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Label Letter

Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

Stop the Waiting Games: *Fund the TSA*



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J. David Cox Sr.

That's why we're calling on Congress to end the waits once and for all by hiring a minimum of 6,000 new screeners to staff security checkpoints. This will bring staffing back up to 2011 levels and restore sanity and security to screening lines across the country. With thousands of passengers missing flights due to long waits, Congress would be wise to move quickly.

But the problem goes beyond just underfunding. For a year now, Congress has been raiding funds from TSA ticket fees that are supposed to offset the cost of passenger screening. In 2014, Congress decided to divert billions in fee revenues away from security toward what they called "paying down the deficit." This change has led to \$12.6 billion in ticket fees being diverted away from security screening over the next ten years – all at a time when TSA needs those resources the most.

TSA officers show up to work every day and do their job to keep the flying public safe. Last year, they discovered a record 2,653 firearms at security checkpoints across the country, on top of countless other weapons and dangerous items. The haul was a 20 percent increase from 2014, despite the lower staffing levels. There

By J. David Cox, Sr., AFGE National President

You can have fast lines or good security, but you can't have both. At least not with the skeleton crew with which the Transportation Security Administration is currently operating.

Airports all across the country are reporting massive lines, with hours-long waits for passengers becoming the norm. It's unpleasant, but also entirely avoidable.

Transportation Security Officers have asked for more staffing resources for years, but our call has fallen on deaf ears in an austerity-obsessed Congress. After years of neglect, it's no wonder the situation has gotten as dire as it is today. And if something isn't done soon, the waits will only get longer and longer.

The TSA Officer workforce has declined by more than 5,000 since passenger volume began to increase steadily in 2011. In fact, since 2013, air travelers have grown 15 percent while the number of

Transportation Security Officers has dropped 10 percent. What was once a workforce of 47,000 screening 740 million passengers a year, has now dwindled to around 42,000 officers screening a record 800 million passengers. So long as Congress sits on its hands, that gap is only expected to widen.

The good news is that this is not a complicated problem. It's common sense that more airline passengers require more screeners to process them safely and quickly. The bad news is that Congress funded just a few hundred new screeners in its most recent budget, which won't even make a dent as the summer travel season heats up.

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hasn't been another 9/11 thanks to their often thankless work. They've been doing more with less for years, and the long lines are proof positive that we can't wait any longer to act.

Robbing ticket fees and shortchanging security budgets is not leadership – it's an unacceptable security risk. It's time for Congress to do their job and take immediate action to end the waits by staffing the TSA.

J. David Cox Sr. is national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents more than 670,000 federal and D.C. government employees nationwide. ■

Spotlight the Label

THE INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The International Longshoremen's Association, AFL-CIO is the largest union of maritime workers in North America, representing upwards of 65,000 longshoremen on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, Great Lakes, major U.S. rivers, Puerto Rico and Eastern Canada.



In its 125-year existence, it has had a turbulent history.

One of the first incarnations of the modern longshoremen's union, the Longshoremen's Union Protective Association (LUPA), was formed to combat the exploitation of the workforce along the U.S. coastal regions in 1864.

Another version of the union was formed along the Great Lakes region, as the Association of Lumber Handlers, which would later become the ILA.

In 1914, the New York-based LUPA would be absorbed into the ILA. Dramatic events throughout the ILA's history have led to a now modern union that is focused on preserving jobs and protecting wages. ■

Put a Union Label On It

Laborers', Chemical Workers and Steelworkers Among Organizations Receiving Grants for Infectious Disease Training Programs

The Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), the International Chemical Workers Union (ICWU) and the United Steel Workers (USW) training funds are among eight organizations that will receive training grants for workers and first responders whose occupations could expose them to infectious diseases.

In June, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other federal agencies, announced that they would begin a three-year, \$9 million program designed to improve safety training for approximately 35,000 workers.

The initiative is part of NIEHS' Worker Training Program and aims to educate health-care, waste management, mortuary, and transportation personnel about environmental infection control and hazard recognition methods.

"When we think of occupations that may be exposed to infectious disease, airport workers or custodial employees may not initially come to mind," Joseph "Chip" Hughes, PhD, director of the NIEHS' WTP, said in a press release. "Yet all of these occupations have an important role in minimizing disease transmission, and they need to know how to protect themselves so they don't get infected or spread diseases to their families or communities."

The United Steelworkers Union (USW) version of training program will be conducted by the USW Charitable and Educational Organization's Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety and Environmental Education (TMC). TMC is a partnership of the USW, Communications Workers of America (CWA), Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA), Labor Institute (LI), Make the Road New York (MRNY) and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON).

Under the new training initiative, TMC will remain working with unions and worker centers to serve as a front-line defense controlling infectious disease outbreaks by strengthening the partnership, advancing training of experienced worker-trainers on awareness and operations levels, and expanding the amount of trainers locally and regionally. The partnership will also continue working to develop cadres of bilingual trainers to reach Spanish-speaking workers within immigrant communities. These trainers and trainees will undergo yearly evaluations and refresher training courses to maintain and progress knowledge.

"The United Steelworkers union includes manufacturing workers – but we have grown to also include members in healthcare and other sectors where workers are increasingly at risk of exposure to a growing number of infectious diseases," USW Health, Safety and Environment Assistant Director Jim Frederick said. "And our Tony Mazzocchi Center partners represent community health workers, flight attendants and others who face a similar risk."

"Many union workers will be educated because of these programs," said Richard Kline, president of the Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO. "These and other training programs being offered by our union affiliates are creating a larger market share for our union workforce. We must continue to do all we can to compete in this global economy." ■



WALK IN MY SHOES

USW Member Wins National Jefferson Award for Helping Domestic Violence Survivors

A United Steelworkers local union member from Texas was named one of the top volunteers in the nation for leading a project to provide scholarships for survivors of domestic violence to study for family-sustaining employment at union-represented oil refineries.

Priscilla Puente, an oil refinery worker and member of USW Local 227 in Pasadena, Texas, on Thursday night won the Jefferson Awards Foundation's Outstanding Public Service by an Employee honor. The award was announced at the national ceremony in Washington, D.C. Puente leads her local union's efforts to raise money for scholarships that help women at The Bridge Over Troubled Water shelter. The Jefferson Award is considered America's gold seal of public service.

"The work of Priscilla Puente and her USW sisters and brothers is life-changing, and we're so proud that she has received this well-deserved national honor," said Leo W. Gerard, USW International President. "Priscilla understands that family-supporting employment means economic freedom, and that freedom helps victims of domestic abuse become survivors." Puente, a member of the union's Women of Steel and Next Generation activist programs, was among 14 members and retirees honored as 2016 winners of Jefferson Awards as part of the USW Cares program, which encourages and highlights the community service work of our union. She was selected as the USW's overall Jefferson Awards Foundation Champion volunteer for 2016 and represented the union at the national ceremony, where she was selected out of volunteers from around the nation for the top award. "I hope this honor helps shine a light on the important work of Bridge Over Troubled Water, whose mission is really the same as our mission as a union," Puente said. "They want to break the cycle of domestic violence, and we're actually helping do that by helping people help themselves. We've shown that if you give someone in need a family-sustaining job, you change their life."

"Words cannot express how proud we are of Priscilla for winning such a prestigious national honor," said Ruben Garza, director of USW District 13, which covers Texas. "She represents what it means to be a Steelworker: someone who works hard not just on the job but in our communities. Steelworkers really do have big hearts and we hope this award helps inspire more people to help those in need."

The USW is in its first year as a Champion with the Jefferson Awards Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to building a culture of service through a variety of programs and awards.

About the Jefferson Awards Foundation: The Jefferson Awards Foundation is committed to tapping into the incredible capacity and spirit of Americans. Its Youth programs, Students In Action, LEAD360, and GlobeChangers, support, train and empower youth to be leaders and changemakers. Its vast network of Media Partners honors local unsung heroes who are the best of their communities. Its Champions and National Partners are engaging, activating and celebrating their millions of constituents and employees. All together, working to build a culture of service in the country. For more information: www.jeffersonawards.org. @JeffersonAwards. ■



Priscilla Puente (right) presents Karmelita Straight (left) with a scholarship as part of her volunteer efforts with The Bridge Over Troubled Waters organization. Also pictured is Kontessa Walker, Karmelita's sister.

What's Your Story?

In 150 words or less—accompanied by a picture of you at work...Help us walk in your shoes. We're open to all union members, active, retired, laid off.

"We want rank and file members to help us to illustrate the rich, diverse tapestry of hard working men and women who make up the American labor movement. They are proud of their work and proud of the contributions they make to their communities," explains Union Label Department President Richard Kline. "We want to demonstrate to American consumers and businesses that union labor gives added value in quality and reliability to products and services that are bought and sold."

The pictures and stories we get will be published in the Label Letter and posted on the Department's website—and perhaps in posters and other promotional materials. E-mail a Walk in My Shoes to: unionlabel@unionlabel.org; or send by regular mail to:

Walk In My Shoes,
c/o Union Label & Service Trades Dept.
(AFL-CIO),
815 16th St. NW,
Washington, DC 20005

New York RWDSU Members Ratify Macy's Contract

More than 5,000 unionized Macy's workers at four stores in the New York City area voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new four-year contract in late June. Workers at the stores voted via secret ballot with a 97.5 percent approval. The negotiated agreement between the Company and RWDSU Local 1-S averted a strike by the workers.

The new agreement includes the following key provisions that will boost Macy's workers and improve the quality of their jobs: substantial wage increases; a better and more affordable healthcare plan; and fair schedules, including no mandatory requirement to work holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. ■



Back to School

Send them back to school with these union-made products and services from members of the USW, CWA-PPMWS, UAW and UFCW.

Back to School Supplies

ACCO BRAND PRODUCTS:

- Five Star school supplies and organizational gear
- Mead school supplies
- Roaring Spring paper products
- Modern Jen journals and folders
- Construction paper
- Poster Board
- Drawing pads
- Sketch books
- Compositions notebooks
- Wire-bound notebooks
- Binders and portfolios
- Index cards
- Envelopes
- Folders

BOISE PAPER PRODUCTS:

- Boise X-9
- Business Choice
- Flagship
- Office Depot
- FasCopy
- Xerographics
- USA Xerographics
- Grand and Toy
- W.B. Mason

PACON BRAND PRODUCTS:

- Artist drawing/sketch pads
- Array card stock & bond paper
- Art Street construction paper
- Bordette Decorative Border
- Classroom Keepers storage
- Colorware tagboard
- Corobuff 3D decorative backgrounds

- Decoral Art Roll paper
- Ecology recycled paper
- Ella Bella photography backdrops
- Fadeless Paper
- Flameless Paper
- GoWrite! dry erase pads
- Kaleidoscope colored paper
- Little Fingers construction paper
- Neon fluorescent-colored paper products
- Peacock colored paper products
- Plastic Craft modeling material
- The Present-It easel pads
- Rainbow Colored Kraft duo-finish paper
- Riverside construction paper
- Spectra ArtKraft duo-finish paper
- Spectra Art Tissue tissue paper
- Spectra Glitter
- Trait-tex yarn
- Tru-Ray construction paper

MASTER LOCK:

- 1500 Series

CLASSROOM SUPPLIES:

- Clorox Disinfecting Wipes
- Kleenex tissues
- Puffs Tissues

New Orleans Charter School Teachers Ratify Union Contract

Educators and the school board at Morris Jeff Community School, a high-performing charter school in New Orleans, have ratified an innovative union contract that supports students and teachers alike and allows the school to advance its core mission to educate all students.

The three-year contract creates a student support committee, made up of edu-

cators, administrators and parents, to address the needs of the whole child and to ensure special needs students receive appropriate supports.

It establishes several other mechanisms for labor-management collaboration to focus on the needs of students, and it includes a 5 percent raise for teacher assistants and the creation of a new and

fair educator evaluation system.

"This contract at Morris Jeff shows how innovative and supportive union contracts can be," said United Teachers of New Orleans President Larry Carter. "A contract like this is good for teachers, students and the community, leading to an atmosphere of support and collaboration that schools need to thrive. The student support committee is an especially encouraging piece of this agreement, which has the potential to do wonders for the school and the students."

"Throughout this whole process, we remained very student-centered," said Morris Jeff teacher Matthew Tuttle. "The contract we have in place for next year shows both the teachers' and the administration's commitment to providing the best possible education for our students. We see this as another exciting and beautiful chapter in the story of Morris Jeff Community School."

"It was empowering as a classroom teacher to speak up and be heard at the table and then to see some of our ideas actually become contract language. The contract we have created speaks directly to our school's mission and vision," said Morris Jeff teacher Kristen Weddle.

"Educators at Morris Jeff have joined their colleagues at other charter schools in New Orleans and around the country to form a union as a vehicle to advocate for the supports students need to learn, and the respect educators need to teach," said AFT President Randi Weingarten. "The innovative contract at Morris Jeff is an important step forward for the entire school community and a great example of how charter educators across the country are using the bargaining process to raise their collective voice to create better schools that benefit students and educators."

This is the first collective bargaining agreement for Morris Jeff Community School. Morris Jeff is one of four newly unionized charter schools in New Orleans, part of a wave of contract and organizing victories for charter school educators around the nation.

The American Federation of Teachers represents educators at 228 charter schools across 15 states. ■

USW Contract Provision Moves Work from China to Mississippi

A new contract ratified by United Steelworkers (USW) Local 7477 members at True Temper Sports in Amory, Miss., a maker of steel tubing used in golf shafts and other products, not only improves pay and benefits, it requires that the company close a plant in China and reshore the work to its Amory plant.

The provision related to China is expected to create some 50 permanent jobs in the coming months in Amory, and up to 100 jobs over the term of the contract, which runs through July 2020.

True Temper Sports is a sports and equipment manufacturer. The company manufactures golf club shafts, bicycle parts for frame builders, ice hockey sticks, lacrosse sticks, baseball bats and more.

Steel shafts have been produced at the U.S. based Amory plant since 1965, for customers including Adams, Bridgestone, Callaway, Cleveland, Cobra, Mizuno, Nike, Ping, TaylorMade, Titleist and Wilson. ■

Metal Trades Department President Retires



Ronald E. Ault

After more than four decades in the labor movement, Ron Ault, Metal Trades Department, (MTD) AFL-CIO president retired on July 1, 2016.

Ault, a Vietnam veteran, served a four-year enlistment with the U.S. Navy before beginning his career as an apprentice with International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in 1971. After graduating with honors four years later, Ault worked as a journeyman inside machinists for the Virginia based shipyard.

Ault served in various local and national union positions throughout his distinguished career before becoming president of the Department in 2002.

From 1980-1985, he served as president of the Tidewater Virginia Federal Employees Metal Trades Council and the Chairman of the Conference Committee at NNSY in Portsmouth, VA. Ault also served as Campaign Coordinator in the Metal Trades Department's successful drive for union recognition at the Avondale Shipyard in New Orleans and was the Chief Negotiator for the historic first union contract at the yard.

Ault served as an organizer for the International Union of Operating Engineers and business representative for the IAM and later as the East Coast General Representative for the Metal Trades Department under former President John Meese.

The 11-member MTD Executive Council has elected United Association (UA) MTD Key Representative James "Jimmy" Hart to fill Ault's unexpired term. ■

ALEC's Little Brother May Be Coming to a County or City Near You

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), has been a powerful lobby serving right-wing interests at the state level for more than a quarter of a century. The once covert Koch brothers funded organization that operated in the shadows writing model legislation for state houses around the country, has received a lot of attention in the last few years. The negative press has forced corporate backers to break ties with the organization in attempts to save face with the public.

But rather than back down, ALEC has instead decided to redouble its efforts and drill down its targets to the county- and city-level legislatures instead.

Its new iteration, the American City County Exchange (ACCE), held its first meeting in 2014, and following ALEC's lead, ACCE is now grooming a new team

of corporate-friendly politicians and equipping them with the tools to promote special interest bills at the local level.

For example, in Montgomery County, MD, County Council President Nancy Floreen has introduced legislation that would gut collective bargaining in the county. Floreen, a Democrat, introduced an expedited bill that contains portions of ALEC's "Collective Bargaining Transparency" model legislation.

Montgomery County has always been an extremely progressive locality. It is the home of Department of Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, and where he got his start in the political arena. The fact that this once bastion of liberal policies could face legislation that is pulled straight from the ALEC playbook is not only surprising, it is down-right scary.

If ACCE or ALEC is successful in its infiltrating Montgomery County, other counties in Maryland and around the country won't be far behind.

"The labor movement and its progressive allies were able to expose ALEC, and out its backers, and now it is time to expose the ACCE for what it is — Another Koch-funded bill mill that aims to pass local laws that benefit Wall Street, not Main Street," said Rich Kline, president of the Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO. "We have already seen attempts to pass local right-to-work ordinances, and unless we fight back, we can expect a lot more of that type of union-busting to happen." ■

Unionized Verizon Workers Win Big Gains After Six-Week Strike



As Gawker journalist Hamilton Nolan put it in a May 31 article, "Strikes work. Strikes have always worked."

The public witnessed first-hand how well strikes work when nearly 40,000 members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) went on strike at Verizon and ultimately defeated company demands for major givebacks. The more than six-week strike ended with workers securing impressive gains that include the addition of 1,400 new union jobs, pay raises topping 10 percent over four years, a first contract for the company's wireless retail workers, profit sharing, signing bonuses and pension increases.

CWA President Chris Shelton lauded the "persistence and dedication of Secretary Perez, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service director Allison Beck and their entire teams," in a statement issued by the union.

Department of Labor Secretary Tom Perez and FMCS director Beck oversaw the negotiations, which led to the eventual agreement.

Fitzgerald Boyce, a New York based Verizon field technician was quoted in the CWA statement as saying, "striking wasn't an easy decision for our families, but we knew that we had to fight to save good jobs and our way of life. We fought hard and we won." ■

NLRB RULING LIMITS EMPLOYERS ABILITY TO HIRE PERMANENT REPLACEMENT WORKERS DURING A STRIKE

In early June, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a new ruling that reinterprets the 1938 Supreme Court decision, *Mackay Radio & Telegraph*. *Mackay*, which had been used by employers to defeat or dissuade strikes, affirmed employers' right to hire replacement workers.

In its ruling, the Board narrowed the reasons that an employer can use to hire permanent replacement workers during a strike.

The case was brought by SEIU against *Piedmont Gardens*. The Board ruled that an employer may not hire permanent replacements if one or more of its reasons conflicts or interferes with workers' rights under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

In this case, a *Piedmont Gardens* executive admitted that she had acted on the belief that permanent replacement workers "would come to work if there was another work stoppage." And an attorney for the company reportedly told an attorney for the union that the employer "wanted to teach the strikers and the union a lesson."

With the Board's new interpretation, the company's motives, made the replacements illegal. ■

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EndNotes

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Social Security, Other Issues Face a Crucial 2016 Election



Social Security has a Union Label. The 1935 passage of the original Social Security act was preceded by long-term labor movement activism. Every subsequent improvement and extension of social security protection was moved forward by labor movement action. Protections for disabled workers, Medicare and Medicaid, all part of

the Social Security program, were the result of pressure from the labor movement and its allies in government and beyond.

The important role of Labor in social progress was acclaimed by President Obama, who said: "It was the labor movement that helped secure so much of what we take for granted today. The 40-hour week, the minimum wage, family leave, health insurance, Social Security, Medicare, retirement plans. The cornerstones of the middle-class security all bear the union label." But progressive achievements are not invulnerable to attack.

In 2016, Social Security is under attack again. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) has sought large reductions in Social Security programs throughout his career in Congress. The upcoming election could threaten these programs if Ryan and his allies win big and maintain Congressional majorities.

Donald Trump, the likely GOP presidential candidate, called Social Security a Ponzi scheme in 2000 and has since indicated that for political reasons he cannot criticize it. His plan for supporting Social Security relies on projected corporate tax cuts to spark the economy, trickle-down economics in other words. His fiscal policy would actually result in a huge budget deficit requiring cuts in all federal programs.

Hillary Clinton, the AFL-CIO endorsed candidate for the presidency, has pledged to protect and improve benefits under the Social Security program. Democrats have countered Republican criticism of Social Security's solvency with proposals like raising its revenue by raising the income cap on contributions.

Unfortunately, the assault on the middle class and workers' rights has many sides. The extension of right-to-work laws remains a Republican goal. Trump, told South Carolina Radio Network, "I love the right to work."

With all of this in mind, union voters should remember all of the ways in which our country has been improved by the labor movement's progressive agenda, social progress proudly displaying the Union Label. ■