonderful” organization with integrity and ambition and that International President Brian Bryant was widely known as a person of honor and influence.

Throughout the hall, PPPWU delegates, guests and officials said they agreed – this was an alliance that was a winner for both organizations.

Over three days, IAM and PPPWU leaders socialized, exchanged ideas and pledged mutual cooperation as though adding resonance to the Bill Withers tune played earlier.

“You just call on me brother when you need a hand,”

Withers sang. “We all need somebody to lean on.”

PPPWU members said IAM officers already made them feel part of the family.

“You are home,” said General Secretary-Treasurer Dora Cervantes and President Bryant said the merger marked “truly a great moment in the history of not only the PPPWU but the IAM Union.”

At last, PPPWU President Israel Castro called the question.

The resolution had been moved and seconded.

Should the PPPWU merge with IAM Union?

Aye,” roared delegates from around the country.

It was the start of a stronger future, they declared, built together. ■

Tedeschi: Attended Many but this One was Perfect

By George Tedeschi

As PPPWU president emeritus and a 60-year veteran of the labor movement, I was honored to be invited as a guest with others to the recent special convention – an historic event that I did not want to miss.

We were there to learn about our potential partner, IAM Union, and details of the affiliation and merger agreement as presented by PPPWU President Israel Castro and Secretary-Treasurer James Santangelo.

President Castro invited IAM International President Brian Bryant and General Secretary-Treasurer Dora Cervantes and a number of top IAM officials to address delegates and answer questions.

AFL-CIO President Elizabeth Shuler spoke and emphasized the importance of solidarity. “There’s power in standing together,” she said.

I was extremely impressed with President Castro and his competency in handling this momentous convention.

He ran it flawlessly – excellent hotel arrangements, an informative agenda, sessions conducted in an open, democratic atmosphere that allowed delegates an opportunity to comment, ask questions and express themselves.

More important was President Castro’s excellent presentation of the merger document and his ability to answer questions authoritatively.

Without question, Israel Castro is the right person to serve as president.

A wonderful team of PPPWU office staff members helped make the convention run smoothly. Preparing for the merger, President Castro wisely sought the counsel of former president Steve Nobles, Santangelo, PPPWU general board members and union attorney Peter Leff.



Especially inspirational was a memorial to former Secretary-Treasurer Clark Ritchey, who died unexpectedly last year at age 58.

I have attended every convention since the mid-1960s and think I am a good judge of how these events succeed. This one did. It was an amazing event – perfect.

At the closing session, delegates and guests sang, “Solidarity Forever,” one chorus more rousing than the last.

The words have special meaning for the PPPWU at

this time. We have an exceptional president. We are strong, united and autonomous. Solidarity forever. ■

George Tedeschi is president emeritus of the PPPWU and former president of Local 406-C, Long Island, the GCIU and GCC/IBT. He retired from the GCC/IBT post in 2019 but continued as a Teamster vice president-at large until 2022. Tedeschi continues to advise the PPPWU on administrative and pension matters.

HONORING THE DEVOTION OF CLARK RITCHEY

During an upbeat and exhilarating convention, PPPWU delegates observed a solemn moment to honor the memory of former Secretary-Treasurer Clark Ritchey, a beloved union professional who died unexpectedly in June at age 58.

A blue-and-white sash draped over an empty chair said, “In Memoriam, Clark Ritchey.”

His initials were enclosed by angel wings with halos above. There was a union label to indicate printing had been done at an allied shop.

“We miss him terribly,” said recently retired PPPWU President Steve Nobles, who worked closely with Ritchey.

Mike Maddock, District Council 2 president and Ritchey’s longtime friend, also expressed profound loss.

“I do miss him and I’m sure everybody here misses him,” Maddock said. “He was a great leader.”

Maddock told The Communicator he would see that Ritchey’s mother, Carol Ritchey Harr, received the sash.

PPPWU President Israel Castro recalled Ritchey’s impact on the union and pledged “to honor his memory and live up to his legacy.”

Ritchey was a rare and devoted labor official, said



“We miss him terribly,” said former PPPWU President Steve Nobles in regard to Secretary-Treasurer Clark Ritchey, who died unexpectedly last year at age 58.

George Tedeschi, PPPWU president emeritus. “He had that ability, that charisma, that knowledge, just the gut to do the right thing always for the members.”

What would Ritchey think of the PPPWU-IAM Union partnership?

Nobles said Ritchey, who had participated in merger talks with IAM, enthusiastically backed the alliance.

“He would have been immensely proud,” Nobles said.

Plenty to Celebrate, Work Still Undone

The nation turned 250 this month.

There was plenty to celebrate – two-and-a-half centuries mostly marked by progress and prosperity.

Mostly.

Plenty of work remains to be done.

Too many Americans feel left out and overlooked.

Racial differences still haunt the nation. Economic disparity is growing. Social mobility is stuck. The wealthiest are increasing their advantage while millions hustle to make ends meet. The very idea of work is being challenged by artificial intelligence – the ever-present “AI.”

For organized labor, this semiquincentennial year offers an opportunity for assessment.

At the union’s special convention in Maryland, leaders of the PPPWU and our new merger partner, IAM Union, spoke with optimism and assurance. The theme was “A Stronger Future – Built Together.”

At the same time, PPPWU President Israel Castro, IAM International President Brian Bryant and surprise guest AFL-CIO president Liz Shuler left little doubt that unions must resist powerful anti-labor forces and make the most of increasing public approval.

“If we don’t grow this labor movement when we see 70 percent of the public in the United States is pro-union than what are we doing – right?” Shuler said. “We’ve got to take advantage of that.”

Shuler denounced the administration of President Donald Trump for “the biggest act of union-busting in our history” by rescinding bargaining rights for nearly 1 million federal workers and showing favor to giant corporations and tech sector billionaires.

Enemies of organized labor are always ready to do damage.

Labor must overcome the opposition.

In this momentous anniversary year, only 10 percent of employees are unionized – most in the public sector. As Shuler says, it is essential for labor to break through, to harness social media and digital technology – yes, perhaps including AI – and build membership at a significant pace.

It won’t be easy.

Americans must be reminded of the honor that comes with honest work – and its importance.

“Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital,” said President Abraham Lincoln in an 1861 message to Congress. “Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.”

That thrilling statement from one of our wisest and most beloved leaders makes an essential point.

Workers built this country and keep it strong. They deserve praise and respect, not a political poke in the eye.

Ironically, Trump’s labor department has an anniversary message applauding American labor for making the country “a shining symbol of freedom and opportunity” and claiming that Trump “is securing a better future for all workers.”

That’s just hype. Trump is no Lincoln – although he outrageously often makes the comparison.

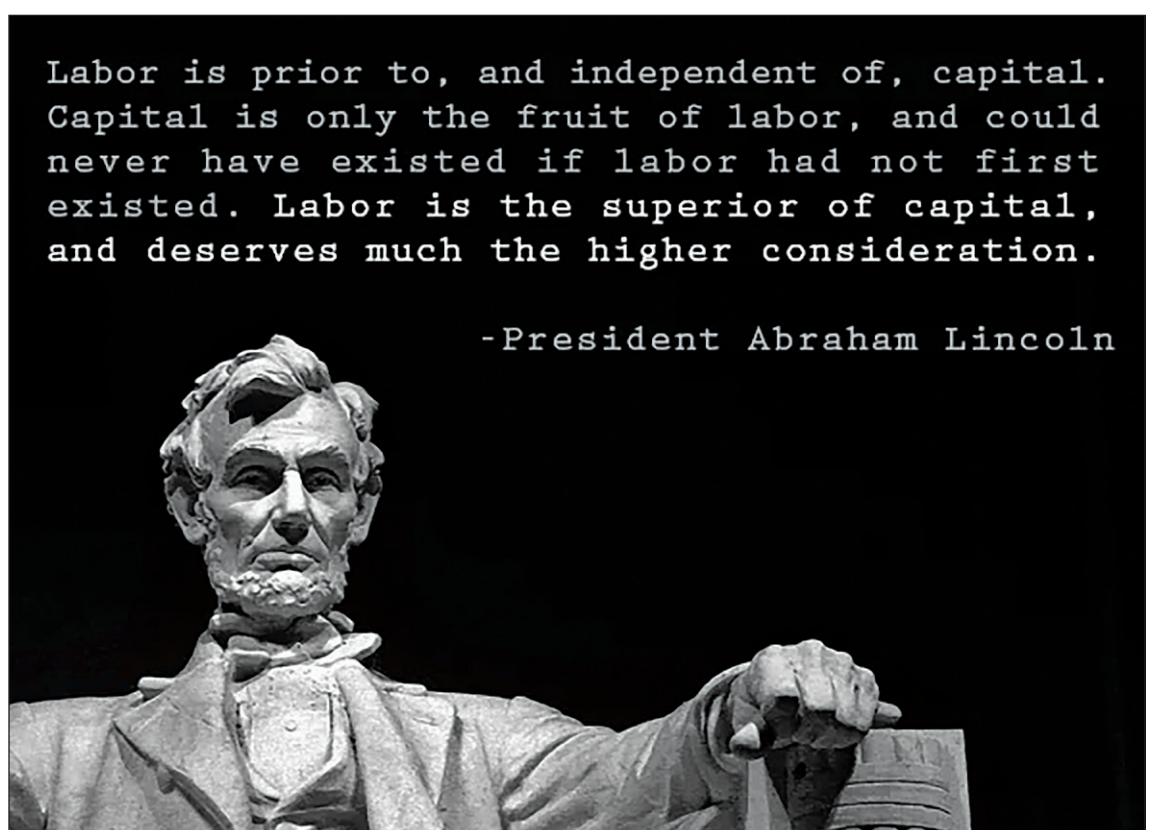
We don’t need phony compliments from an anti-union White House.

We need to celebrate organized labor and spread its life-changing word.

We need to tell our story more effectively.

Along those lines an innovative project called #Peoples 250 is gathering stories by workers “that lift up the history of struggle that has advanced worker rights, civil rights, equality, and democracy over the past 250 years.” (Learn more at laborheritage.org)

The 21st Century is nearly more than a quarter complete. Our nation is 250 years old. History is on a fast track. The labor movement must take a deep breath, re-commit to its highest principles and keep pace.



Point of View

BY ROBERT B. REICH

Public Interest or Private Gain?

By Robert B. Reich

It’s impossible to understand American politics without also understanding the American economy – and vice versa.

Politics and economics may be different disciplines but they’re two sides of the same coin.

This came home to me again when I saw the latest report on the U.S. gross domestic product.

Worker compensation – wages and benefits – grew 0.8 percent from the fourth quarter of 2025 to the first quarter of 2026. Corporate profits grew 2.7 percent.

When you adjust for inflation, hourly wages have risen 3 percent since the end of 2019. Corporate profits have risen 50 percent.

Workers’ share of the nation’s income has now dropped to the lowest it’s been since records began in 1947. Profits’ share is the highest since 1950.

The trend toward lower wages and higher profits began in the 1980s, increased in the 2000s, picked up speed after the pandemic, and is about to explode as Artificial Intelligence takes over.

But what about workers?

This is not just morally wrong as Pope Leo recently said in an encyclical letter devoted to the effects of AI.

It also threatens the future stability of our economic and political system.

What accounts for the increasing shift of the American economy from wages to profits, even before AI?

One big reason is monopolization.

The economy has become concentrated in a few giant corporations with the power both to raise prices and keep wages down – firms like Amazon, Alphabet (Google), Apple, Microsoft, Nvidia, Meta, Walmart, to mention a few.

These giants control large swaths of the economy. They also exert significant political

power. They’re like black holes in space, sucking in vast sums of money.

Their political power makes it impossible to know whether government policy is based on the public interest or private gain.

Workers, meanwhile, no longer have any countervailing power. In the 1950s, over a third of workers in the private sector were unionized. That gave them enough bargaining power to claim a significant share of the total economy.

Now, only 6 percent of workers are unionized. Their bargaining power has been further eroded by their easy replacement by lower-wage workers in Asia and by software. AI will further erode it.

This trend is not sustainable. It feeds growing anger at the system, which demagogues like Donald Trump exploit for their own ends.

What should be done? Let me list five steps:

1. A new era of antitrust. Giant corporations will have to be busted up.

2. Tax those at the top, especially on the value of their ownership of capital.

3. Regulate AI and provide a universal basic income to cushion those who lose their jobs because of it.

4. Universal health care – perhaps via Medicare for all – along with subsidized childcare and elder care.

5. Distribute capital far more widely, so that the broad American public has a palpable stake in the rip-roaring stock market and the AI tsunami.

None of these fixes will be easy. Even if all are implemented, they may still be insufficient.

But we have no choice but to try. We’ve witnessed what mass anger can do to America in the form of Trump. Unless we act soon, we’re likely to have Trumps – or worse – as far as the eye can see.

Robert B. Reich served as secretary of labor in the Clinton administration and is Emeritus Carmel P. Friesen Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. He has written numerous books including the latest, “Coming Up Short: A Memoir of My America.” This piece appeared originally as a Substack newsletter (robertreich@substack.com).

A Bad Situation, Worse

Asked about the effect of the Iran war on consumer prices, President Trump answered without hesitation.

"I don't think about Americans' financial situation," Trump said.

No kidding.

Shoppers have been struggling since February, 2025, when Trump started his illegal tariffs program.

Those levies were not paid by foreign countries, as Trump claimed, but by American business, which promptly passed increased costs to consumers.

So the war in Iran – started by Trump but never adequately explained – was not the start of a spike in prices. It just made a bad situation worse.

How bad?

Average inflation rate for 2025 was 2.6 percent. Now it's higher than 3 percent.

Gasoline prices are up nearly 30 percent and more than \$1 a gallon in some places. Now many families have to decide whether to fill up the tank or buy groceries. Food is up, too, of course – more than 3 percent.

This is not what Trump promised on the campaign trail – he was going to bring down grocery prices on Day One, remember – but we learned long ago that the President has an uneasy relationship with truth.

Instead of bringing prices down, Trump went out of his way to send costs skyward – and then, as might have been expected, blamed the results on his predecessor, Joe Biden, who, it should be noted,

delivered to Trump the strongest post-covid economy in the world.

Instead of letting the good times roll and take all the credit, Trump indulged himself in a crazy tariffs scheme that he has believed – absurdly – for decades would produce untold wealth.

Surprise: It doesn't.

Then followed a bizarre sequence where Trump pouted about not being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and started a Mideast war with his pal, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

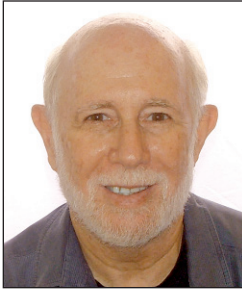
The two claimed they were stopping Iran from building a nuclear weapon, which, ironically, Iran had not been doing until Trump, in his first term, killed an Obama-era containment plan.

Advisors told Trump Iran likely would block the Strait of Hormuz through which passes 20 percent of the world's oil plus other vital goods like fertilizer to grow food and helium essential for computer chips. No matter. It was bombs away.

We know what happened next

Prices soared. The President shrugged. As Trump says, what does he care about the American consumer? ■

Jerry Morgan is a former Newsday business writer and member of Local 406-C.



Guest Spot

BY BRIAN BRYANT

Stronger Future – Together

To the proud members of the Printing Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America:

On behalf of the 600,000 members of the IAM Union, I want to welcome each of you as we take a historic step to bring our unions together.

First, I want to thank IAM/PPPWU International President Israel Castro, Secretary-Treasurer James Santangelo, the general board, district and local leaders, and the entire membership for your leadership, vision and commitment throughout this process.

Our focus has always been on securing the strongest future possible for IAM/PPPWU members, and that dedication helped make this partnership possible.

Our message is simple: A Stronger Future – Built Together.

For generations, PPPWU members have fought for better wages, benefits, working conditions, and respect on the job. You have built a proud union with a strong identity and a rich history of standing up for working people across North America. This affiliation honors that legacy while providing new opportunities and resources to strengthen it for years to come.

Just as important, this partnership preserves what makes the IAM/PPPWU unique.

Your leadership remains in place. Your autonomy is protected. Your assets remain yours. Your members gain the strength of the IAM Union while maintaining the identity and traditions that brought you to this moment.

Our unions already represent workers at many of the same employers. This partnership allows us to coordinate strategies, strengthen bargaining power and speak with a more unified voice when fighting for

the interests of working people.

From education and leadership development at the IAM Union's William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center to expanded bargaining, organizing, legal, communications, safety, legislative and strike support, IAM/PPPWU members now have immediate access to the full resources of the IAM Union.

At a time when corporations continue to grow larger and more powerful, workers must do the same. By bringing our unions together, we increase our collective strength, expand our voice at the bargaining table, and create new opportunities to organize, grow and win for working families.

This partnership is about solidarity. It is about workers standing together to build a better future for themselves, their families and the generations that follow. It is about recognizing that when we work together, we are poised to meet the challenges ahead and seize the opportunities before us.

To International President Castro, the General Board, and every IAM/PPPWU member: Thank you for your trust and partnership. The IAM Union is proud to stand with you, and we look forward to building an even stronger future together. ■

Brian Bryant is the 15th international president of IAM Union, formerly the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). In April, Bryant was appointed chair of the AFL-CIO's Legislative and Policy Committee.



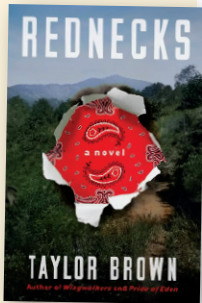
All the Best

Print

Rednecks

Taylor Brown

The West Virginia coal mine battles of 1920 and 1921 – the worst conflict in the United States since the Civil War – were ignited by fierce company resistance to union organizing. In his sharp and moving novel, Taylor Brown tells the story of the resolute “rednecks” (miners wore bright bandanas to show solidarity) who fought corporate titans in a heroic effort to secure better safety standards and fair treatment. Colorful characters – some drawn from real life – give the novel a sense of intimacy and Taylor's taut narrative is a reminder of how history can be altered by ordinary people dedicated to a noble cause. Bosses won in the short term but, over the years, the coal wars led to reforms that serve as lasting tribute to the rednecks of West Virginia. **St. Martin's Press (hardbound); St. Martin's Griffin (paperback). Prices vary.**



Video/Streaming

Ghostlight

Kelly O'Sullivan and Alex Thompson, directors

Dan Mueller is a construction worker who has seen better times. His teenage son, Brian, died recently in troubling fashion. Relations with his wife, Sharon, are tense. A teenage daughter, Daisy, is rebellious. Then comes the crusher: Dan sounds off at work one day and is put on leave. He doesn't mention the layoff to his family and, just when despair seems certain, Dan gets a break. Unlikely as it seems, he joins a local theater group doing, “Romeo and Juliet” – he's never heard of Shakespeare's classic – and finds that he has a surprising stage presence. The experience is transformative for Dan and as this small, sensitive film attests, life may have many acts, some tragic, some triumphant, just as Shakespeare said. **Streaming on Hulu and for rent on other platforms.**



Music

The Last Ship

Sting

Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner, the performer known as Sting, last month brought a newly adapted version of his 2014 musical, “The Last Ship,” to The Metropolitan Opera in New York – “a tribute to the people and place that shaped me,” he said. The musical celebrates the hearty shipyard workers left adrift when the industry was shattered by competitive forces and shifting global priorities. Sting's expanded, two-disc edition of the original cast album is powerful and poignant, a fitting and soulful tribute to honest labor and the often painful price of what some call progress. **A&M, 22.98 ebay**



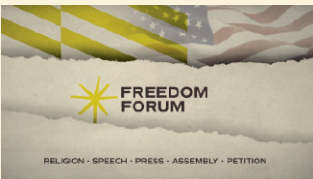
Internet

Freedom Forum

Freedomforum.org

Established 35 years ago by USA Today founder Al Neuharth, Freedom Forum

continues a resolute protector of First Amendment rights and its vibrant website delivers what amounts to a daily civics lesson. Posted recently were articles on government surveillance, threats to broadcast independence, and dismissal of a bogus Trump Administration lawsuit against the Wall Street Journal. A range of First Amendment experts add to the mix and there is a nifty feature that shows front pages from newspapers around the country. “Our vision is an America where everyone knows, values and defends the freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition,” says the Freedom Forum in a mission statement that ought to be endorsed by every American and recalled by those who would trample the nation's democratic norms and threaten free expression.



‘Victory for Both Unions’

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Lending support to the merger was AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, a major national labor movement leader.

Shuler hailed the dedication of Bryant and other IAM Union officials for serving as a “beacon” in the union movement and complimented PPPWU officers “for your leadership, for your activism and for your fight.”

There is “power in standing together,” Shuler said, and, in a brief interview with The Communicator, termed the PPPWU-IAM Union partnership a “good alliance” that would allow members of both unions to “win more at the bargaining table.”

Affiliation with IAM Union – known widely as the Machinists and renowned for its bargaining clout and political outreach – represents a new chapter in the history of the PPPWU, a labor organization that has survived for more than 100 years under various names and representing workers in a number of industries.

Predecessor unions include the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union (IPPAU), Amalgamated Lithographers Union (ALU), International Printing and Graphic Communications Union (IPGCU), the Graphic Arts International Union (GAIU), the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU). In 2005, a merger with the Teamsters in 2005 formed the GCC/IBT. Negotiated by George Tedeschi, former GCIU president and now PPPWU president emeritus, and former IBT General President James P. Hoffa, the agreement formed the Graphic Communications Conference of the IBT as an autonomous unit within the Teamster domain.

That merger worked well for the GCC and IBT, Tedeschi said. “We had an amicable relationship with them and President Hoffa.”

Hoffa and Tedeschi retired as Teamster officials in 2022 – Tedeschi was a vice



AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler hailed the PPPWU-IAM Union alliance and said both organizations would gain strength and “win more at the bargaining table” for union members.

president at large – and in the same year Sean M. O’Brien was elected top IBT officer. O’Brien’s administration soon sought changes in the merger agreement and demanded that the GCC/IBT surrender its independence or leave the Teamster fold.

GCC/IBT leaders refused to accommodate any attempt to undercut the union’s autonomy and challenged the Teamster edict.

While the GCC/IBT prevailed in court, general board members believed they could not trust the O’Brien administration to honor any future agreements.

By that time, the Teamsters already had launched a raiding campaign aimed at luring away PPPWU members.

Castro acknowledged that the Teamster experience had made PPPWU leadership wary about another merger.

Without a guarantee of independence, Castro and general board members said, there could be no alliance with the IAM or any other union.

Several merger partners were considered, Castro said – some urged immediate affiliation – but the IAM stood alone in giving PPPWU leaders time to do necessary research and make a careful consideration.

In months of discussion, Castro said, IAM leaders – Bryant, General Secretary-Treasurer Dora Cervantes, and others – proved themselves trustworthy and eager to join ranks with a union whose members work alongside IAM people in many plants.

“They have proven to me over this course of time that they are truly our brothers and sisters,” Castro said at the PPPWU

Continues on page 9



IAM Union’s Headquarters building in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, opened in 1992 and has been cited in Architecture magazine as a ‘veritable collage of machine images’ that ‘stands as a visible statement of what IAM members do for a living.’ PPPWU office operations will move to the building as part of the new PPPWU-IAM alliance. ‘This is a beautiful facility and we will be delighted to work side by side and in solidarity with our new partners,’ said PPPWU President Israel Castro.



Located on an inlet of the Patuxent River in southern Maryland, the William W. Winpisinger Education and Technology Center – known as the ‘W3’ – demonstrates the commitment of IAM Union to membership training. A wide curriculum is available to union members in areas of organizing, collective bargaining, communications, and arbitration. The facility is named for former International President William W. Winpisinger who believed it was important that members come together in a pleasant setting to gain knowledge and share ideas. At a recent W3 women’s conference, the PPPWU was represented by Linde Shaw, DC-3 secretary-treasurer, and Maggie Peck, executive director of The Members Retirement Fund. ‘The center was a space where women shared knowledge, discussed challenges, successes, and showed support for one another through both tears and laughter,’ Shaw said. Sessions at the Winpisinger facility were inspiring and productive, Peck said. ‘They equipped me with valuable tools, helpful resources, and meaningful relationships and friendships that I can rely on in my work every day.’

convention in Hanover, Maryland. “They have been there for our union.”

There would be no repeat of the Teamster debacle, he said.

“What happened with the previous partner is not this partner,” Castro told delegates. PPPWU officials had “double-checked and triple checked” every aspect of a merger proposal to make certain of the IAM’s intentions and integrity. They soon became convinced. “I believe in the IAM.” Castro said.

IAM’s respect for merger partners is evident in the appointment of Bryant as international president in 2024 following the retirement of former chief executive Robert Martinez Jr., PPPWU officials said.

Formerly a pipefitter at Bath Iron Works in Maine, Bryant is the first IAM chief executive to come from a union – the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America (IUMSWA) – that merged with the IAM.

“And that matters to me,” Bryant told delegates. “It matters to me personally. Because I know what it feels like when members wonder what comes next.”

Assured that the IAM was a suitable match, PPPWU board members late last year voted unanimously to call a special convention necessary to authorize a vote of the rank-and-file.

The convention, at the Live! Hotel in Hanover, Maryland, brought together PPPWU leaders from around the country who, in speeches and side conversations, conveyed a sense of enthusiasm and reflected the convention theme of, “A Stronger Future – Built Together.”

“What you’re trying to build here is make us a force to be reckoned with and you’d have to be crazy not to do it,” said Christopher Sclafani, a delegate from Local 1-L, New York.

Joe Inemer, president of Local 16-N, Philadelphia, added his voice.

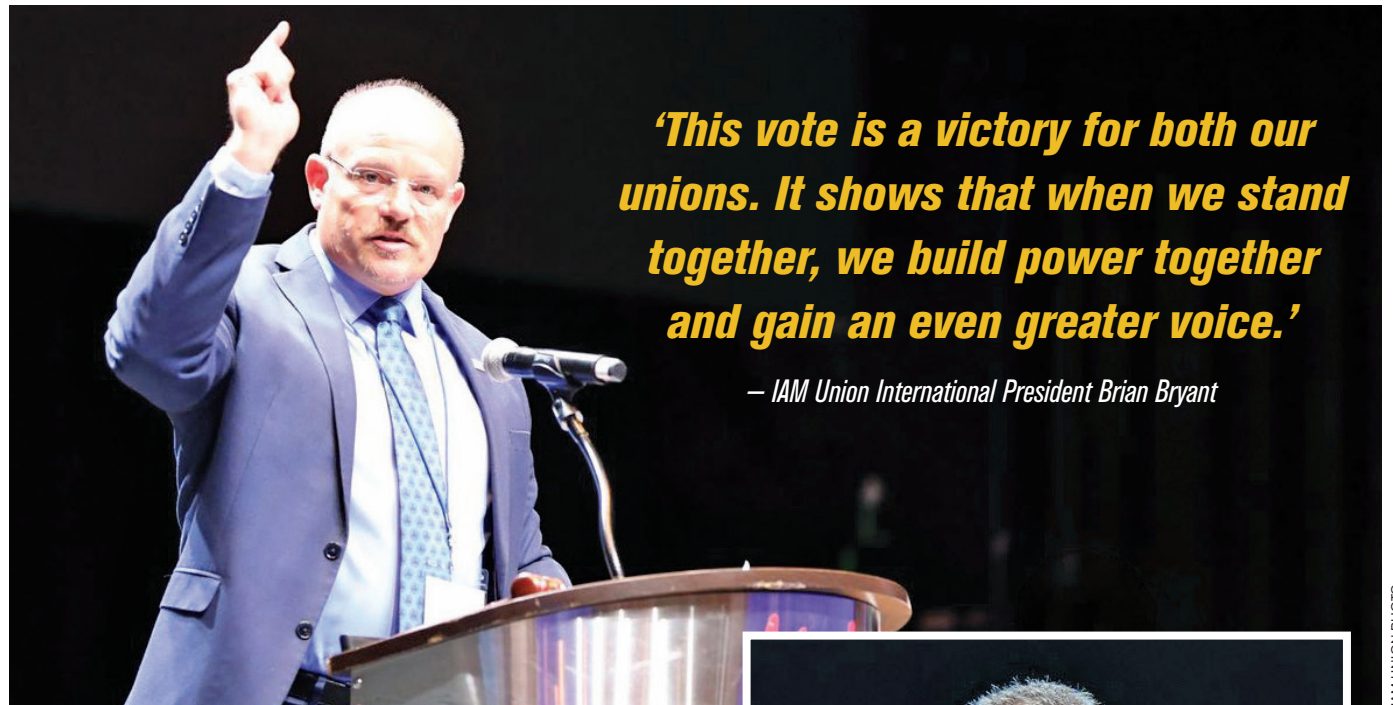
“I support this merger 100 percent and we’ll do our best to get the vote out,” Inemer said.

Ken Roberts, of Local 577-M, Milwaukee-Madison, said the IAM had worked diligently to make PPPWU members feel part of a larger family – a stark contrast, he said, to the PPPWU’s previous merger partner.

IAM Union officials unfailingly showed a spirit of fellowship and camaraderie. “These guys are like roommates,” he said.

At one point in the convention, Cervantes told PPPWU delegates, “You are home.”

Partnership with the IAM brings a host of advantages for the PPPWU – educational opportunities, legal assistance, financial input, organizing support and political influence, leaders said. The IAM has eight lobbyists on Capitol Hill and Bryant recently has been appointed chair of the AFL-CIO Legislative and Policy Committee, a major post – especially relevant because the PPPWU now rejoins the

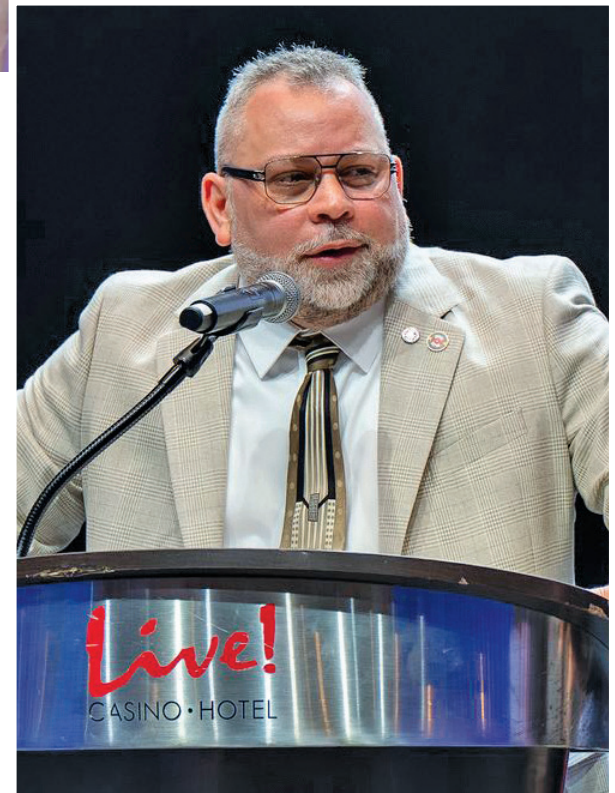


‘This vote is a victory for both our unions. It shows that when we stand together, we build power together and gain an even greater voice.’

– IAM Union International President Brian Bryant

‘We have protected our independence and joined forces with one of the most prominent unions in North America.’

– PPPWU President Israel Castro



PPPWU President Israel Castro

AFL-CIO, a benefit lost when the Teamsters withdrew from the labor coalition in 2005.

Cost savings also will be substantial because of the merger, according to PPPWU officers.

PPPWU Secretary-Treasurer James Santangelo said IAM will provide rent-free office space at its Upper Marlboro headquarters and contribute significantly to operating costs by covering the salaries and benefits of the PPPWU president and a certain number of office staff members, international representatives and organizers.

Benefit to the PPPWU would be significant enough to cover any per capita increase associated with the merger for two years, Santangelo said. “To me, the choice is clear,” Santangelo said.

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IMPORTANT MERGER PROVISIONS BENEFIT PPPWU

Affiliation with IAM Union brings a host of advantages for the PPPWU and its members. Here is a rundown of important merger provisions:

- IAM provides office space at no cost and a number of staff salaries will be covered by IAM Union.
- Associated savings will offset the IAM per capita tax for two years and likely reduce it in the third year and beyond.
- Access to IAM Union services, including communications, organizing, legal, safety and health, legislative and programs for women and veterans.
- Opportunities to attend training, classes and courses at the William W. Winpisinger Technology & Education Center at no cost. College credit for certain courses.
- Renewed affiliation with AFL-CIO.



- Scholarship program and reduced cost college programs.
- Employee Assistance Programs, including those for drug addiction.
- Access to the IAM defense fund.
- Strike payments of at least \$200 and up to \$250 per week.
- PPPWU retains autonomy of its locals and district councils.
- Incumbent officers and general board members will continue to maintain exclusive authority to govern the affairs of PPPWU, as per its constitution.
- The funds and assets of the PPPWU, its district councils and locals remain the property of the PPPWU and its affiliates.

A Common Commitment

continued from PAGE 9

The IAM is widely known for a commitment to education and highly respected classes at the large William W. Winpisinger Education & Technology Center in Hollywood, Maryland, named for a former president and known as the “W3.”

Several PPPWU members and officials already have attended sessions at the center and in a video report said the learning atmosphere was invigorating and the mood cordial and supportive.

“There was a real sense of belonging,” said Maggie Peck, executive director of The Members Retirement Plan who also assists in PPPWU social media outreach. Linde Shaw, DC-3 secretary-treasurer, said her experience at the W3 provided “insight” and perspective.

Common to both unions, leaders said, is a commitment to increase membership through aggressive organizing – a theme often sounded by Castro.

Cervantes said IAM Union has “an army of organizers out there kicking butts every day” and Bryant told delegates there was an existential need to build ranks – and that he was committed to the task.

“Organizing is not optional anymore,” Bryant said. “It is survival. The labor movement cannot shrink and expect to win. We have to grow.”

In opening remarks to delegates at what he called a “historic” convention, Castro also underlined the need to boost membership especially, he said, at time when President Donald Trump and Republicans on Capitol Hill have created a “climate” hostile to organized labor.

Despite political opposition, he said, the union movement and PPPWU “have extraordinary opportunities at this moment – opportunities to stand up and show people what we stand for,” he said.

For the PPPWU, that meant joining forces with a larger, international organization that offers strength, aid and solidarity.

‘You are home.’

– Dora Cervantes,
IAM General
Secretary-Treasurer



IAM UNION PHOTO



IAM UNION PHOTO

PPPWU officials said they had been treated with dignity and respect in all discussions with IAM Union leaders including General Secretary-Treasurer Dora Cervantes who addressed delegates at the PPPWU special convention. ‘I believe in the IAM,’ said PPPWU President Israel Castro.

To generate support for the alliance, PPPWU leaders held regional meetings before the June vote – in Atlantic City and Milwaukee – and urged officials to engage with members, answer questions and provide information on the IAM Union partnership.

Aligning with the IAM was a means of “building power” and forging a “real path to continue our 100-year history,” Castro said at the convention.

Eddie Williams, president of Local 527-M, Atlanta, echoed the remarks of delegates who, in high spirits, left Maryland with what many described as a sense of relief, excitement and optimism.

“This is one of the best moves we’ve ever made,” Williams said. “I’ll be a proud member of the IAM. I feel part of them already.” ■

PPPWU ‘Delighted’ to Aid Guide Dog Effort

Sometimes, solidarity shows up wagging a tail.

In 1948, IAM Union – previously, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers – helped found what now is Guide Dogs of America - Tender Loving Canines in response to the needs of a retired union member afflicted with blindness.

The union continues to raise millions annually for the organization through donations and fund-raising events including golf tournaments, car shows and galas.

“Guide Dogs of America - Tender Loving Canines embodies the very best of what solidarity looks like in action,” said IAM Union International President Brian Bryant. “The IAM Union’s charity of choice changes lives every day by providing highly trained service dogs to veterans, children with autism, and individuals who are blind or visually impaired – all at no cost to those who need them.”

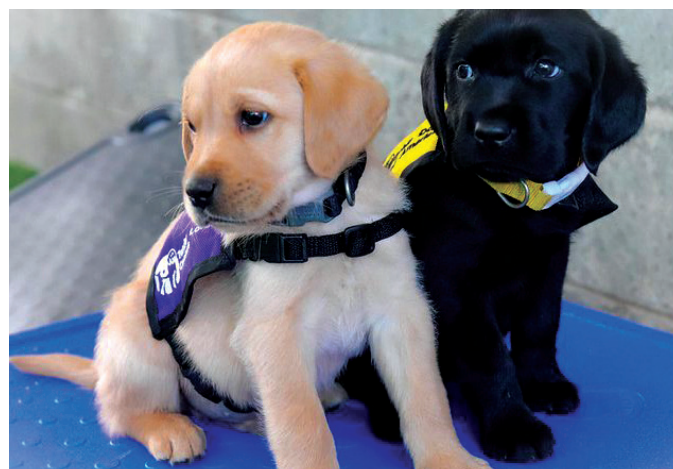
Representatives of the guide dog organization – accompanied by a well-behaved Golden Lab – addressed PPPWU special convention delegates at IAM Union headquarters in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, and later PPPWU members and locals pledged more than \$7,000 for Guide Dogs of America - Tender Loving Canines.

“We are delighted to join IAM Union in supporting this important work and hope to continue in the future,” said PPPWU President Israel Castro.

Guide Dogs of America - Tender Loving Canines breed, raise and train Labrador Retrievers, German Shepherds and Golden Retrievers on a 7.5-acre campus in Sylmar, California. “Our highly skilled canines become trusted companions that increase confidence, mobility, and independence,” the organization said in a website statement.

Bryant said IAM Union remains deeply dedicated to the guide dog cause.

“The IAM Union is proud to support this life-changing mission and the incredible independence, confidence, and companionship these dogs provide,” he said. “Together, we are helping ensure more people have the support they need to live, work and thrive.” ■



GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

NEWSDAY EDITORIAL STAFFERS APPROVE CONTRACT CALLED 'ONE OF THE BEST IN YEARS'

Newsday editorial and electronic pre-press technicians overwhelmingly ratified long-term contracts that gained significant wage and benefit improvements without concessionary givebacks.

"These are by far two of the best contracts we've gotten in a very, very long time and they're five-year deals, which is huge these days," said Mike LaSpina, president of Local 406-C, Long Island.

The agreements – covering reporters, copy editors, librarians, multi-media, digital and other personnel – include wage increases over five years, \$1,200 signing bonus, two additional personal holidays and stronger language dealing with byline protection.

Electronic pre-press is a small, separate 406-C bargaining unit representing technicians who prepare digital files and images for production. Pre-press members won contract improvements consistent with those of editorial staff members.

"And the biggest thing is that this was not concessionary bargaining – we gave absolutely nothing back," LaSpina said.

LaSpina credits the negotiations committee as doing an "outstanding job." It included Zachary Dowdy, Deborah Morris, Nick Spangler, Judy Weinberg, Barry Hooghkirk and Don Salvitti.

Local leaders hailed the cooperative approach of Newsday ownership and a management team that continues to support the newspaper even as many U.S. dailies falter.

"All is great," LaSpina said.

HOOP DREAMS COME TRUE IN CHI AND WITH SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY

Leaders of 415-S, Chicago, said they were excited to revive the local's summer basketball tournament as a way to build solidarity after a challenging period.

Officials are planning a program with 8-12 teams, referees, food, and a trophy that will be held each year by the victorious tournament team.

With 415-S preparing to emerge from trusteeship after more than a year, the tournament signifies renewed focus on solidarity and the importance of cooperation between the local's seven bargaining units, according to PPPWU organizer Pedro Olguin.

Since appointment as the local's trustee in November, Olguin has formed an advisory board to provide a forum for unit officials to express concerns and conducted training sessions on contract enforcement and organizing. Now he is bringing back basketball.

"It's played out really well where members of each shop are better able to advocate for themselves," said Olguin.

Renewing the basketball program was a way to reinforce the spirit of unity.

"There was this sense of nostalgia about when things were really good with a lot of camaraderie," Olguin said. "They needed to get that back – and part of bringing it back is the basketball tournament."

Building friendships and providing a summer activity seemed a worthy enterprise.

"It's a way of keeping people involved during the summer and keeping in touch with their unit," Olguin said. "You can build community around grievances and contracts. But there's added value of building community by getting to know each other outside of work."



SUPARTINI PARTINI VIA DISPLATE.COM AND GOOGLE IMAGES

Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your PPPWU local has been involved in organizing efforts, community outreach or volunteer work, e-mail a brief summary to reporter Dawn Hobbs at dawnhobbs@cox.net or call 805-284-5351.

PPPWU WOMEN ATTEND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AT IAM EDUCATIONAL CENTER

Two PPPWU colleagues discovered a new support system and expanded their leadership skills at a recent IAM Women's Leadership Program.

The event, at IAM Union's Winpisinger Education and Technology Center in Hollywood, Maryland, drew 50 participants from around the country, including Linde Shaw, DC-3 secretary-treasurer, and Maggie Peck, executive director of The Members Retirement Fund.

"I was honored to have been chosen to attend,"

Shaw said. "The center was a space where women shared knowledge, discussed challenges, successes, and showed support for one another through both tears and laughter."

More than workplace issues were discussed, Shaw said.

"Also the everyday life challenges we face," she said. "The support there was very impressive. You gain knowledge, but also you feel like you belong to something very important. You leave knowing you have a very big support system behind you."

The program assists those already in union leadership positions and others intending to become more involved at the local level.

The popular IAM class had been filled for some time but PPPWU President Israel Castro was able to reserve spots for Shaw and Peck.

"Women bring unique perspectives and it's important to get them involved more in the union – from stewards to higher leadership positions," Castro said. "It expands our reach and brings in a different voice."

Peck said the experience at the Winpisinger Center – also known as the "W3" – was timely and productive.

"In view of the PPPWU and IAM merger, President Castro believes we should take advantage of opportunities available to all PPPWU members because of our new partnership," Peck said.

Classes at the W3 took a practical approach, she said.

"They equipped me with valuable tools, helpful resources, and meaningful relationships and friendships that I can rely on in my work every day."

The Winpisinger Center – built in 1980 and named for a former IAM president – offers a variety of classes on negotiation, organizing topics, human rights, politics and legislation.

A schedule can be found at W3IAM.org



Attending a women's leadership program at the IAM Union Winpisinger educational center were PPPWU officials Maggie Peck, executive director of The Members Retirement Fund, far left, and DC-3 Secretary-Treasurer Linde Shaw, far right. Extending a welcome were Dee Colbert, IAM Women's and Young Workers director, second left; Julie Fritchen, Winpisinger director, third left; and, General Secretary-Treasurer Dora Cervantes, second right.

VACATION TIME RESTORED AFTER DC-3 ACTION TO 'FIGHT AND WIN'

District Council 3 officials took action recently to assist four union members who accepted voluntary temporary layoffs to help co-workers and faced loss of vacation time as a result of their good deed.

The four PPPWU workers at Printing Service Company of Miamisburg

accepted time off to aid employees who could not afford to take company-imposed temporary layoffs, according to Dean Richardson, president of DC-3.

The company, with a 21-member workforce, originally said it would restore full vacation time for the PPPWU members but reneged on the promise.

"We felt it was unfair and took the grievance to arbitration," Richardson said.

An arbitrator sustained the union's grievance and ruled that the company must restore vacation time for the four workers.

"There are no guarantees in arbitration," Richardson said, "but when we fight, we win."



Miembros PPPWU dan visto bueno a fusión con IAM

Fred Bruning
The Communicator

Los miembros del sindicato Printing, Packaging & Production Workers Union of North America votaron el mes pasado a favor de fusionarse con el sindicato IAM, que cuenta con 600,000 integrantes, poniendo fin a cuatro años de incertidumbre tras la abrupta decisión de la International Brotherhood of Teamsters de echar por tierra la alianza que formaba el GCC/IBT, predecesor del PPPWU.

La votación —realizada en junio mediante voto electrónico— incorpora al PPPWU y a sus más de 15,000 miembros activos en Estados Unidos y Canadá al terrendo del Sindicato IAM, una de las principales organizaciones sindicales del país, primero como filial y, en dos años, como socio totalmente fusionado como Distrito P1 del IAM/PPPWU.

El presidente del PPPWU, Israel Castro, y el Presidente internacional del Sindicato IAM, Brian Bryant, saludaron la victoria como un acontecimiento histórico que garantizaría la autonomía del PPPWU al tiempo que permitiría el tipo de cooperación y solidaridad que sin duda beneficiarían a ambos sindicatos.

«Hemos protegido nuestra independencia y unido fuerzas con uno de los sindicatos más destacados de Norteamérica», declaró Castro. «Y hemos demostrado a quienes pensaban que nos doblegaríamos ante la presión

que aquí está el PPPWU y no se larga: fuerte, orgulloso y unido.»

Al dar la bienvenida al PPPWU en un congreso especial celebrado en mayo, mismo que allanó el camino para la votación de las bases el mes pasado, Bryant celebró el espíritu de propósito común, respeto y apoyo mutuo que condujo a un resultado electoral positivo.

«Esta votación es una victoria para los dos sindicatos», declaró Bryant. «Demuestra que cuando nos mantenemos unidos, concretamos juntos el poder y conseguimos una voz aún mayor.»

La presidente de la AFL-CIO, Liz Shuler, una de las principales líderes del movimiento sindical nacional, apoyó la fusión.

Shuler alabó la dedicación de Bryant y otros funcionarios del sindicato IAM por servir de «modelo» en el movimiento sindical y felicitó a los funcionarios del PPPWU «por su liderazgo, activismo y lucha».

La afiliación al sindicato IAM — conocido ampliamente como los Mecánicos de precisión y famoso por su peso negociador y su alcance político— representa un nuevo capítulo en la historia del PPPWU, un organismo sindical que ha sobrevivido durante más de 100 años bajo diversos nombres y representando a trabajadores de varias industrias.

En 2005, George Tedeschi, expresidente de la GCIU y ahora presidente emérito del PPPWU, y el expresidente general de la IBT, James P. Hoffa, negociaron un

acuerdo que constituyó la Conferencia de Comunicaciones Gráficas de la IBT como unidad autónoma dentro del terreno de los Teamsters.

Esa fusión funcionó bien para el GCC (por sus siglas en inglés) y la IBT, dijo Tedeschi. «Teníamos una relación amistosa con ellos y con el presidente Hoffa.»

Hoffa y Tedeschi se jubilaron como funcionarios de los Teamsters en 2022 —Tedeschi era vicepresidente independiente— y en ese mismo año Sean M. O'Brien fue elegido máximo responsable de la IBT. La administración de O'Brien no tardó en buscar cambios en el acuerdo de fusión y exigió que el GCC/IBT o renunciara a su independencia o abandonara el redil de los Teamsters.

Los dirigentes de GCC/IBT se negaron a aceptar cualquier intento de socavar la autonomía del sindicato y desafiaron el edicto de los Teamsters.

Aunque el GCC/IBT se impuso en los procesos judiciales que siguieron, el consejo general decidió abandonar los Teamsters y formar el PPPWU al considerar que no podía confiar en que el gobierno de O'Brien cumpliera ningún acuerdo futuro.

Para entonces, los Teamsters ya habían lanzado una campaña de redadas destinada a engatusar a los miembros del PPPWU.

Castro reconoció que la experiencia con los Teamsters había hecho recelar a la dirección del PPPWU sobre otra fusión.

Sin una garantía de independencia, dijeron Castro y los miembros del consejo general, no podría haber alianza con la IAM ni con ningún otro sindicato.

Se consideraron varios socios para la fusión, dijo Castro —algunos instaron a la afiliación inmediata— pero la IAM fue la única que les dio tiempo a los líderes del PPPWU para hacer la investigación necesaria y sopesar las opciones con cautela.

A lo largo de meses de conversaciones, dijo Castro, los líderes de la IAM —Bryant, la Secretaria general Dora Cervantes, y otros— demostraron ser dignos de confianza y deseosos de unir filas con un sindicato cuyos miembros trabajan junto a la gente de la IAM en muchas fábricas.

«Me han demostrado a lo largo de este trascurso de tiempo que son verdaderamente nuestros hermanos y hermanas», dijo Castro en el congreso del PPPWU en Hanover, Maryland. «Nuestro sindicato ha podido contar con ellos.»

El congreso especial celebrado en el Hotel Live! de Hanover, Maryland, reunió a dirigentes del PPPWU de todo el país que, en discursos y conversaciones paralelas, transmitieron entusiasmo y reflejaron el objetivo del acontecimiento: «Concretamos juntos un futuro más fuerte».

«Lo que intentan aquí es convertirnos en una fuerza a tener en cuenta y tendrían que estar locos para no hacerlo», afirmó Christopher Scalfani, delegado del Local 1-L de Nueva York.

BIPARTISAN PUSH CONTINUES FOR LAW SPEEDING FIRST CONTRACTS

New York senator Kirsten Gillibrand, an influential union advocate, is pushing for passage of the Faster Labor Contracts Act to aid families struggling under ill-advised White House economic schemes and President Donald Trump's "full-frontal assault" on organized labor.

"Everything from groceries to gas costs more now than it did before President Trump took office, and American workers are feeling the pinch," Gillibrand said in recent comments.

Gillibrand, an upstate Democrat in her third term, said the Faster Labor Contracts Act, passed last month by the House, is "critical" to providing better pay and benefits to workers who have voted to unionize but often face lengthy delays before attaining a first contract.

If gaining Senate approval and enacted, the legislation – endorsed by the PPPWU and a wide range of labor organizations including IAM Union – would demand that initial contract negotiations begin within 10 days of a union request and provide for mediation after 90 days of stalled talks and arbitration after approximately 120 days.

The initiative has bipartisan backing.

It was introduced last year in the Senate by Cory Booker (D-New Jersey) and Josh Hawley (R-Missouri.) Sponsors in the House were Rep. Donald Norcross (D-New Jersey) and Pete Stauber (R-Minnesota). Backers are pushing for passage in this legislative session though the bill has yet to be scheduled for a vote.

PPPWU President Israel Castro said the legislation addresses a common problem.

"Management often tries to delay negotiations as a way of breaking worker morale and union credibility," Castro said. "At the



Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand

PPPWU, we have had great success in bringing employers to the table in timely fashion but we welcome the effort to pass the Faster Labor Contracts Act and encourage its speedy passage."

IAM Union President Brian Bryant expressed a similar view. "Securing a first contract is perhaps the most important part of collective bargaining – and it is also often the hardest," Bryant said. "Employers know they can drag their feet and demoralize workers. This Faster Labor Contracts Act changes that dynamic by making union-busting employers actually come to the table."

In Memoriam

Listed here are members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact The Communicator.

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death	455T Eugene R Fleming	11-11-23	25M Jerry K Reisinger	01-24-24	999ML Barbara Sams	01-28-24	
Death Benefit Claims Paid				458M Eric D Davis	12-14-23	25M Michael J Spivey, Sr	01-07-24	4535M Billy Wirzberg	11-11-22	
January 2024				458M Richard Deck	12-24-23	25M Norbert P Veldhaus	01-31-24	6505M Robert J Clow	12-03-22	
1B Gary D Flug	11-20-23	503M George T Watkins	10-03-23	458M Darel H Forest	09-20-23	25M Frederick Watson	01-25-24	Death Benefit Claims Paid		
1B Jeanne F Manseau	11-18-23	503M James H Fortin	06-27-23	458M Charles M Fortunato	12-03-23	25M Walter T Williams	07-13-23	April 2024		
1B Patricia A Uhl	10-07-23	503M Kenneth L Furman	11-30-23	458M Thomas P Frank	11-17-23	72C Richard J Haberland	05-31-23	1M Arnold R Bialke	11-15-23	
1L Alexander M Alison III	10-08-23	503M Gerald M Hayes	10-11-22	458M Willie L Massenburg, Jr	10-25-23	77P Dale F Dewildt	01-20-24	1M Philip G Harvey	02-21-24	
1L Thomas J Brannan	01-08-22	503M Walter I Liebler Jr	08-19-23	458M James E Norstrom	12-03-23	77P Charles E Otto	10-31-23	4B Weldon T Morris, Sr	11-21-23	
1L David P Shackett	11-19-23	503M Edward J Lincalis	10-16-23	458M Raymond J Randall	01-03-24	77P William Stoffregen	01-19-24	14M Gary G Moss	02-21-24	
1M James Darrel Ensign	10-17-23	503M Charles F Mckay	11-02-23	458M Jose R Santillan	12-01-23	77P Orville R Wohlrabe	01-04-24	14M Shykir S Prewitt Gantt	02-08-24	
1M Gerald W Larson	11-12-23	514M Laura M Davis	12-03-23	503M Frank G Gengo	08-02-23	100M Frederick W Bell	12-23-23	24M James E Green	03-09-24	
1M Robert E Wathke	11-15-23	555M Luc Drouin	11-07-23	503M Lewis E Hyde Jr	09-30-23	100M Paul Sanchioni	11-04-23	24M Charles L Ludloff Jr	01-28-24	
2N Raymond J Bushley	11-12-23	555M David C Mason	11-16-23	514M Mary L Carrell	12-13-23	117T Phyllis A Brotherton	12-25-23	24M Joan D Skiles	03-03-24	
2N William R Oneil	11-09-23	555M Jean C Rivet	11-22-23	514M Robert G Lang	12-04-23	117T Larry W Earlywine	01-11-24	25M Lucille Allen	03-25-19	
2N Robert F Rusinek	05-07-23	577M Ronald H Hinz	11-24-23	527M Hettie H Elliott	12-12-23	206T Dallas G Mccalvy	11-20-23	25M Bernard M Bocian	02-28-24	
3N Donald L Parents	06-07-22	577M Garland Thompson	11-17-23	543M Gary Van Gundy	12-16-23	285M Gordon E Barnes	07-27-23	25M Gary W Chism	01-26-24	
3N William J Rosa, Sr	11-27-23	625S Norman O Paradis	11-21-23	555M Rene Corbeil	11-17-23	285M James M Proctor	12-31-23	25M Charles W Marrs	02-22-24	
4B George D Johnson	10-14-23	999ML Louise Cooper	11-09-23	555M Mario Cousineau	11-10-23	355T Ronald E Llewellyn	06-22-23	25M Walter Philpot	10-03-23	
14M Joseph B Alberici	11-24-23	999ML Charles R Haley	09-28-23	555M Jean-Guy Lebel	11-14-22	388M Jerry O Mccerrin	11-09-23	72C Alvernia A Beasley	02-23-24	
14M Joseph J Finnerty	11-24-23	999ML Robert E Parlee	11-10-23	555M Pierre Primeau	01-03-24	455T Vernon W Jones	12-09-23	77P James J Bednarowski	02-26-24	
14M Robert Huffman Jr	10-15-23	6505M Harold V Kellermann	11-04-23	555M Pierre Tremblay	11-29-23	458M Joseph V Bialko	01-08-24	77P Richard C Wyngaard	02-24-24	
14M Josephine E Parks	11-17-23	6505M Jill D Trice	04-17-23	577M Warren S Kindt	12-12-23	458M Ralph J Fries	12-22-23	119B James W Anderson	02-28-24	
14M Nicholas A Reiter	08-25-23	6505M Lonabee J Worley	11-02-23	577M Ronald E Muth Jr	12-27-23	458M John J Garrison	12-17-23	235M Charles R Rusher	02-05-24	
14M Richard W Toogood, Sr	11-30-23	Death Benefit Claims Paid			577M Edward G Nieskes	12-16-23	458M Eva B Giba	11-29-23	235M Leon Simmons	02-20-24
16N Charles F Parker	11-28-23	February 2024			735S Theresa A Melnick	12-01-23	458M Richard L Harpling	02-10-24	388M David C Allen	12-18-23
17M David W Decker	11-15-23	1B Frank J Aguirre	12-20-23	853T Dennis L Gareis, Sr	12-09-23	458M Kenneth R Huege	02-06-24	458M Ronald E Ericksen	02-15-24	
17M Thurlow D Hay	12-12-23	1B Donna M Kotval	11-14-23	853T Oscar H Otterbeck, Jr	05-10-23	458M Howard W Mclean	12-16-16	458M Robert A Kolasa	03-02-24	
25M Virginia M Bragg	11-28-23	1L Charles W Lehr Jr	01-02-24	999ML Gerald R Sullivan	10-18-23	458M Melvin Nowaczky	01-30-24	458M James K Malloy	03-07-24	
25M Clarence W Heidenberger	11-13-23	1L Charles Ludwig	09-14-23	999ML Thomas D Calmes	01-20-24	458M John H O'Shaughnessy	01-18-24	458M Russell A Nykaza	01-16-24	
25M Joseph W La Fleur	11-27-23	1L Lawrence J Mccginn Jr	12-04-23	999ML Eldon E Geist	12-10-23	458M John V Rayford	12-14-23	458M Charles W Penders, Sr	02-28-24	
25M Jerry F Lee	11-06-23	1L Raymond J Wilk, Sr	12-15-23	999ML Arlin E Grobengieser	12-18-23	458M Anton Valent	02-13-24	458M Daniel Robaczewski	02-11-24	
25M Gerald H Niehaus	10-05-23	1L Jerry D Woodruff	12-20-23	999ML Donald E Remillard	12-31-23	458M Klaus-Peter Wrehde	01-07-24	458M Melvin I Shapiro	03-02-24	
25M Raymond M Phillips	10-26-23	2N Norman V Siejakowski	10-11-23	4535M Terence W Mann	11-09-23	458M Robert E Yetter	12-05-23	458M Carl R Ulrich	03-06-24	
25M Joseph V Randall	11-03-23	4C Joseph R Mansfield Jr	12-07-23	4535M Mary E Pulpan	11-05-23	458M Armin C Zimmermann	12-24-23	518M Stephen L Backus	11-29-23	
25M Clifton Sebastian, Jr	11-02-23	14M Arthur Carrado	12-20-23	6505M Thomas L Allen	12-26-23	503M Michael H Conway	01-09-24	527M Willie James Parker	01-13-24	
25M Richard A Stefan	11-30-23	14M Peter M Germani, Jr	12-16-23	Death Benefit Claims Paid			503M Carl K Elieff	01-27-23	527M Carl Leroy Webb	01-07-24
72C Walter Winfield, Jr	12-06-23	14M Frank E Martin	11-03-23	March 2024			503M Paul D Mattice, Sr	01-04-24	568M William B Pfeifer	02-14-24
77P Gail C Jones	11-09-23	17M James R Castor	06-22-23	1B Steven L Boren	11-16-23	514M Carol A Egmer	10-26-23	572T Robert G Rehnstrom	12-26-23	
77P Richard A Miller	11-04-23	24M Frank J Balkovec	01-09-24	1B Goldene F Mondragon	11-30-23	518M Sally J Munz	01-07-24	577M James H Borchert	06-14-19	
137C Stephen A Gavrish	08-12-23	24M Paul F Gallagher, Sr	12-26-23	1L John A Kerimian	01-29-24	527M Mae A Lockwood	11-22-23	577M Gordon E Mrozinski	12-25-24	
137C Michael J Holdredge	11-17-23	25M Gary H Ball	12-31-23	1L Anthony J Lasalle	02-14-24	543M Wilber M Bechtolt	01-19-24	612M Clayton C Record Jr	01-13-24	
235M John A Ferguson	12-02-23	25M Mattie P Clark Polston	11-17-23	1L Joseph S Reitz Jr	01-02-24	555M Joseph Antoine Barade	04-15-23	612M Sebastien Tones	11-02-23	
235M Ronald L Meyer, Sr	12-02-23	25M Delbert L Heitzman	01-01-24	1M Jonathan G Guilmant	12-17-23	555M Gerald E Doucet	01-18-24	612M Florence R Zaborsky	12-31-13	
285M Edward C Owen	09-24-23	25M Delbert L Heitzman	01-01-24	1M Bruce F Krieg	11-23-23	555M Jacqueline Doyle	07-06-23	853T James E Stuart	12-14-23	
329C James K Peters	11-07-23	25M Stanley J Mazak	01-10-24	1M Jerge M Schoecheert	04-03-22	555M Nicole Lanoue	01-29-24	999ML Cletus J Koester	02-24-24	
406C Stephen T Schaefer	01-31-22	25M Gerald L Pearl	11-28-23	1M Reine Marie Lefebvre	12-27-23	555M Carmel J Mercier	01-28-24			
458M Robert Collins	11-20-23	25M Michael L Ranney, Sr	01-01-24	1M Thomas R Stano	12-12-23	555M Michel Angelo Petruccio	10-31-23			
458M David H Eichler	07-11-23	25M Lance M Sandy	01-12-24	3N James F Burns Jr	07-04-23	568M Donald E Bush	07-02-23			
458M Anthony J Quick	11-18-23	25M William A South	12-05-23	3N Paul B Hannisian	12-21-23	568M Roland R Kuhlman	01-19-24			
		25M Charles P Spalding	12-07-23	14M Stephen E Mcfaul Sr	01-26-24					

Jerry Cartwright: Tireless Worker, Distinguished Career

Gerald Lee “Jerry” Cartwright, who served for more than 40 years as an international representative for the IPPAU, GCIU and GCC/IBT and was known for unfailing commitment to the welfare of union members and their families, died May 17 at his home in Apple Valley, Minnesota. He was 90.

Traveling widely to meet the needs of a demanding schedule, Cartwright kept a rigorous pace until retirement in 2006 at age 70. “My work is my life,” he said, according to family members.

After Cartwright retired, the GCC/IBT general board praised him for “being instrumental in improving the lives of his union sisters and brothers during his most distinguished career.”

Steven Cartwright, one of Cartwright’s four sons, said his father often was on the road – gone during the week and home on weekends – but provided love and direction for his children that still guide their lives.

“His boys miss him,” Cartwright said.

Born July 5, 1935, in Wellsville, Ohio, Cartwright began his print industry career in April 1957 as an apprentice at an envelope plant covered by the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants’ Union (IPPAU).

He rose through union ranks and served as president of IPPAU Local 638 from January, 1959, until appointed international representative in December, 1966.

Cartwright continued in that capacity when the IPPAU merged with the Graphic Arts International Union (GAIU) in 1983 to form the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU) and in 2005 when the GCIU and Teamsters merged to create the GCC/IBT.

Earlier in Cartwright’s union career, he helped found the Tri-State District Joint Council for Eastern Ohio, Western

Pennsylvania, and Northern West Virginia and was elected council president in March 1962. He served as southern representative for the North American Council of Specialty Unions, president of the Southern Conference of Specialty Unions and president of the Eastern Conference of Specialty Unions.

Viewed as an especially able and diligent union professional, Cartwright managed union conventions from 1968-2004.

“He was smart, motivated and very efficient,” said George Tedeschi, former president of the GCIU and GCC/IBT and now PPPWU president emeritus, who knew Cartwright for many years. “You could be sure Jerry would get the job done.”

When IPPAU President Sol Fishko had a difficult assignment he handed it to Cartwright and another top official, Chuck Ellington, Tedeschi said. “Jerry and Ellington were great friends and colleagues.”

Tedeschi recalled Cartwright as a person with particular flair – a tall, lanky man with red hair and a red beard who dressed impeccably and with style. “He was a colorful kind of guy,” Tedeschi said. Even in retirement, Cartwright remained a vivid character, Tedeschi said. “He went skydiving when he was around 70 and sent pictures.”



Gerald Lee ‘Jerry’ Cartwright

“Why?”
“Because I’m going to the Super Bowl with my four boys.”

The New Orleans Saints beat the Indianapolis Colts 31-17 and – thanks to Dad – the four Cartwright sons were there to see it with their father.

Jerry Cartwright is survived by his wife, Sheryl Sailo; sons, Jeffrey of Monroe, Georgia, Kevin of Newton Falls, Ohio, Steven of Citrus Springs, Florida, Jerry of Wellsville, Ohio; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

Bryant Named to Legislative Post

IAM Union International President Brian Bryant has been appointed chair of the AFL-CIO Legislative and Policy Committee – a move underlining the machinists' union national influence and hailed by PPPWU President Israel Castro as “an impressive and encouraging development.”



Bryant's reputation in the labor movement as a thoughtful and innovative leader was an important consideration as the PPPWU discussed a merger with IAM Union, Castro said.

“Over the last year, I have come to know President Bryant and admire his commitment, integrity and wide range of knowledge,” Castro said. “He is exactly the kind of leader the labor movement needs and one we can trust to benefit the PPPWU and its members.”

The AFL-CIO legislative group sets policy priorities regarding labor rights, collective bargaining, and economic opportunity for working-class Americans who often struggle to make ends meet as the ultra-rich accumulate even greater wealth.

“I'm honored to serve in this role at such a pivotal moment for IAM Union members and all working people,” Bryant said. “This is about building a stronger, united labor movement that delivers results.”

Bryant said his focus would be on “raising wages, protecting benefits and ensuring that workers have a seat at the table when decisions are made.”

Castro hailed the agenda as “far-seeing and inspiring.”

The AFL-CIO's confidence in Bryant is well-earned, Castro said. “Brian Bryant has the background, talent and determination to bring about positive results. We wish him success and look forward to working together.”

Fund Would Aid Striking Workers

Union Now, a nonprofit, pro-labor group backed by the Communications Workers of America (CWA), has launched a pioneering fund-raising program to support workers who lose income while on strike or face hardship for union organizing.

Proposed by Sara Nelson, international president of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, the Union Now fund would supplement strike benefits of workers on the picket line and extend an economic lifeline to employees illegally terminated for union activity.

The idea, Nelson told The American Prospect magazine, is to protect union members and build the ranks of organized labor.

“This all comes from a place of recognizing that our world is screwed up because union density is so low,” Nelson said.



American Prospect noted that an Economic Policy Institute study found 60 million U.S. workers would join a union if they had an opportunity. At the same time, government statistics show only 10 percent of the country's work force is organized.

“The labor movement hasn't had a national strike fund,” Nelson told the Prospect, and that fear of lost income “is a fundamental issue, a fundamental roadblock to organizing.”

Union Now will need funds from major unions, pro-worker contributors and followers of progressive political figures like Sen. Bernie Sanders and New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani to help build a war chest, the Prospect said.

At a Union Now rally in Manhattan, Sanders said nourishing the union movement is particularly important at a time when Republicans and President Donald Trump pose a dire threat to labor interests.

“This is literally an unprecedented and dangerous moment in American history,” Sanders said, according to the Prospect. “If Trump and his fellow oligarchs get their way, we'll live in a society where fewer and fewer people have more and more wealth and power. Where democracy will be undermined. Where workers will be thrown out on the street with no recourse.”

But, said Sanders, with workers strong and united, “there is nothing we cannot accomplish.”



Dems Establish Workforce Caucus

Early in his second term, President Donald Trump signed an executive order denying federal workers the right to organize or bargain collectively – a move denounced as “abhorrent” by the American Federation of Government Employees.

Trump's action last year – likely to be reviewed by the Supreme Court – and other anti-union moves have drawn wide rebuke from organized labor and recently spurred formation of the Federal Workforce Caucus by two dozen Democratic legislators from House and Senate.

The caucus seeks to demonstrate how federal employees serve the American public, spur conversations between lawmakers and unions and improve morale at government agencies.

“After a traumatic year for the civil service, including a 43-day government shutdown and unprecedented mass firings, this caucus is very timely,” said Eric Bunn Sr., national secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Government Employees.

Bunn said a top priority of the caucus will be to fight for passage of the Protect America's Workforce Act, a measure that would restore workers' collective bargaining rights. The measure passed the House in December but stalled in the Senate.

Reviving it is essential, labor leaders said – and not only for federal workers.

In a statement, the AFL-CIO said Trump's assault on federal workers could be only the start.

“He and his administration want to put an end to collective bargaining and make sure that workers are powerless to oppose his actions,” the AFL-CIO said.

Fight back, said the AFL-CIO – and tell legislators to restore federal bargaining rights and reverse “the worst act of union-busting in American history.”

‘Prairie Populist’ Eyes Senate Seat

In Nebraska, Dan Osborn is known as a “prairie populist” – a down-to-earth former union leader who is running for U.S. Senate on a common-sense platform that calls for controlling government waste, rooting out corruption, strengthening labor rights, protecting family farms and defending the nation's democratic traditions.

Osborn seeks to unseat Republican incumbent Pete Ricketts and has picked up support from a number of unions including the United Auto Workers and American Federation of Government Workers.

Also backing Osborn is the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, which Osborn served as local president and led on a successful 11-week strike against cereal company Kellogg in 2021.

Polls show a close race but analysts say Ricketts remains a favorite.

Osborn, a Navy veteran running as an independent, says he is undaunted.

“Every day, I roll up my sleeves and get to work, fixing what needs fixed,” he said.

If he goes to Washington, Osborn said, he'll have plenty to keep him busy.



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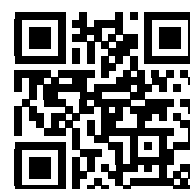


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PPPWU-AMUSMNT-6-3-25

Daunting Task of Steadying DOL After Chavez-DeRemer

Following the resignation of Lori Chavez-DeRemer as U. S. Labor Department secretary earlier this year, the agency – usually low-profile and seldom in the news – found itself struggling to recover from months of soap-opera style allegations and reports of scandalous behavior.

It may take a while.

Keith Sonderling, former DOL deputy secretary and now its acting chief, quickly assembled a staff of labor department veterans in an effort to signal stability and professionalism after a chaotic period that included claims of personal misconduct on the part of Chavez-DeRemer and misuse of government funds, analysts said.

“Collectively, we are well-positioned to build on our progress and continue delivering meaningful results for American workers and businesses across the nation,” Sonderling said in a statement.

Making good on that promise will be a daunting task, experts say.

Omar Algeciras, vice-president of American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 2391, said DOL employees faced “difficult conditions” and “constant turbulence” under Chavez-DeRemer, according to the Guardian newspaper.

Her departure “creates an opening, but without stable leadership, respect for the workforce and a clear commitment to the mission, the challenges facing the department will continue,” said Algeciras who works at the labor department and whose union represents agency workers.

The Guardian noted that criticism of Chavez-DeRemer went beyond issues of personal conduct.

Labor experts faulted her for zealously implementing a variety of anti-worker Trump administration policies like ending overtime and minimum wage protections for home care and domestic workers, weakening farmworker protections, and allowing employers to pay disabled workers less than minimum wage, the Guardian said.

On Capitol Hill, the Congressional Labor Caucus said Chavez-DeRemer made decisions “that reduced oversight of workplace safety and enforcement of labor laws, leaving workers more vulnerable to injury, wage theft and exploitation.”

Repairing the DOL’s reputation will not be easy, analysts say. However, Sonderling is a seasoned insider with deep experience in labor relations and Washington politics, analysts say.

Described by the Politico news site as a “well-connected” Republican insider, Sonderling has a background in labor law and served as deputy administrator of DOL’s Wage and Hour Division during Donald Trump’s first term and a GOP commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission when Joseph Biden succeeded Trump in 2020.

Sonderling has been an ardent supporter of the President and said at an international labor conference in Geneva last year that Trump was putting “the American worker first at home and abroad” – an evaluation disputed by union leaders who consider the current administration emphatically anti-labor.

“Donald Trump surely is not a friend of labor,” said PPPWU President Israel Chavez. “He has fired thousands of federal workers, robbed them of collective bargaining rights and given unusual access to high-tech billionaires who want to keep artificial intelligence unregulated no matter the cost to American workers.”



Keith Sonderling, acting secretary of the U. S. Labor Department



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Whatever his policy priorities, Sonderling – who can serve indefinitely as acting DOL secretary – is viewed widely as a low-key individual who ran the DOL’s day-to-day operation during the tumultuous tenure of Chavez-DeRemer.

The former secretary left her post in April for what the White House said was a job in the private sector amid allegations of improper conduct, irresponsible use of government funds and drinking on the job.

Analysts said it was clear, however, that Chavez-DeRemer was proving an embarrassment for the administration and likely fired by Trump who only weeks before had dismissed Kristi Noem as head of the Department of Homeland Security and Pam Bondi as U.S. attorney general.

At the time of her resignation, Chavez-DeRemer was the target of a probe by the DOL’s inspector general following reports that she was carrying on an affair with a member of her security team, booking upscale hotels and fancy cars at government expense and often not showing up for work.

Adding to the troubling narrative were complaints that Chavez-DeRemer, her husband, Shawn DeRemer, an anesthesiologist in Portland, Oregon, and her father, Richard Chavez, sent young DOL staff members text messages of questionable propriety, according to a report in the New York Times.

Allegations of inappropriate behavior made Chavez-DeRemer the subject of late-night comedians – her behavior was noted on “Saturday Night Live” and other shows – and at some point her continued role as DOL leader seemed untenable.

When she resigned, Chavez-DeRemer, a former Republican congresswoman, thanked Trump for naming her labor secretary – a nomination, the Guardian said, influenced by “strong support” from Teamster General President Sean M. O’Brien who posed with Trump and Chavez-DeRemer at the 2024 Republican national convention.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in this historic administration,” Chavez-DeRemer told Trump before departing.

Target of FBI Raid Shares Pulitzer Prize for Public Service

Score one for the First Amendment.

And for Hannah Natanson, a 29-year-old reporter at the Washington Post.

Since last year, Natanson has been investigating the Trump administration’s severe – and frequently haphazard – cuts in the federal workforce.

Her stories, examining the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) run briefly by billionaire Elon Musk, showed the effects of layoffs on employees and the nation’s civil service structure.

Natanson’s work drew praise – but not at the White House.

In January, FBI agents, acting on orders of the Justice Department, took the extraordinary step of searching Natanson’s home.

Raiders took her laptop and other digital devices essential to her reporting, claiming Natanson, a member of the Washington-Baltimore News Guild, had published stories based on leaked government documents.

In May, there was another assessment of Natanson’s work – a Pulitzer Prize.

Judges awarded the Post a Pulitzer in the prestigious Public Service category based on Natanson’s stories and those of other Post investigative reporters.

Pulitzer officials credited the Post team with “piercing the veil of secrecy around the Trump administration’s chaotic overhaul of federal agencies and chronicling in rich detail the human impacts of the cuts and the consequences for the country.”

When the award was announced, Natanson thanked federal workers who aided in her reporting.

“You believe that truth matters in a democracy,” she said. “You trusted that The Washington Post was the right place to report it. With everything I have, I still believe that, too.”

At the PPPWU, which, like its predecessor unions, has close ties to the newspaper industry, officials hailed Natanson’s work and emphasized the importance of press freedom.

“Just as the Washington Post motto says, ‘Democracy dies in darkness,’” said PPPWU



Hannah Natanson

THE WASHINGTON POST VIA GOOGLE IMAGES



THE PULITZER PRIZES VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

President Israel Castro. “Congratulations to Hannah Natanson for shining light on the outrageous steps taken by Trump and Musk to lay off thousands of government workers, many of them union members.”

PPPWU President Emeritus George Tedeschi, who was instrumental in bringing Newsday editorial staff members into Local 406-C on Long Island 50 years ago, said the work of reporters like Hannah Natanson is essential to holding government accountable.

“I was proud to represent reporters and editors at Newsday,” Tedeschi said. “They were dedicated to finding the truth and let nothing get in the way. Hannah Natanson and her colleagues in newsrooms around the country uphold the highest principles of our nation even if powerful people don’t like the results.”