



2022 UNITED STEELWORKERS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION COVERAGE DAY ONE



CONWAY: 'WE ARE EVERYBODY'S UNION'



International President Tom Conway opened the USW's 2022 Constitutional Convention on Monday, Aug. 8, with an address that celebrated the union's victories and recommitted the USW to leading the fight for better lives for workers in the coming years.

"We make things. We help people. We are the backbone of this economy," Conway told the approximately 2,000 USW member delegates gathered at the MGM Grand Conference Center in Las Vegas. "And we are never, ever going to let anyone forget how essential we are."

Conway, in his first convention address since becoming USW president in 2019, said that Steelworkers in all sectors of the economy – from health care to manufacturing – have proved repeatedly that they are an indispensable part of keeping the nation running, through the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges.

"The work we'll be doing here this week," he said, "is some of the most important we do as a union."

That work, he said, includes rededicating the USW to its core mission, and

laying out a plan for the future to ensure that mission will be successful.

"That's why we're here brothers and sisters," Conway said. "Because every worker deserves a seat at the table and the protections of a union contract."

Making sure more workers gain those protections, he said, means constantly growing the union by mobilizing member organizers across the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean, who will talk to their peers about joining the movement.

"If the pandemic taught us anything, it's that workers are hungry for unions," he said. "We're going to expand existing efforts in our traditional sectors, and we're going to look at new industries."

Conway said the efforts of every USW member – local bargaining and safety committees, Rapid Response and political activists, Women of Steel, Next Generation leaders and SOAR members – will be integral to those fights, as the union is sure to face opposition from greedy employers and anti-union politicians.

"Corporations try to exploit our differences," Conway said. "But what

they get instead is relentless, unwavering solidarity."

On Monday, the USW delegation heard from other speakers and passed a series of resolutions meant to strengthen the union's commitment to those fights, including a resolution reinforcing the 2022 convention theme, "Everybody's Union." Conway returned to that theme throughout his address.

"We know what it means to be part of everybody's union," he said. "It's an unyielding dedication to watching out for each other and helping each other through tough times."

The emergence of new technologies and the growth of clean energy jobs means that the USW membership of the future may not look the same as it did 80 years ago, but its strength and solidarity will only grow.

"We will continue to work together," he said. "We'll support each other and ensure our union and our communities can keep growing and thriving for 80 more years, and another 80 years beyond that."

RESOLUTIONS THAT WORK FOR EVERYBODY

One of the key elements of the Constitutional Convention is to debate and pass policy resolutions. Policy resolutions give delegates a chance to define the identity and direction of the union.

The policy resolutions debated this week will build a strong foundation of unity and solidarity aimed to improve the lives of members and their families. The resolutions reflect a shared confidence and willingness of the union and its members to make necessary changes. As Steelworkers work to increase bargaining power and welcome in new members, the union will build on its strong foundation, ensuring there is space for all workers seeking to build better lives.

Day 1 included the following policy resolutions:

No. 1: “Our Past Leaders” honors past USW leaders and dedicates the union to continuing the tradition of leadership and distinction they established.

No. 2: “In Memoriam” pays tribute

to all of those union leaders and members who have passed away since the 2017 Convention.

No. 3: “Everybody’s Union” reaffirms that the USW will always fight for social and economic justice in order to build better lives for all.

No. 6: “Women of Steel” recommit the USW to identifying, supporting and mentoring Women of Steel activists in the union, workplaces, and communities.

No. 10: “Building Union Power” urges local unions to utilize the Building Power program when preparing for challenging bargaining to enhance their capacity to mobilize their membership to promote and defend their rights.

No. 18: “Renewing Labor Rights” works to raise standards for our members and all workers by supporting changes to public policy that protect and expand workers’ rights.

A number of other resolutions will be presented and debated this week. Resolutions can be found online at convention.usw.org/resolutions.



BIDEN: THANKS TO THE USW, ‘MANUFACTURING IS BOOMING’

President Joe Biden praised the United Steelworkers on Monday for helping to unite America behind a historic infrastructure bill that’s already growing the middle class and energizing the nation’s economy.

“The bottom line is, because of you, American manufacturing is booming,” Biden said in videotaped remarks to the USW’s 2022 Constitutional Convention, referring to the major role that union members and retirees played in pushing the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act through Congress last year.

The legislation will sustain good-paying jobs for years, Biden noted, with products made by union workers “rebuilding our roads, our bridges, our ports and our airports.” He also praised the USW for successfully advocating for legislation, known as the Butch Lewis

Act, that stabilized troubled multiemployer pension plans and saved the retirements of 1.3 million workers and retirees.

“The middle class built America, and unions built the middle class. Steelworkers built the middle class,” said Biden, adding that he will sign another bill this week to spur semiconductor production and revitalize the nation with “worker power.”

U.S. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto also provided videotaped remarks welcoming USW members to Las Vegas, her hometown, and pledging her support of pro-worker legislation like the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act.

“You deserve our support,” she said. “For more than eight decades, the United Steelworkers have been building this country.”



MRVAN PROUDLY SUPPORTS STEELWORKERS

Rep. Frank Mrvan Jr. regularly proves himself to be one of the USW's strongest supporters in Washington, D.C., through his work as a first-term congressman from Indiana and as co-chair of the Congressional Steel Caucus.

"I'm proud to be the first member of Congress to be sworn in wearing a USW mask," he told delegates at the 2022 Constitutional Convention.

In his remarks, he praised USW members' work on getting the infrastructure bill passed with strong domestic procurement provisions and touted legislation that will help working families like the Protecting

the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Long before he ran for Congress, Mrvan marched in solidarity with members of USW Local 7-1 on the picket line at the BP Whiting refinery in 2015, and when U.S. Steel and other companies announced layoffs impacting USW members, he made sure workers and their families had help.

"I know real people's lives are impacted by trade policies," Mrvan said. "I know what it means to last one day longer and be one day stronger."



USW Local 1944 President Donna Hokiro speaks at the microphone. Local 1944 represents telecommunications workers in locations across Canada.



PAST PRESIDENT LEO GERARD INSPIRES CONVENTION VIA VIDEO ADDRESS

Past USW International President Leo W. Gerard sent greetings of solidarity and inspiration in a video message to the 2022 Convention.

Through the message, Gerard touched on much of the USW's most important work and why it is truly Everybody's Union.

"We make room for everybody," Gerard said. "Whether it's bringing in new members in higher education or expanding our footprint in manufacturing."

Gerard said he is proud of the USW's reputation for advancing occupational health and safety and making workplaces safer by increasing access to training for workers so that fewer workers are killed, injured or made sick on the job.

He challenged delegates to continue generating positive energy, lifting workers' voices to win the fights ahead and have a real impact in these changing times on legislative and political issues – ensuring that both the Canadian and the U.S. governments are accountable to workers.

The Convention also passed a resolution honoring Gerard and other former leaders as one of the first orders of business, acknowledging their foresight as a crucial component of the union's current and future success.



WALSH COMMITTED TO ‘NEXT GREAT CHAPTER’ OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT

U.S. Labor Secretary Marty Walsh vowed Monday to fight for workers undercut by unfair trade and hamstrung by weak labor laws.

The decades-old Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program expired June 30 – cutting off job training and other assistance to laid-off workers – because Republicans in Congress refused to join Democrats in extending it.

“It’s a program that workers deserve,” Walsh told the USW’s 2022 Constitutional Convention. “And it’s a program we need to continue.”

In the past two years alone, Walsh noted, TAA supported 3,300 USW members, among thousands of workers across the country.

Walsh stressed the Biden administration’s efforts to create and preserve union jobs through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other initiatives.

But “we have to keep looking out for the workers who are impacted by global trade. We have to make sure they have opportunities,” Walsh said pledging to continue working with Congress to renew TAA.

Walsh, the former head of the Greater Boston Building Trades who still carries a union card, also underscored the Biden administration’s determination to “take down the barriers to worker organizing” as more Americans seek to join unions in the wake of the pandemic.

Biden supports the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which would make it easier for workers to form unions. In addition, Walsh served as vice chair of the White House Task Force on Organizing and Worker Empowerment that made dozens of recommendations for empowering union drives.

And the Labor Department is launching an online Worker Organizing Resource Center that Walsh described as a “one-stop shop on how to form a union.”

“Together, we have the opportunity to write the next great chapter in the history of the labor movement,” he said.



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