

USW@Work

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A Powerful Voice for Workers

CARLTON ORGANIZES ROANOKE'S SIXTH CONSECUTIVE LABOR DAY PARADE

Seven years ago, because Roanoke, Virginia, did not have an annual Labor Day Parade, an unnamed reporter from a local Roanoke newspaper, thought that the labor movement was not as active as some union folks in the area believed it to be.

Thinking he could maybe get some legs on the story, the reporter challenged Cliff Carlton—a 23-year Steelworker at Yokohama Tire—with an accusatory question that has stuck with Cliff to this day. “Where is labor?” the reporter said, mockingly. Cliff did not respond; at least, not with words.

Instead, he started organizing to make sure that there was a Labor Day Parade in Roanoke the next year. Just last month, Roanoke had its sixth consecutive Labor Day Parade, and Cliff boasts that the parade is getting better every year.

Needless to say, Cliff hasn’t stopped working, even though he retired in 2015. He’s kept busy organizing the annual Labor Day Parade, with some fellow retirees, and he was just recently elected the President of Virginia’s chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans—a national organization that is focused on protecting vital programs like Social Security and Medicare.



Cliff Carlton

Cliff is excited to take on this role with the Alliance, because he sees it as an extension of all the work he does with his SOAR Chapter 8-UR2, and even his time as a Division Chairman and member of his local union’s Executive Board (USW Local 1023). Cliff has also been Vice President of the western Virginia Labor Federation for 15 years.

Cliff knows that not everyone is going to be as active in their retirement as he is. However, he believes everyone should consider getting involved with their local SOAR chapter, if they are nearing retirement. Cliff’s SOAR chapter has even supported the bargaining committee at his local union, and has plans to continue doing so in their upcoming negotiations with Yokohama.

“It’s nice to sit back and rest; but, it’s not a luxury we have. We still need to be involved, if we want to keep our benefits or maybe even improve upon them.”



Roanoke, Va.

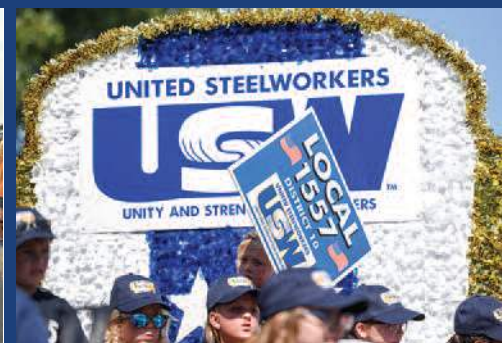
SOAR CELEBRATES LABOR DAY 2017



Chicago, Ill.



Lowell, Ind.



Pittsburgh, Pa.

We Need to Pay Attention



BILL PIENTA
SOAR President

We need to pay attention to the way the current administration feels about active workers to get an understanding regarding how it feels about retired workers. If this administration treats workers unfairly, it should be equally clear what they think about retired workers.

A recent appointment of an NLRB member, who previously worked as an attorney representing companies in cases against unions, makes it pretty clear who he will favor in future cases against employers or unions.

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a case, *Janus v. AFSCME*, regarding the issue of public employees' payment of union dues. A tied vote on this issue, in a similar case, allowed a lower court decision that favored the Union to stand. Most, if not all, legal scholars feel that with the President's new appointment to the Supreme Court, that the long standing policy will be struck down and the Union's ability to represent their members will be severely impacted.

In another case, to be heard by the Supreme Court regarding workers' rights, the Trump administration will argue alongside companies that agreements requiring workers to arbitrate disputes with their employers individually, rather than bringing class-action lawsuits collectively with their co-workers, are valid.

Class-action litigation can result in large damages awards by

juries and is harder for businesses to fight than cases brought by individual plaintiffs.

In an unusual twist, the administration will face off against an independent agency of the federal government, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

The Justice Department, in June, reversed the government's stance in the case taken under former President Barack Obama and said that it would not defend the NLRB's position that employment agreements requiring workers to waive their rights to bring class action claims are invalid.

The NLRB argues that those agreements violate federal labor law and let companies evade their responsibilities under workplace statutes.

Also, the government's failure to issue a report on the Section 232 investigation, regarding the impact of imports on Steel and Aluminum, has caused severe harm to the workers in those industries; that in some cases may be fatal.

If this is the way working women and men are treated by this administration, I think it is pretty easy to imagine how they feel about people who no longer work. There are many more examples I could mention, but my space is limited. We, as SOAR members must pay attention to actions and not be distracted by words. We need to stay focused on protecting the rights and benefits of workers and retirees.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Save the "Cat!"



JULIE STEIN
SOAR Director

As the old saying goes, "There's more than one way to skin a cat." Except, in this scenario, the "ways" are proposals of the Trump administration and the "cat" is any law or protection that workers have fought for and won.

We've seen three separate attempts, in as many months, to move legislation forward to repeal the Affordable Care Act; which would leave Americans without protections from preexisting conditions, without health coverage being extended to the age of 26 and without any real cost controls on coverage and prescription drugs.

Fortunately, there was a concerted effort by labor unions, health advocates, community groups and voters to make certain these efforts were roundly defeated. However, as we've seen so many times with this administration (and even suggested ourselves a few months ago), those who wish to do harm to working people will inevitably find a way to do so.

While President Trump insists that the votes exist somewhere to move this legislation forward, his allies in Congress appear to be repackaging their hopes to appease wealthy donors with tax breaks paid for by gutting vital programs like Social Security and Medicare. This grand redistribution of wealth is laid out

in the budget resolution for 2018; being offered by the Republican-controlled House Budget Committee.

Knowing that "Tax breaks for Millionaires" and "Cut Social Security" are not great campaign slogans, Republicans are looking feverishly for ways to get their budget passed before the 2018 midterm elections. The GOP-controlled House just approved a law that would allow the Senate to pass a budget without votes from the minority party. So while they are behind schedule based on their original timeline, they might be able to rush this through before the holidays.

Lastly, we are also watching the looming Supreme Court case (*Janus v. AFSCME*), which could deal a devastating blow to unions by banning mandatory dues for public employees. The Court will begin deliberations over the case in early 2018, and we can probably expect a decision before their June recess.

In closing, they never rest and nor should we! Our union will have many ways for our members and retirees to fight the Republican budget proposal. Please stay engaged with your SOAR chapter and be sure to check our website at www.usw.org/soar for vital information and updates.

Join with us, as we continue the fight to protect and enhance the quality of life of our retirees and working families. Together We Stand Strong!

Chapter 30-18 Celebrates Nineteen Years



By Charlie Averill
SOAR Emeritus Member

SOAR Chapter 30-18 is made up primarily of retirees of the Northern Indiana Public Service Company, which covers the northern third of Indiana.

Our members live all over Indiana and in sixteen different states, limiting our social events to just one per year. This year, in September, we came together to celebrate our 19th year as a chapter.

Chapter President, Dorine Godinez, made sure that all went smoothly and members enjoyed visiting with old friends and making new ones.

Funding for the door prizes was donated by USW Locals 12775, 13796 and District 7 Sub-District 4. All prizes were made in the U.S.A., and everyone took home at least one.

Those in attendance expressed a desire to have our chapter donate \$1,000 to help the hurricane victims and were given information about our

issues, as well as a copy of the latest issue of the SOAR Chapter Connection newsletter.

We look forward to celebrating our 20th anniversary next year.



www.usw.org/soar

District 12 SOAR's Joel Buchanan Represents USW at Pueblo Pride Festival

"Our union is one of inclusion. America has always been a country that celebrates diversity, and SOAR needs to reflect that," says Joel Buchanan, a 43-year USW member and retiree from Evraz Rocky Mountain Steel (formerly Oregon Steel).

In August 2017, he represented the USW and the Pueblo Central Labor Council (PCLC) at the Pueblo LGBTQ Pride Festival. This annual event is held to bring together members, friends, family and supporters of the LGBTQ community to celebrate acceptance and diversity. This is the second consecutive year that the USW and the PCLC has participated and supported the festival. The festival also received support from AFSCME, the Fire Fighters and Colorado WINS, which represents more than 31,000 state employees.

"We've thought it was important to be here not just to support the (LGBTQ) community, but to also promote the labor movement to groups that aren't always associated with us," remarked Buchanan on why it is important that the USW maintains a presence at the festival. "Being here helps broaden support for our issues, while also raising our awareness of others who are being taken advantage of or discriminated against in our communities."

For more on Joel's work as a SOAR member, go to our website at www.usw.org/soar



SOAR in ACTION

USW@Work

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JANE BECKER

Scholarship Luncheon

The Granite City SOAR Chapter (34-2) held their 8th Annual “Jane Becker” Scholarship/Award Banquet on Monday, August 14. The banquet was well attended with over 175 members, friends, allies and elected officials.

The SOAR scholarship has been named as the Jane Becker Scholarship in honor of Jane Becker’s activism, as a gifted labor and political organizer, who mentored a generation of activists. Jane was the wife and working partner to the late United Steelworkers President,

George Becker, but she built a reputation on her own, as a tireless advocate for working people and causes. She was one of the pioneer organizers of SOAR, the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, and lent her time and expertise to numerous Democratic political campaigns.

SOAR awarded three \$3,000 scholarships to the winners of this year’s essay contest. The essay contest was on the topic of “How does Fair Trade differ from Free Trade?”

The winners of the 2017 scholarships were Kaitlin R. Koenig, Mona O. Zubi and Bailey J. Tate.

Dr. Robert Daiber, Regional Superintendent of Schools for Madison County, presented the scholarship checks to the essay winners for their first installment of their scholarship award.

The chapter also recognized community leaders and activist members.

The SOAR award winners this year were:

Friend of SOAR

Jim Centner, Activist and former SOAR Director, Retired

Edward Sadlowski Labor Leader of the Year

Scott Marshall, SOAR Executive Board Member, District 7

The 2017 Volunteer

Dennis Warren, SOAR Chapter 34-2

The 2017 Activist

John Obucina, SOAR Chapter 34-2

\$3,000 Scholarship Winners



Kaitlin R. Koenig



Bailey J. Tate



Mona O. Zubi

Pictured, left to right: Dennis Barker, SOAR Chapter Vice President; the Scholarship Award Recipient; Dr. Robert Daiber, Regional Superintendent of Schools for Madison County; and Jeff Rains, SOAR Chapter President.

BRIDGE of COMPASSION

SOAR members, of the I.W. Abel Chapter 1-27 in Canton Ohio, were looking for a local charity with which to become involved. We found one, just a few blocks away from our meeting place at Golden Lodge USW Local 1123, called the “Total Living Center.” It was started in 1983 by a local minister, Reverend Don Barto. He was the pastor of an area church who had a vision of a community charity to help the poor and needy and provide Christian teaching and living. Their goal or mission is to serve like Jesus, love one another and tend to the sick and the poor.

Reverend Barto found an empty building that had once been a church, and with local help he purchased the building and began his mission. It is all volunteer work; as a charitable center it operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit faith ministry. It is totally funded through contributions and free will gifts, no government help or assistance from local food banks. Their help comes from local farms, supermarkets and local businesses.

The center has many services under one roof. Their “Bridge of Compassion” truly allows them to walk into the lives of the sick and the poor. Two large freezers were donated, as well as three commercial washers; as many they serve do not have laundry facilities and cannot afford a laundromat. On Sundays, there is an afternoon worship service followed by a free dinner, also grocery distribution. On Wednesdays there is



Bible study, supper, healing service and prayer. On Fridays there are Al-Anon meetings, AA meetings, free chiropractor, free beauty salon, free haircuts and free clothing for children and adults. For the daily need, Monday through Saturday they serve a free bowl of hot soup.

Our SOAR chapter Executive Board toured the facility and knew we had to get involved.

We asked our members to bring paper products, cleaning supplies and miscellaneous items to our SOAR meetings and we then took the donations to the center. In addition, our SOAR chapter recently donated \$200, for which the center was very grateful.

We are sure that our donations aided in their mission, as they truly are a “Bridge of Compassion.” We will continue to be a part of their mission and encourage you, or your SOAR chapter, to look around your community for your opportunity to be of service—it’s totally rewarding for everyone.

Jim Reed, Secretary, I.W. Abel SOAR Chapter 1-27

District 4 Gets a New SOAR Chapter

On September 27, SOAR members in Lincoln, Rhode Island, were honored to have their SOAR chapter (SOAR Chapter 4-15) officially chartered by the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees. The new chapter will be home to retirees from USW Local Union 4543, an amalgamated local that represents Steelworkers at a number of facilities in Rhode Island and southern Massachusetts.

Serving as the chapter’s first president will be Andrew Pora, a retiree from General Cable Corporation. Al Polk, District 4 SOAR Executive Board Member; Abdellatif “Abdou” Elberchouii, USW District 4 Staff and “Eddie” Matias, LU 4543 Vice President, worked tirelessly over the last few years laying the foundation for this new chapter, which already has



approximately 80 members. The chapter plans on holding quarterly meetings and they will support the work of Local Union 4543, while fighting against efforts to compromise vital programs like Medicare and Social Security.

Officers of USW SOAR Chapter 4-15 are, pictured left to right: Andrew Pora, President; Jose Dacosta, Vice President; Hector Orellana, Financial Secretary. Also pictured: Ed Matias, Vice President – LU 4543; Al Polk, District 4 SOAR Executive Board Member; Abdellatif “Abdou” Elberchouii, USW District 4 Staff. Not present: Zdzislaw “Ziggy” Lesnikowski, Recording Secretary.

New Democrats Lead Fight to End Pension Theft

By Doug Macpherson

SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

At a packed USW union hall in Hamilton in September, federal NDP Member of Parliament and SOAR member Scott Duvall held a press conference to announce that in the new session of parliament he would introduce a private members bill to “protect workers’ pensions and benefits, and force companies to provide termination or severance pay, before paying secured creditors.”

Scott was supported by the presence of several federal NDP caucus members, including then-interim NDP Leader Tom Mulcair, as well as several members of the Ontario provincial parliament, USW National Director Ken Neumann, USW District 6 Director Marty Warren and leaders of several other unions and the Ontario Federation of Labour.

Pension theft during corporate insolvency proceedings has been a long-simmering issue for SOAR members and labour unions, who have long demanded reforms to Canada’s bankruptcy laws. We all remember too vividly when the judge overseeing the restructuring of U.S. Steel Canada (now renamed Stelco) at the stroke of a pen removed health benefits from 20,000 retirees and surviving spouses.

This issue affects pensioners from Wabush to Sault Ste. Marie, to Regina and Winnipeg and communities across the country.



SOAR Canadian National Coordinator Doug Macpherson, right, joined federal NDP Member of Parliament Scott Duvall, centre, and Ontario Member of Provincial Parliament Paul Miller, at a press conference in September to announce Duvall’s proposed legislation to protect workers’ pensions and benefits during corporate insolvency cases.

Most recently employees and retirees of Sears Canada are falling victim to the perils of the insolvency manoeuvring that is allowed under our country’s outdated laws. It is time to stop the legalized theft of workers’ benefits and pensions!

The NDP with the support of the CLC affiliates, provincial labour federations, SOAR chapters and other retiree groups, must lobby relentlessly to make this a reality.

More to come on this story... stay tuned.

SOAR CHAPTER 3-19 STEPS UP Helping Steelworker Families in Wildfire Crisis

As devastating wildfires raged out of control in British Columbia this summer, forcing the evacuation of entire communities, District 3 SOAR members stepped up to help Steelworker families in need.

Chapter 3-19 President and District 3 SOAR board member Dennis Carrigan and his chapter decided to make a sizable donation to a USW local seriously affected by the wildfires.

Combining business with a vacation trip to Vancouver, Dennis met with the executive of SOAR Chapter 3-14 and presented a cheque for a donation to support the USW local’s wildfire relief efforts.



Allan Haggstrom, president of Chapter 3-14, left, accepts a donation from Dennis Carrigan, District 3 board member, to help USW members affected by devastating wildfires in British Columbia.

Mr. Prime Minister, the economy is not working for working Canadians.

Repeatedly it is reported in the media that Canada's economy has been growing steadily since the last recession and continues to create jobs month over month.

This is partially true, but misleading.

By Doug Macpherson
SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

A recent report by TD Economics sated: "Kudos to the Canadian job market. In spite of another year riddled with global and domestic uncertainty, the economy continued to add jobs at a solid rate, marking the seventh year of expansion following the recession. WE WISH WE COULD END THE STORY THERE, BUT UNFORTUNATELY ALL OF THESE JOBS WERE PART TIME." (Emphasis added).

Yes that's right –100% of the net growth in jobs in Canada in 2016 were part time, and by definition probably precarious as well.

Another recent study, released by the Canadian Payroll Association, stated: "Working Canadians living paycheque to paycheque, gloomy over economy and facing high debt."

It offered survey results including:

47% of employed Canadians are living paycheque to paycheque.

41% spend all of or more than their net pay.

25% could not come up with \$2,000 within a month in an emergency.

74% have saved only one-quarter or less of what they feel they'll need to retire.

Yet we hear the Prime Minister almost every day claiming that his government "is focused on helping the middle class and those working hard to enter it."

Mr. Prime Minister, it is not working!

Recently I attended a town hall meeting on precarious work. At the table with my wife and me were three much younger folks, one a young woman who was working two jobs to stay afloat. She was falling behind and her short-term goal was to get a better job for one of the two she currently has, or obtain a third job. Her long-term goal? "Hope!"

The other two young people were McMaster University students, one graduating this year in accounting and finance. His experience was short-term contract work. On graduation, he said tongue-in-cheek, all his classmates hoped to get a job on Bay Street wearing three-piece suits, working 80 hours for 40 hours' pay! But he knows that goal was probably unrealistic.

Mr. Prime Minister, the economy isn't working!



LENA SUTTON WINS JEFFERSON AWARD

SOAR USW Jefferson Award winner Lena Sutton is congratulated by USW National Director for Canada Ken Neumann, left, District 6 Director Marty Warren, centre, and International President Leo Gerard, right.

Join Veterans of Steel

At the 2017 Constitutional Convention our union committed to exploring the creation of Veterans of Steel, a place in the United Steelworkers (USW) where those who served or who are serving our country can find resources, camaraderie, support and a way to fight for core issues such as protecting and creating family-supporting jobs after service.

If you are a USW member or retiree who's also a military veteran, go to www.usw.ca/vetsofsteel to complete the form so we can be in touch with more information about Veterans of Steel. As the program is developed, we would like your ideas about how we can best help you and other veterans.

This link is for veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces. If you are a veteran of the U.S. armed forces, please see the article on page 10 of this publication.

We'll send everyone who signs up a free "Veteran of Steel" sticker.

You can also text VET to 32323 to join*.

*Message and data rates may apply. You can opt out at any time by replying STOP.





2017 SOAR USW Jefferson Awards Winners **LENA SUTTON AND DON KELLNER**

LENA SUTTON



Lena Sutton is the President of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Chapter 10 in Hamilton, Ontario and is one of

SOAR's USW Jefferson Awards winner for her continued commitment to those in need.

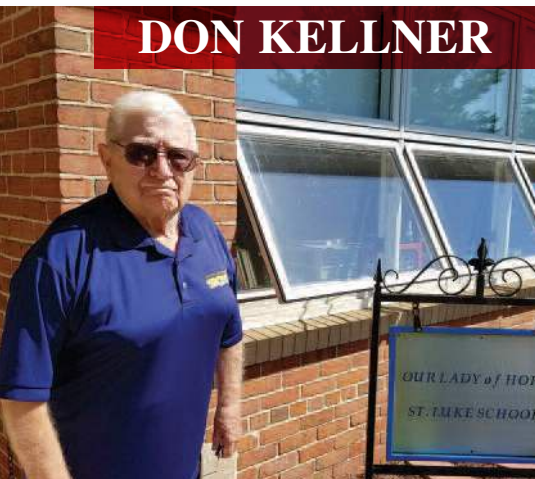
Sutton joined USW Local Union 7711 in 1974 and was elected President of the area's SOAR Chapter in 2006. In her more than 40 years of activism, she's held multiple positions at the local level, including recording secretary, shop steward, health and safety rep and was a member of the negotiating team.

She continues to be involved in the Hamilton Area Women's Committee and raises money for the United Way and other local charities. It is estimated that she's helped raise more than \$100,000 and prepare and serve thousands of meals for the needy and homeless in her area.

Most remarkably, though, each year Sutton dedicates hours of her time as a volunteer tax preparer for low income families and retirees in her area, often visiting individuals in their homes many times to complete their paperwork. She also conducts seminars to help educate people about the Disability Tax Credit and other services that can help reduce income tax for those who are eligible.

When asked why she's so committed to service, she says, "I witnessed my parents helping many families in our small town during times of need. And now I do it because I care about my neighbors and I believe community matters."

DON KELLNER



Don Kellner began working at Bethlehem Steel in 1955 and got more involved in the union during the strike of 1959, a 116-day strike that idled the

steel industry throughout the U.S. "This was a very tough time for lots of folks and I knew I needed to do something," said Don.

Kellner was elected as Local Union 2609's recording secretary, went on to be a grievance committeeman, chairman of the grievance committee, vice president and served three terms as president before retiring in 2001.

Kellner wasn't just a dedicated union officer, though; he was also a leader in his community. He coached a local softball team, umpired for Little League, volunteered with Baltimore County Recreation and Parks youth and adult programs and worked with local groups and lawmakers to connect youth with good jobs.

One of the most notable community service projects he spearheaded was the food bank he began during the steel crisis of the 1980s for laid-off members. Since then, the program has been adopted by activists outside the union and has grown to serve the eastern Baltimore County community.

After retiring, he became the president of his local's retiree committee and was quickly recruited as a member of SOAR Chapter 8-1, of which he currently serves as President of both groups. Kellner continues to engage with Steelworkers, community members and local lawmakers to push for programs and legislation that serve working people in his area.

Lena and Don are just two of the many Steelworkers making a difference in the lives of others.

If you know a Steelworker retiree who deserves recognition for commendable community service, tell us!

We are accepting nominations for the 2018 USW Jefferson Awards – Go to: <http://usw.to/rq> to access the 2018 Champion Nomination Form.

Don't Let Lawmakers Make a **BUM DEAL** out of the **NEW DEAL**

From the very beginning of our great union, our founders knew that a strong labor movement demanded dignity and respect for both active and retired workers. That sentiment is reflected in the founding principles of the Steelworkers Organizing Committee (SWOC) in the 1930s.



Here are two founding principles that are particularly relevant for retirees today:

“To secure equitable statutory old-age pension...” and “To secure by legislative enactment, laws... establishing our right to organize...”

Then, as now, these principles are not just ideas—they are foundational to our union’s work. Workers helped to establish Social Security into law over 80 years ago, and we fight to keep it strong today. We secured laws during the New Deal, like the National Labor Relations Act, that established our legal right to organize and bargain collectively. That right has helped us make gains in securing pensions and healthcare for retirees at the negotiating table.

Ever since then, corporate elites have been trying to reclaim their dominance. In 1947, the Taft-Hartley Act began the roll-backs of hard-earned gains for workers through so-called right to work laws and numerous other anti-union initiatives that sought to weaken us.

Those attacks never stopped. Today we see regular attempts to undermine the ability to form strong unions, both in the public and private sectors. One of the worst is the Employee Rights Act (ERA).

This reckless legislation could be called “right to work on steroids.” With versions in both the House and Senate that continue to garner co-sponsors and an administration that is sure to sign a finalized bill, any further movement is a threat to unions—and the benefits, wages and policies for which we work.

So what is in the ERA?

- ▶ Imagine that you are trying to form a union and everyone who doesn’t vote counts as a “no”—no politician would ever be in office that way!
- ▶ Imagine that non-members in your workplace could vote on your contract or whether or not to go on strike.
- ▶ Imagine that you had to have a new election to keep your union EVERY time there was a change in 50 percent of your membership. Employers could manipulate that through layoffs and hires!
- ▶ Imagine that you had to go member to member each and every year to get the portion of dues that pays for critical parts of our union’s work, like Rapid Response.

The Employee Rights Act does all of this and more. It’s a corporate giveaway designed to destroy our rights. It weakens our ability to newly organize, to efficiently run our locals, and to bargain fair contracts. By eroding our strength, solidarity, and resources, policies like the ERA will result in more losses of defined benefit and healthcare plans for those who came before us.

We will not allow sacrifices for workers’ rights in the past to be dismantled in vain. We are keeping a close eye on this bill. Please educate others on this destructive legislation and take a moment to call your elected officials in Washington. Tell them that it’s time to stand with workers and oppose the ERA.



D7 SOAR Rallies for Human Rights, Dignity for Immigrant Families

“This is a human rights and workers’ rights fight. We cannot be divided.”

In early October, Scott Marshall (District 7 SOAR Executive Board Member) and Jim Lange (SOAR Chapter 31-9) were among the Steelworkers who attended a rally against mass deportations at the Gary Indiana Airport, which has been one of the federal government’s chosen locations to carry out deportations.

In fact, more than 12,500 immigrants have been deported through GIA as of June 2017 (chicagotribune.com, 10/6/17). More than 100 demonstrators from various unions, community groups, faith-based organizations and immigrants’ rights groups came to bring attention to and decry the secretive and inhumane treatment of our immigrant sisters and brothers.

Deportation creates more problems than it solves. Those who are being deported have oftentimes lived so long in the United States that they have no friends, family, or income in Mexico. In broad daylight the demonstrators bared witness to buses of deportees, including Dreamers, who were wearing leg irons and chains after being abruptly uprooted from their communities. The communities they leave behind here in the United States will also suffer greatly as a result of losing countless family-owned businesses, churches, community centers and more.

Giving further reason for why union members should oppose mass deportations, Scott Marshall explains that the threat of deportation has been used countless times to intimidate immigrant workers from joining unions. “Even when you’ve been following the rules and have a Green Card, the threat of deportation or of your community being raided in the middle of the night oftentimes scares workers enough that they might not join a union,” Marshall explains. “This is a human rights and workers’ rights fight. We cannot be divided.”



Join Veterans of Steel

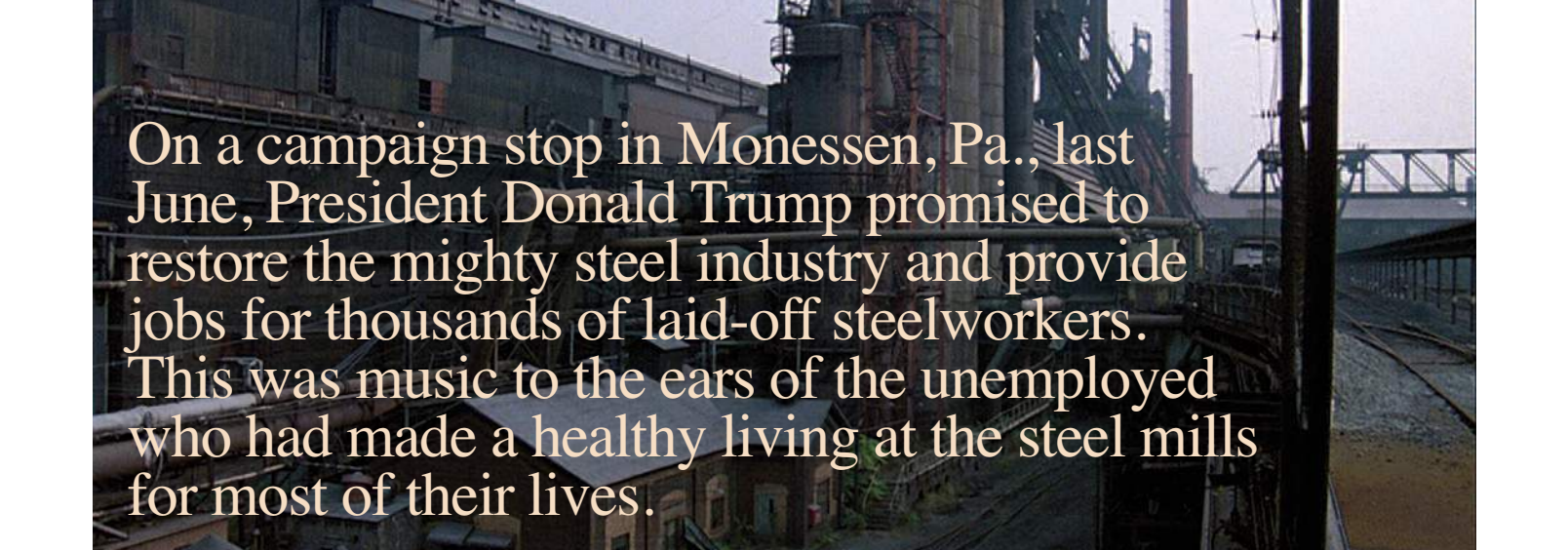
At the 2017 Constitutional Convention our union committed to exploring the creation of Veterans of Steel, a place in the United Steelworkers (USW) where those who served or who are serving our country can find resources, camaraderie, support and a way to fight for core issues such as a fully-funded Veterans Administration (VA) or protecting and creating family-supporting jobs after service.

If you are a USW member or retiree who’s also a military veteran, go to www.usw.org/vetsofsteel to complete the form so we can be in touch with more information about Veterans of Steel. As the program is developed, we would like your ideas about how we can best help you and other veterans.

You can also text VET to 47486 to join.*

We’ll send everyone who signs up a free “Veteran of Steel” sticker.

*Message and data rates may apply. You can opt out at any time by replying STOP. For full terms: usw.org/text.



On a campaign stop in Monessen, Pa., last June, President Donald Trump promised to restore the mighty steel industry and provide jobs for thousands of laid-off steelworkers. This was music to the ears of the unemployed who had made a healthy living at the steel mills for most of their lives.

Keep Your Promise, Mr. President

People were looking for a change, one that would bring back the glory days of a fine middle-class life. After all, the southwestern Pennsylvania Mon Valley was once the steel production capital of the United States.

Trump told the crowd, “It will be American steel that sends our skyscrapers soaring, soaring into the sky, beautiful sight, more beautiful with American steel. We are going to put American steel and aluminum back into the backbone of the country.”

With his rhetoric, many United Steelworkers voted for Trump because they felt he was talking to them and would deliver on his promise. The USW endorsed Hillary Clinton but it is apparent there were many defections from the union ranks.

If Hillary Clinton was president today, the steel industry would be in better shape had she not done one thing concerning the industry.

Rushing to beat American sanctions under Donald Trump, the amount of Chinese and other foreign imported steel has increased by nearly 22 percent during the president’s first nine months in office.

President Trump and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross launched a rarely used Section 232 investigation in April to determine if the effects of steel and aluminum imports pose a threat to these American industries and to the national security of the United States. Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to conduct these comprehensive investigations.

Public hearings were held at the Commerce Department in May and June and the administration set a self-imposed deadline of June 30 to release the findings and potential retaliatory actions by the United States against China and other foreign nations who are dumping their excess products into the U.S., weakening industries that protect America’s national security.

Despite Ross’ promise to act quickly on these top-priority matters, it is now November and the Trump administration has failed to address these



urgent problems. American steel and aluminum workers continue to lose their jobs and the U.S. is at further risk during a possible military confrontation if we no longer have the capabilities to ramp up our armaments without depending on foreign-made steel and aluminum.

A group of more than 60 USW members from around the country descended upon Washington, D.C. during the week of September 18 to visit senators and staff members to continually stress the importance of an immediate solution. Just two days later, however, Ross spoke with steelworkers and stated the delayed Section 232 investigation report will not be released until Congress deals with tax reform.

And Trump has earlier said the Section 232 report would not be made public until after tax reform and infrastructure are in place.

Well, USW brothers and sisters can’t afford to wait.

All SOAR members and active United Steelworkers are encouraged to contact your representatives in Congress and let them know America’s national security and the jobs it provides come first and foremost. Taxes and infrastructure will take years to resolve, during which time America may not be able to defend itself.

Contact your U.S. Representative at their district offices or call the Capitol switchboard in Washington, D.C (202) 224-3121 where your call will be directed to your Senator or Representatives’ Capitol office.

Let it be known that the hard-working, middle-class wants their jobs, pensions and health care back.

After all, American steel is what built this country.

Jeffrey Bonior is a staff writer for the Alliance for American Manufacturing.

No Ordinary Annual Picnic

In July, USW District 11 SOAR had their annual picnic in Mountain Iron, Minnesota—it was no ordinary picnic! Longtime SOAR activist, Bonnie Carey, now the District 11 SOAR Executive Board Member, delivered a presentation to highlight ways that the SOAR chapters can play significant roles in helping their communities. Bonnie shared her experiences of participating in picket lines, helping with local election campaigns, attending rallies and more. There were a number of special guests, including representatives from the offices of U.S. Senators



Al Franken (D-Minn.) and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), as well as U.S. Representative Rick Nolan (D-Minn.-8). State Rep Julie Sandstede (D-Fla., H6A) attended, in person, to talk with USW members about the issues affecting seniors, and to hear their feedback. Also in attendance were various representatives from the AFL-CIO. This event was a great representation of how SOAR chapters can bring retirees together to share ideas across their district, while breaking bread with state and federal government officials that need to hear our union perspectives.

Bonnie Carey

D11 SOAR: Mobilizing in the Midwest



Trump's Executive Order on Health Care is Bad Medicine

On Thursday, October 12, President Trump signed an executive order that could undermine the affordability and quality of health insurance in America. Congressional leaders couldn't enact their failed Trumpcare bill, so the President hastily reached for his pen, despite admitting earlier this year that he had no idea "health care could be so complicated." The Trump administration also announced it was ending key cost sharing reimbursements to insurance companies, which help millions of low-income Americans afford their health insurance. This reckless decision will force insurers to raise premiums by nearly 20 percent, which could make insurance simply unaffordable for some consumers.

The executive order instructs Trump's cabinet agencies to look at ways to allow insurers to sell health policies across state lines. The aim is to open up association health plans (currently covering employees of various businesses and organizations) to people in the individual market. These insurance policies would not be subject to the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) rules mandating coverage for pre-existing conditions or essential benefits, in theory making them cheaper—but also skimpier.

These lower-cost, bare bones plans could siphon off younger and healthier enrollees, leaving older and sicker patients in the ACA exchanges and driving up their premiums. Ultimately, this could result in a death spiral for the ACA. Not only does the selling-across-state-lines concept undermine important patient protections and drive up premiums for the most vulnerable, particularly older, near retirees, it has never proven viable for insurers or the insured. That's because this idea of interstate insurance is complex. Most insurance plans have specific networks of doctors and hospitals and they are unlikely to have many health care providers for you in all states.

Legal challenges to the President's executive order are already being prepared in the states if these harmful changes are enacted—so this isn't a done deal by any means. (e-mail communication from NCPSSM, 10/19/17)

Don't Miss this IMPORTANT DEADLINE

Open Enrollment season runs through December 7. Have you looked at your Medicare Part D and Advantage plans to ensure they still work for you? Each year, both Medicare Advantage and Part D plans make changes to their benefits, cost-sharing, provider networks and monthly premiums. That means the plan that best served you in 2017 may not be the best plan for you next year.

Given that out-of-pocket health care costs consume 25 percent of a Social Security check, it's especially important that beneficiaries take the time to ensure last year's plans still meet their needs.

In addition, for anyone impacted by hurricanes Harvey, Irma or Maria, Medicare is offering a special enrollment

period that runs through the end of the year which will allow individuals affected by these hurricanes to enroll, dis-enroll or switch Medicare health or prescription drug plans. To request special enrollment, individuals may contact 1-800-MEDICARE.



WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Secure retirements. Good jobs. Workers' rights. Safe and healthy workplaces. Stronger communities. Protection from illegal and unfair trade. A safety net for when life throws us curveballs. These are the things that build a fair economy where everyone can benefit—not just the wealthiest few. This is what grows the middle class and creates a better nation.

For over two decades, USW members and retirees have been working for these goals through Rapid Response, our union's legislative education and action program. It's not only for us. It's for our kids, our grandkids, and all those coming after us. We have a legacy to leave.

Whether you are a member of a SOAR chapter or an individual USW retiree, we need your help. If you're not yet engaged in Rapid Response, please reach out to the coordinator from your district and get plugged in. There are easy activities that you can do on your own or with a group to make a real difference. We're all in this together!

DISTRICT 1	Randie Pearson	419-779-0446
DISTRICT 2	Sue Browne	269-838-5956
DISTRICT 4	Mark McDonald	716-553-0239
DISTRICT 7	Jerome Davison	219-617-5338
DISTRICT 8	Ronnie Watson	540-354-6173
DISTRICT 9	Shane Mitchell	205-631-0137
DISTRICT 10	George Piasecki	610-368-9970
DISTRICT 11	Bob Ryan	651-295-4155
DISTRICT 12	Catherine Houston	510-457-5175
DISTRICT 13	Andy Fiye	918-232-8128





Washington Wrap

By Ken Kovack
SOAR Legislative Director
Washington, D.C.

What's In Your Wallet?



Of all the cards we keep in our wallet, there is one that stands alone as the most important but most seldom used—our Voter Registration Card. Sure, you might use your credit or debit card every day, and your Social Security or Medicare card every month.

But, what's more important than the card you pull out one time every year, when you vote for representatives who can decide whether or not you have Social Security or Medicare in the first place?

Voting is fundamental to our democracy. Voting can and does change public policy.

Shamefully, voter turnout in the United States is extremely low compared to many other countries. For example—in 2016, 60 percent voted,

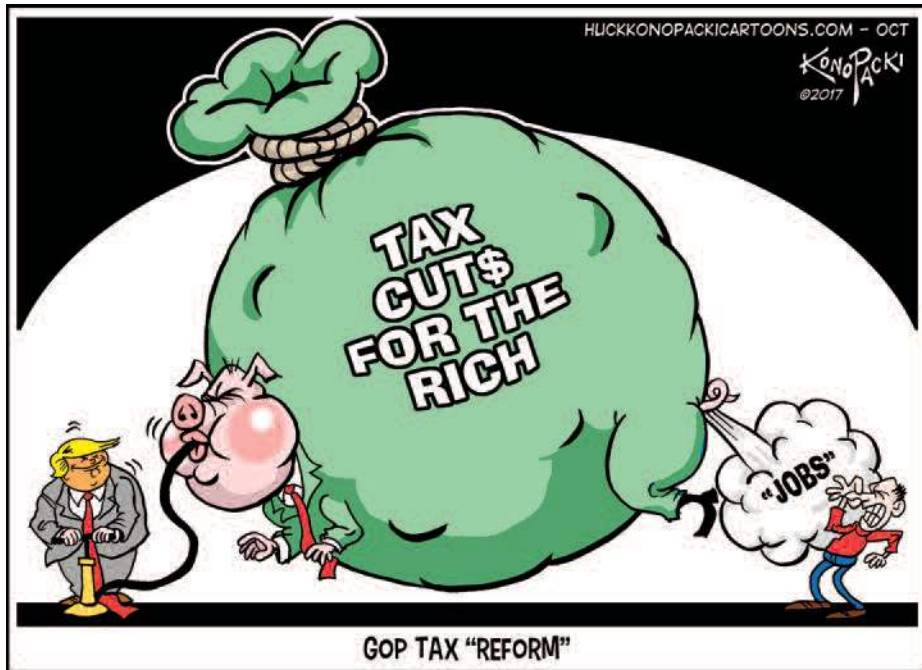
which was up from 2012 at 58.2 percent, however, 61.6 percent voted in 2008. Worse yet, 90 million eligible voters did not participate in the elections of 2016.

In Maine, 72.8 percent led the nation in turnout with New Hampshire a close second at 72.5 percent. The state of Texas, with the most burdensome voter laws, came in with a low of 51.6 percent voting. Comparatively, 87 percent of Belgians voted, followed by 86.4 percent in Turkey.

It is time to change because the threat to vital programs and unions cannot be minimized. Too much is at

risk. Your wallet holds the key to protect and expand our safety net. We all know that SOAR has always been, and will continue to be working on protecting our interests. Every USW retiree should consider joining SOAR. We can make a difference when we work together with our union leadership and like-minded organizations.

Editor's Note: The timing of this publication just missed Election Day. I hope you pulled your voter registration card from your wallet and exercised your right to vote this year and I encourage you to continue doing so in future elections.



Social Security Benefits to Increase in 2018

Social Security's annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is an increase in the benefit amount people receive each month. By law, the monthly Social Security and SSI federal benefit rate increases when there is a rise in the cost of living. The government measures changes in the cost of living through the Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index (CPI-W).

The CPI-W rises when prices increase, making your cost of living go up. This means prices for goods and services, on average, are a little more expensive. The COLA helps to offset these costs.

As a result, more than 66 million Americans will see a 2.0 percent increase in their Social Security and SSI benefits in 2018.

Other changes that will happen in January 2018 are based on the increase in the national average wage index. For example, the maximum amount of earnings subject to Social Security payroll tax will increase to \$128,700. The earnings limit for workers younger than "full" retirement age will increase to \$17,040 and the limit for people turning "full" retirement age in 2018 will increase to \$45,360.

www.socialsecurity.gov

Editor's Note: Please see "Offset Medicare Part B" article on page 15.





Don't Let the GOP Raise the Medicare Eligibility Age, Cut \$1 Trillion from Medicaid

By Robert Roach, Jr.

The House recently passed its 2018 budget resolution, bringing House Speaker Paul Ryan one step closer to cutting \$1.5 trillion from Medicare and Medicaid. Eighteen Republicans voted against the resolution, along with all the Democrats who were present.

The vote allows the GOP to pass its tax bill with a simple Senate majority, instead of a 60-vote threshold. The GOP's House and Senate proposals are different, but both cut Medicare and Medicaid ruthlessly. The Senate budget requires cuts of \$473 billion from Medicare and about \$1 trillion from Medicaid over the next 10 years.

These cuts are completely unnecessary. And the GOP is doing it just so they can give tax cuts to corporations and billionaires.

The House budget raises the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67 and turns guaranteed health benefits into a system of inadequate vouchers. Cuts of more than \$1 trillion to Medicaid will force states to make deep cuts either in the number of people who receive benefits or to the level of health care provided.

The House of Representatives is making a point with their budget priorities. They are saying that seniors are not a top priority.

Here is their plan: offer enormous tax giveaways to corporations and the wealthy, watch the deficit skyrocket, and then announce that we have no choice but to cut Medicare and Medicaid.

It is almost as if Republicans forget that President Trump pledged not to cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. Fortunately, Alliance members have an excellent memory.

Dial 866-828-4162 to be connected to your Senators' offices.

Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously the General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW.

For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.



2018 Social Security COLA will be 2.0%

Not Enough to Offset Medicare Part B Premiums

The Social Security Administration announced that next year's Social Security cost of living adjustment (COLA) will be 2.0%. That means an increase of \$25 per month for the average beneficiary.

According to the nonpartisan Kaiser Foundation, however, this will not be enough to offset the rise in Medicare Part B premium costs for 2018.

Coverage for Medicare Part B is optional, but 91 percent of Medicare beneficiaries are signed up for it. The program covers

physicians' care, outpatient care, certain medical equipment, laboratory tests, some health home services, and other care for patients. According to a Senior Citizens League study, retirees have lost one-third of their buying power since 2000 because COLA increases haven't been able to catch up with skyrocketing health care and housing costs. Researchers expect Part B premiums to increase an average of 5.4 percent each year between 2017 and 2024.





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



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