



# THE DISPATCHER

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Photo by Robbin Doyno

# Legislative attack targets ILWU longshore workers

**E**lections have serious consequences for ILWU members and their families – especially for ILWU longshore workers who recently found themselves being targeted by Republican members in Congress. Here's how it happened.

In 2014, Republicans took over the United States Senate and increased their majority in the House of Representatives. The Democratic Party played it safe and failed to outline a progressive agenda for working families. In the absence of a Democratic agenda to vote for, voters found something to vote against, registering their anger against growing unfairness in the economy. Attitudes measured by exit polls were negative in the extreme, with 8 in 10 saying they were dissatisfied by the performance of Congress, and 54 percent giving the thumbs down

to Obama. A majority of voters were unhappy with the U.S. economic system itself, with nearly two thirds saying it's unfair and favors the wealthy - and only 32 percent saying it's fair to most people.

Instead of changing the economy to work for the majority of Americans, the newly elected Republican Congress decided to throw their weight behind the rich and powerful, trampling the working class. One unifying belief held by the Republican leadership is that they do not like strong unions, so they have focused their efforts against a strong union – the ILWU – that fights without apology for good wages, health and pension benefits, and safe workplaces.

In the last month, U.S. Senators, Senator Cory Gardner (Republican from Colorado) and Senator John Thune (Republican from South Dakota) made speeches on the floor of the U.S. Senate, asking other

Senators to support their efforts to punish the ILWU for standing up to employers. Senator Gardner proposed legislation to extend powers to Governors to meddle in the collective bargaining process between the ILWU and the Pacific Maritime Association. Senator Thune introduced legislation (The Port Performance Act) which mandates that the federal government monitor productivity and gather statistics on longshore workers.

Unfortunately, a part of the Port Performance Act (S. 1298) was included in a comprehensive transportation bill that passed the Senate. Senator Mazie Hirono (Democrat-Hawaii) prepared an amendment to the bill that would have struck the port metrics section from the bill, but Senate Republicans refused to allow her to offer the amendment on the floor. The Senate Republican leadership also slipped in a provision that

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## LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

**Dear Editor,**

I'm writing to recognize the contributions of ILWU Local 10 pensioner Andrew Dulaney Jr., who struggled to improve equality and opportunity in our union before his passing on July 11, 2015.

Born in 1935 at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Andrew, Jr. moved with his family to Oakland in 1942. They were part of the "great migration" that saw millions of African Americans leave the South in search of better jobs and opportunities. Andrew's father and older brother soon joined the ILWU, and Andrew, Jr. followed in 1959. He was elected to serve as Business Agent in 1987, and his work during the years that followed compelled me to write this letter.



*Andrew Dulaney Jr., as a young man.*

In the early 1990's, a rally was held at the Port of Los Angeles to support hundreds of Local 13 Allied Division rail yard workers in Long Beach. Andrew and I were among many who attended that rally, along with other African American brothers from Locals 8, 19 and 23 in the Pacific Northwest. At the rally, these brothers told us about some disturbing incidents of racism and discrimination in their locals, so the following day we invited them to tell us about the problems in more detail at a small meeting that included Local 10 members Dave Stewart and Leo Robinson. Our group decided to investigate further and some of us flew to Tacoma. There we heard about problems that included Blacks and Latinos being left out of the registration process or limited to only a few slots. We also heard allegations of discriminatory dispatch practices that hurt women, along with reports that entry into the Walking Boss locals was biased against Blacks in Portland and Seattle.

I served on the International Executive Board (IEB) at the time and first raised the issue there. The Board assigned me to serve on a three-man fact-finding committee that included Local 34 member Richard Cavalli and Local 52 member James Dean. Our committee prepared a report that confirmed these problems, and the Board voted to refer the matter to the upcoming Coast Longshore Division Caucus meeting. At the Caucus, we presented a detailed, confidential report describing the problems of racial and gender discrimination in some locals. The Caucus responded with a multi-point plan authorizing International officers to resolve specific complaints; authorizing the Coast Committee to address registration and dispatch complaints, and ensure fairness to all; proposing that the PMA add an affirmative Action program to the registration process; inviting the African American Longshore Coalition (founded at Local 10 and open to all) to make a full report at the next caucus meeting; encouraging more outreach to community groups about the ILWU's registration opportunities; recommending that the International Convention develop an educational and affirmative action program; and finally they reaffirmed a 1992 resolution that the union and locals would not share the cost of any penalties imposed on another local or individual if discrimination was proven.

At the next Caucus meeting, which followed the 1994 International Convention, Andrew and other African American Longshore Coalition members led a two-day review of issues and solutions. At that meeting, Andrew proposed what has come to be known as the "Dulaney" amendment; reiterating the position that the union and locals are barred from paying any settlement or judgement involving a proven case of discrimination. This policy was in force when one large northwest local was later found guilty of discrimination in a federal court case and had to shoulder the entire burden of a costly settlement among the members who had tolerated the discrimination.

I'm glad that Andrew Dulaney Jr. helped our union strive to end those regrettable episodes of discrimination and unfairness, and I wanted to make sure that a new generation of union members will understand the issues he tackled and contribution he made.

Sincerely,

**Lawrence Thibeaux, Local 10 pensioner  
Oakland, CA**

**Dear Editor,**

I am a surviving spouse of ILWU Local 34 member Ivan Johnson who passed away in February of 2006.

I want to thank the union for providing me with a nice pension, but most of all for the wonderful medical coverage that I have. Medical coverage is so important as one ages. Many of my friends wish they had medical coverage like I have. So often we take things for granted and don't express our appreciation. The last pension increase prompted me to write and say "thank you" for the pension and medical help I receive, which makes my life so much easier and secure.

**Dolores Johnson  
Santa Rosa, CA**

**Dear Editor,**

My name is Daniel Conway, and I'm proud to have been the son of John A. Conway, a longtime Local 34 member. Like many who came from the "Greatest Generation," my father remembered the desperate years during the Great Depression and he served in World War II. When he returned home, work was hard to find – sometimes there was only 15 minutes at a time. He and other union members had to fight like hell to get a 2-hour minimum, then fight like hell to get a 4-hour minimum. They finally got an 8-hour minimum.

Because of the ILWU, our family was able to have health care benefits – including polio vaccinations that protected me and my sister from the disease that afflicted my father and so many others before it was eliminated.

My dad passed away in 1994, after a career as a Ship's Clerk and Supercargo. He and his union buddies were serious about helping each other on and off the job. I can remember the days when former ILWU International President Brian McWilliams came to help my dad and I re-roof our 3600 square foot home. I also remember the day when dad came home with a 300-pound halibut in his Volkswagen, and asked me to cut it up so he could share it with union members on the waterfront.

I worked for a decade as a union meat cutter, then retired from PG&E after being part of the union there for 23 years. During the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, I quickly checked on my family then spent days helping so many people who needed their power and gas restored.

Today I'm concerned about the situation facing young people with so few union jobs. That's why I'm ordering two copies of all the books and videos that the ILWU sells in the back of The Dispatcher. I'm planning to read them myself – and share them with my son – so that he'll understand what my dad always told us about the importance of unions.

Thanks be to God that we had a union, because it was the only thing that saved us and made it possible for dad to provide us with a good life. The union, my father used to say, "is the best of my heart, mind and will. The union is the source of my security and survival for all of my days."

The same is true for me and my family today. We need to help the next generation make it possible for them too.

**Daniel Conway  
Fort Mitchell, Kentucky**

**Dear Editor,**

It was an honor for us, as pensioners and ILWU Canada officers, to be able to join you at St. Peters cemetery in Nanaimo to witness the dedication of a monument to six longshoremen buried there many years ago.

The fact that this was being done some 129 years after the tragic accident which caused their deaths and that the gravesite was unknown for years, is nothing less than remarkable. The dedicated efforts of your Club, in addition to the excellent work done by historian Dr. Ron Magen in locating the burial site, all came together on the morning of July 29th.

All members of the ILWU, in attendance or not, stood tall at this ceremony, making us proud of being members of an organization that puts such value on our history and those who came before us.

**Barry Campbell, Secretary Treasurer  
ILWU Canada Pensioners Organization**

Send your letters to the editor to: *The Dispatcher*, 1188 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109-6800 or email to [editor@ilwu.org](mailto:editor@ilwu.org)

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# Working with allies to protect the union, community and environment

The ILWU in Southern California is building bridges with pro-labor environmental groups and oil refinery workers to protect good union jobs in the harbor area and safeguard residents living nearby – including many ILWU families.

## Pro-union enviros

“We’re working with national environmental groups who are proudly pro-union, said Southern California District Council (SCDC) President Cathy Familathe, pointing to Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) and Food and Water Watch (FWW). Along with the Sierra Club, these national groups have pledged to work with unions in order to hold corporations more accountable. “Ideally, this can help workers win safety improvements on the job while the community also benefits from securing good jobs and a cleaner local environment.” In Southern California, the effort seems to be producing results.

## Fracking in Carson

On June 27, the SCDC co-sponsored a public workshop about “fracking” – the process of injecting chemicals deep underground to loosen oil and gas deposits. After studying the issue and considering the possibility of permanently contaminated groundwater, the SCDC took a position against fracking in the harbor area.

## Supporting a ban

A month later on July 28, the Planning Commission at the City of Carson met to decide whether to ban fracking within the city limits. Several years ago, oil companies announced plans to frack hundreds of nearby wells, but a strong community organizing campaign resulted in a temporary halt. At the July 28th meeting, large numbers of concerned community members and two absent Commissioners resulted in a postponement of the fracking decision until September 8, when another strong turnout is expected.

## Refinery workers

The ILWU has also been supporting harbor area refinery workers, who have their own history of working with environmental groups. Most refinery workers in the area belong to United Steelworkers (USW) Local 675 in Carson, a union that shares progressive values with the ILWU and is led by Secretary-Treasurer Dave Campbell.

One distinguished refinery union leader was Tony Mazzocchi, who died in 2002 and was a good friend of Dave Campbell. Together they and others believed it was important to build bridges between unions and environmental groups. Steelworker President Leo Gerard called Mazzocchi “one of the most visionary trade unionists in America who wrote the book on building alliances between workers and environmentalists.”

## No job give-aways

Pacific Coast Pensioner President Rich Austin, recently circulated a booklet within the ILWU that was inspired by Mazzocchi and published by refinery workers in 1991, called: Understanding the Conflict Between Jobs and the Environment.

“Mazzocchi said it was crazy to ask workers to give up their jobs for environmental reasons if there was no better alternative,” said Austin. “Mazzocchi believed that unions must first protect jobs, incomes and working conditions for members – but he also believed that we need safer jobs and a healthier environment – so he asked how could we accomplish both goals?”

## Funding a “Just Transition”

Mazzocchi’s solution, says Austin, was to create a “superfund” for workers with enough money to make a “just transition” from older, dirty and dangerous jobs to newer, cleaner and safer ones. “Of course, America doesn’t have such a fund now, but the idea makes sense now more than ever, and it’s something we should encourage unions and environmental groups to support,” he says, noting that workers in the coal and oil industry are prime candidates.



**So Cal solidarity:** Local 13 members (L-R) Robert Cobarruvias and David Serrato delivered cases of bottled water to striking refinery workers last March that were received by Local 675 Secretary-Treasurer Dave Campbell and Chief of Staff Xochitl Cobarruvias. The solidarity gesture from Local 13 was one of several efforts along the coast to support refinery workers who were forced to strike in order to win a contract with the nation’s largest oil companies.

## Like the G.I Bill

Mazzocchi got the superfund/just transition idea after fighting fascism in WWII, and returning home with millions of other soldiers who got free training, education and living expenses under the G.I. Bill. That opportunity improved life for Mazzocchi and millions in his generation, so he wondered why something similar couldn’t be done to help workers doing dangerous and obsolete jobs today.

## Obama & Congress

There was a brief time during Obama’s first term when unions and environmental groups were lobbying together for a massive federal jobs program to help America make the necessary transition toward renewable energy. But Obama used his political chits to pass the Affordable Care Act and succumbed to pressure to remove White House advisor Van Jones, who was the administration’s key advocate for the “green” jobs alliance with unions. Only token funding was made available for green jobs before Republican majorities took control of Congress and slashed jobs and alternative energy programs. That left groups to fight issue-by-issue over refineries, drilling projects, pipelines and energy plants.

## Local 13 solidarity

After a tentative agreement on the new longshore contract was reached in February of 2015, Local 13 did some solidarity outreach to some of the 30,000 refinery workers across the country who were trying to negotiate contracts with major oil companies. Local 13 members David Serrato and Robert Cobarruvias delivered cases of bottled water to refinery workers on the picket lines in March.

## Familiar issues

The issues facing oil workers were familiar: management wanted to replace permanent union workers with contractors who used temporary workers – sometimes non-union – who were lower-paid with less training and less refinery work experience, so they were more likely to cause accidents and get injured or killed.

## Refineries want “flexibility”

Like longshore work on the docks, labor costs at refineries are a relatively small portion of the industry’s overall expenses, but that hasn’t stopped oil companies from pushing to cut labor costs and reduce union power on the job by subcontract-

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**Celebrating 100 years of struggle and solidarity:** Australia’s mine workers who belong to the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), celebrated their 100th anniversary at a Sydney event attended by 350 members in July with ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams. Adopting the slogan, “Stand up. Speak out. Come home,” the union hopes to build solidarity for the challenges ahead as they face increasingly anti-union employers and politicians. (L-R) General Secretary Joe Fleetwood of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, CFMEU Mining and Energy Division General Secretary Andrew Vickers, ILWU Secretary Treasurer Willie Adams and President Carl Findlay of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.



**Honoring LeRoy King:** Hundreds of people from all walks of life gathered at the Local 10 hall in San Francisco to pay tribute to the life ILWU pensioner LeRoy King on July 25th. Family members, Trade union activists, religious leaders, and elected officials shared stories and memories of the many ways King touched their lives. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi spoke at the event and presented the King family with a flag that flew over the Capitol on the day of his passing.

ILWU International President Robert McEllrath also spoke at the memorial about the impact King had on him as a union member. He praised King’s leadership in helping break down the color line that prevented African Americans from holding leadership positions in Local 6. McEllrath was followed by ILWU Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams who praised King’s strength of character and life-long commitment to fighting for Civil Rights and the working class. Adams noted the King was still getting arrested in acts of civil disobedience to defend workers well into his 80s.



# Working with allies to protect the union, community and environment

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ing, automating, requiring mandatory overtime instead of hiring more workers, and “combining” jobs to boost what they call “flexibility.”

## Cost-cutting risks

The consequences of oil industry cost cutting have been dramatic for workers and communities. While long-shore workers were entering the final days of their contract fight on February 18, refinery workers were also negotiating when an explosion ripped through the Exxon-Mobil refinery in Torrance. The blast rocked neighborhoods with the force of a mild earthquake and injured three workers. Many homes in the harbor area were covered with snowy white ash that irritated residents’ skin. Previous explosions at the same refinery occurred in 1988 and 1994, killing one worker and injuring 37. After the explosion, community and environmental groups joined forced forces to call for greater safety measures advocated by the union.

## Chevron disaster

In 2012, an explosion and fire at Chevron’s bay area refinery in the city of Richmond also united refinery workers and residents after the disaster almost killed workers, endangered emergency responders and sent thousands of residents to hospital emergency rooms with respiratory complaints. Chevron eventually pled guilty to six criminal charges, paid a \$2 million fine and was put on probation for 3½ years. The pattern of violations has continued, with Chevron agreeing to pay fines this August of \$146,000 for 22 air pollution violations between 2012 and 2014.

## History of violations

Unfortunately, Chevron’s long history of violations includes previous fires and explosions at the Richmond refinery in 1989 and 1999 that injured 8 workers and firefighters, triggering \$877,000 in fines for “willfully failing to provide protective equipment for employees.” In 1988 the company paid \$550,000 to settle a state lawsuit involving toxic emissions. That same year they paid the EPA \$1.5 million to settle 880 waste-water violations

at their El Segundo refinery near Los Angeles. In 1992, Chevron pled guilty to criminal and civil charges, plus an \$8 million fine involving an offshore drilling platform in the Santa Barbara Channel. The same year they paid \$1 million in penalties for Clean Air Act violations at their Philadelphia refinery. In 1993 Chevron plead no contest to criminal violations and paid a \$550,000 fine involving an oil spill off El Segundo. Also settled that year were \$17 million in proposed EPA fines for alleged violations of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) that were resolved for \$375,000. In 1996 Chevron agreed to pay \$700,000 to settle Clean Air Act charges connected with their refinery in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. In 1997 they agreed to pay \$1.1 million to settle federal charges that critical safety regulations were violated at an offshore drilling platform near Ventura, California. In 1998 Chevron agreed to pay \$540,000 to settle EPA charges that the company bypassed a wastewater treatment system at their Richmond refinery, resulting in toxic releases into the San Pablo Bay over a period of five years. In 2000 the company paid \$7 million to settle Clean Air Act violations at an offshore loading terminal near El Segundo. In 2001 Chevron agreed to pay a \$750,000 settlement involving their oil production facilities in Rangely, Colorado. Also in 2001, a group of companies including Chevron settled a lawsuit for \$422 million involving groundwater contamination in 20 states. This history, along with ongoing problems in other countries including Australia, have made Chevron the target of environmental and labor groups around the world, including the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF).

## Common ground

In Richmond, the Steelworkers union and environmental groups continue to maintain contact and work together when possible. Communities for a Better Environment, Movement Generation and the Sierra Club have supported the union’s call to limit subcontractors and increase safety. When the investigation into the cause of the 2012 explosion and fire showed Chev-



Photo by David Groves, WSLC

**Northwest support:** The ILWU’s (L-R) Local 25 President Johnny Decker, Pensioner President Rich Austin and Local 25’s Grant Landers joined with 100 other union and community supporters outside Tesoro’s massive refinery complex in Anacortes on March 20. Members of Local 12-591 went on strike for three weeks at the refinery beginning February 1. A nationwide tentative agreement was ratified by refinery workers on March 23 that addressed some concerns over safety, staffing and subcontracting. Members of ILWU Local 19 in Seattle expressed their solidarity by contributing \$7500 to help the strikers and families.

ron had been ignoring safety problems, it confirmed what both the union and environmental groups had been saying.

## Chevron’s counter-attack

Chevron responded to the emerging alliance between the Steelworkers and environmental groups in several ways. At the worksite, they used “divide and conquer” tactics to promote conflict between the Steelworkers Union and smaller unions affiliated with the building trades who were dependent on contract work.

## Public relations cover-up

Chevron also mounted a massive public relations campaign that involved buying every billboard inside the City of Richmond, distributing grants to local community groups and launching a company-controlled newspaper and website. But the company’s boldest move was aimed at controlling Richmond’s City Council – and defeating independent-minded Councilmembers who wanted the company to do a better job of protecting residents, safeguarding workers and paying their fair share of local taxes. Chevron spent a whopping \$3 million on their political effort last November that backfired when voters rejected the

company candidates in favor of more independent councilmembers.

## Wilmington refinery safety

Back in Southern California, Cathy Familathe was spreading the word about a July 29 rally sponsored by the Steelworkers Union, environmental groups and the ILWU’s Southern California District Council. The goal was to stop company-proposed refinery operator job cuts that threaten safety at the Phillips 66 refinery in Wilmington.

“Wilmington has some of the worst air quality in the U.S., and plenty of ILWU families live here or nearby,” she said. “The industry is pushing for longer shifts with fewer skilled union workers on duty, and that puts our community at risk.”

## The long view

Local 13 President Bobby Olvera Jr., agrees. “Most of us want to see America become less dependent on dangerous refineries and chemical plants in the future, and we’ve got more than our share here in the harbor community,” he said. “But until that transition happens, we need to make things as safe as possible for workers and residents who live here.”

## 2015 Pacific Coast Pensioners Association Convention

September 5-9, 2015 • San Francisco, California

Holiday Inn Hotel • Golden Gateway • 1500 Van Ness Avenue

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### ROOM RATES

\$170.00 per night (singles/doubles)

\$185.00 per night (triples)

\$200.00 per night (quads)

Plus applicable taxes

This year’s featured speaker and guest is Jhon Jairo Castro Balanta, President of the Buenaventura Port Workers Union in Colombia. “Congress passed the Colombia Free Trade Agreement despite the fact that Colombia is one of the most deadly places to be a labor leader”, said PCPA President Rich Austin. “The Labor Action Plan that President Obama and Colombian President Santos signed in 2011 promised enforcement of labor standards. As with every other phony free trade agreement gimmick, it failed to deliver. Colombia remains a dangerous country for union members. Jhon will fill us in on the current situation there.”

Also speaking at the event at the convention will be Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA 13).

The Convention won’t be all business. The Host Committee has range of enjoyable activities planned, including a banquet and dancing. In addition, drummer extraordinaire John Fisher and his group will perform. John is a member of the Bay Area Pensioners.

**“Pensioners, plan on attending. You’ll have a great time and you’ll have the opportunity to renew old acquaintances and make new friends”.**



# Fighting to save pensions

Local 26 members are putting into practice the “pension protection” resolution that passed unanimously at the ILWU’s International Convention in June.

Workers attended a meeting held in August, where they signed a letter to members of Congress who are backing the “Keep our Pension Promises Act” (Senate Bill 1631 and House Resolution 2844). The proposal would undo part of a law that passed in 2014 making it legal to cut pension benefits of current retirees. Support in Congress for the Pension Promises Act is being led by Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur of Ohio.

## War on pensions

It’s no secret that corporate America is trying to exterminate pensions. Big companies lobbied hard in 2014 to pass a law misleadingly called the “Multiemployer Pension Reform Act” (MPRA) which allowed pension benefits to be cut for current recipients. Sadly, several unions participated in the big-business coalition that lobbied for the new law allowing cuts.

## History of pensions

Pensions, like health care benefits, were won by union members who fought hard to win their improvements. Unions and radical political movements also pushed hard on President Franklin Roosevelt to establish the Social Security system during the 1930’s, but the plan was designed to prevent the elderly, disabled and widows from suffering extreme poverty – not to provide enough for a secure retirement. That fight for decent pensions was led after WWII by unions including the ILWU, Steelworkers and Autoworkers. Today, almost 40 million retired American workers are covered by pension plans, but the number is quickly decreasing as business interests push to cut all kinds of benefits and plans run into trouble.

## Pension problems

Many pension plans remain healthy – but others are in financial trouble. It’s important to understand how pension plans can run into trouble, and what can be done to fix and prevent problems.

## Employer greed

Some plans are in trouble because employers refuse to make fair contributions needed to support decent retirement benefits. With corporations and wealthy business owners gaining more power in the workplace and over lawmakers in Washington, DC, companies have increasingly been able to demand cutbacks in pensions, health benefits and hourly pay. One result is that working class Americans have seen their incomes frozen in real dollars for almost 30 years.

## Union responsibility

Unions sometimes also bear responsibility for allowing plans to get into trouble. In some cases, unions fail to help workers maintain power on the job, which allowed employers to easily push through cutbacks with little resistance from workers. In these cases, employers may be doing the dirty work, but they get away with it because unions have failed to help workers organize and hold the line or win improvements.

## Failing to organize

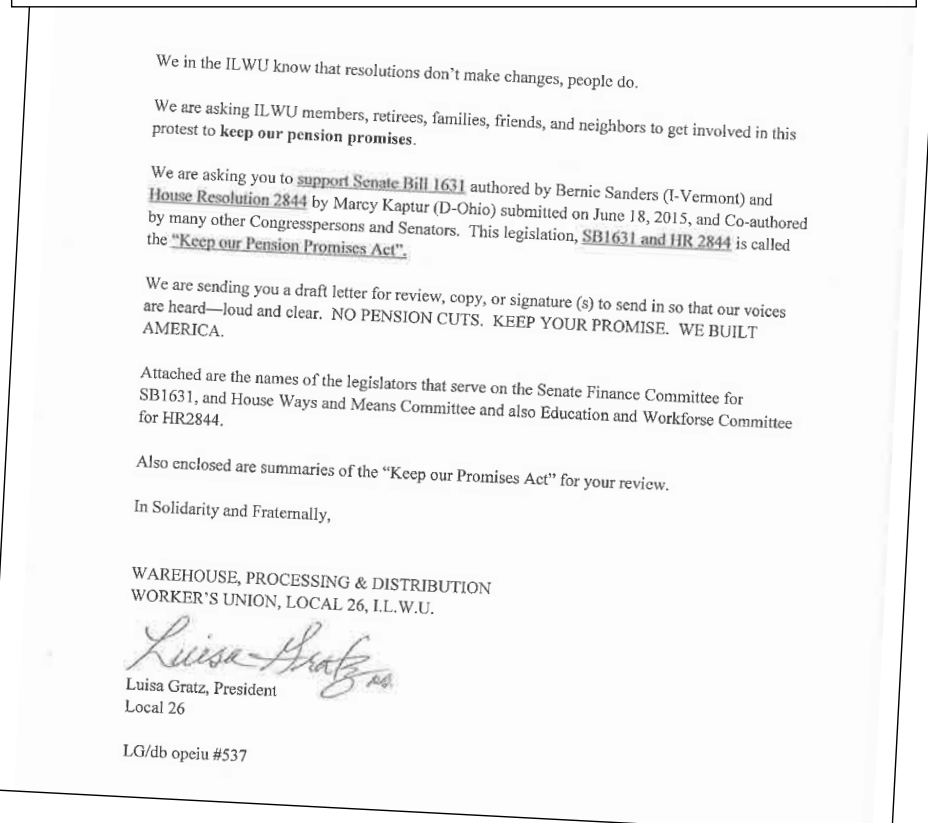
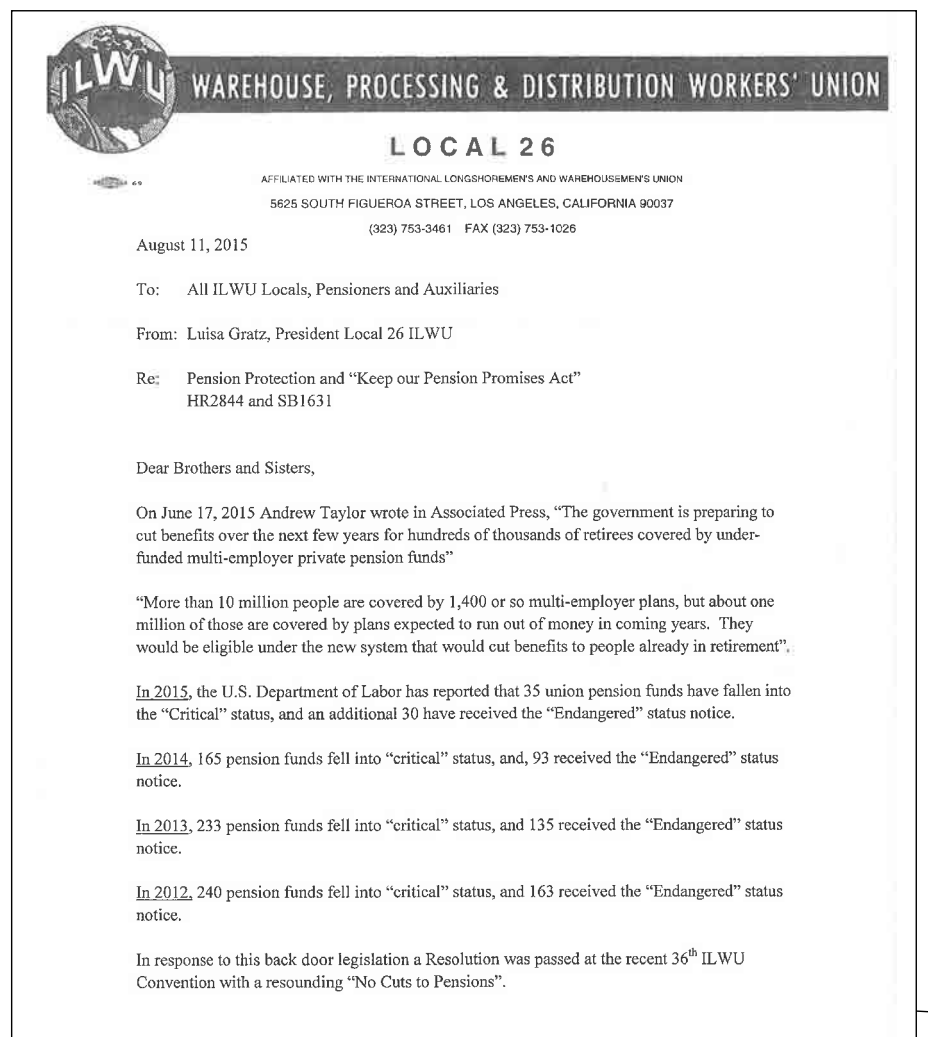
A similar problem happens when unions fail to organize, grow and maintain their strength. A declining membership base that can’t support a growing number of pensioners is a serious problem facing many pensions. Of course, many employers deliberately avoid unions by moving to non-union areas and using tricks to frustrate workers from forming unions. But employers have always played those games and unions who fail to overcome these predictable challenges by successfully organizing, are likely to face problems maintaining pensions, health benefits and good pay.

## Failing to manage

The best pension plans are managed jointly by union and employee representatives who share equal responsibility. Under the law, both union and employee representatives are obligated to act in the best interest of pension fund beneficiaries – known as “fiduciary responsibility.” Serious problems can result if either or both sides fail to do their jobs, by making poor investment decisions or failing to admit and correct problems when they arise.



**Protecting pensions:** Local 26 Secretary Treasurer Hector Aguilar (L) and President Luisa Gratz share materials they recently prepared to educate members about the “Keep Our Pension Promises Act.” law proposed by Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur of Ohio that would help pension recipients.



## Short-run thinking

Managing a union pension plan requires thinking ahead and planning for the future. Unions who are tempted to let employers stop contributing to pension funds when times are good, (known as a “vacation”) such as a rise in the stock market – may find it harder to recover when there’s a market downturn and money isn’t available to pay future beneficiaries. This condition, known as “underfunding,” has become a serious problem for many pension plans.

## Stock market risks

Everything in society – including pensions – is now impacted by critical investment decisions made by a relatively few powerful players on Wall Street. The financial collapse and recession in 2008 didn’t just cause millions of people to lose their jobs and homes – it also severely damaged many pension plans that are only now beginning to recover from massive losses. Unions, in order to protect members and pensioners, need to anticipate these risks when managing pension plans – and

also push for more accountability and regulation of Wall Street.

## Difficult choices

When pension plans do get into trouble, they usually face difficult, sometimes impossible, choices. One way out is what companies and some unions did in 2014 when they lobbied Congress to pass the “Multiemployer Pension Reform Act” that allowed pension plans to cut benefits in order to “save” plans in financial trouble. This approach stands in contrast to the “Keep Our Pension Promises Act” supported by Senator Bernie Sanders and Congresswoman Kaptur that would bar cuts and provide government funding to help pension plans recover. The problem is that big business – who now controls politicians in Washington – are strongly opposed to helping workers with pension problems. While they seem willing to do anything for Wall Street and the richest one-percent, helping the working class and unions is something they strongly oppose.

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# In memory of longshore workers killed in 1886 at the port of Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada

In the late 1800s, when a cargo vessel entered the Puget Sound, it would take on longshoremen at its first port of call, then those men would remain on the ship to work the vessel at all ports in the area.

In mid-June of 1886, the “Queen of the Pacific” put into Seattle where she took on six longshoremen. The longshoremen were charter members of the newly established Seattle Stevedores, Longshoremen and Riggers Union (SL&RU), predecessor of ILWU Local 19. During June and July, the vessel discharged and loaded cargo at docks in the Puget Sound, working its way up to British Columbia.

On June 9, 1886, the Queen was docked in Nanaimo, British Columbia, where a powerful blast ripped through the ship’s hold, taking the lives of the six charter members of the SL&RU: Hans Hanson, August Johnson, William Kade, William McDonald, Patrick Priestly and William Robee. For 59 years, the tragedy was the worst waterfront accident in the history of the West Coast.

The explosion occurred at five minutes before noon on July 29, 1886, at the Nanaimo coal dock where Seattle coal passers were winging coal into the corners of the ship’s hold. Suddenly, a ton of coal hit the center of the lower deck; a clap shook the ship from aft to stern and a sheet of flame flashed upward from the hold to the upper deck.

The SL&RU coal gang was engulfed by flames. As they were carried out of the lower hold, eyewitnesses saw that hair had been burned from their heads and faces; flesh hung in shreds and their “cries were most heart-rending.”

The severely burned men also included eight seamen. Horse-drawn wagons carried the injured to the Nanaimo Hospital where three doctors worked around the clock for two weeks to save lives. One by one, all of the longshore workers and two sailors died from seared lungs and skin burns.

A court of inquiry later determined that coal dust had ignited from spontaneous combustion. They ruled that the explosion was an accident that could not have been prevented. Ten months later, an explosion killed 155 miners at the same mine that provided coal for the “Queen of the Pacific.” Another court of inquiry found the second explosion also an “unavoidable accident.”

During the century that followed, coal miners in North America fought to end coal dust and methane explosions that were claimed by employers and their experts to be “unavoidable.” Union members in the United States finally succeeded in passing the Mine Safety and Health Act in 1977 that led to significant safety and health improvements.

Seattle longshore workers installed a plaque at the Nanaimo gravesite in 1886 to commemorate the deaths of their union brothers and to thank the people of Nanaimo for caring for them. But after 128 years, the plaque had disintegrated.

Seattle Pensioners commissioned Local 19 member and artist Ron Gustin to replicate the original plaque. The new monument is a bronze relief mounted on charcoal black granite that measures 20 x 6 x 28, and weighs 575 pounds. Father Piotr Lapinski, who was in charge of St. Peter’s Cemetery, graciously agreed to the re-installation. At the 2015 rededication Lapinski’s successor Father Krzysztof (Chris) Pastuszka delivered the benediction for the fallen six.

Seattle Pension President Carl Woeck read the original SL&RU message that was dedicated in 1886:

*“We wish to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation of the services rendered our six comrades by the citizens of Nanaimo and missionary Charles Seghers following the recent accident on the Queen of the Pacific. our fallen union brothers Hans Hanson, August Johnson, William Kade, William McDonald, Patrick Priestley and William Robee rest in*



**Exposing the truth:** IBU Secretary-Treasurer Terri Mast and Seattle City Council staffer Cindy Domingo led a discussion at ILWU Local 34 on July 17, following the screening of a 1-hour documentary film about murder of Mast’s husband and Domingo’s brother.

*peace in your care. Should the opportunity ever present itself, the people of Nanaimo may rest assured that the longshoremen of Seattle will endeavor to repay the debt that they so justly owe them.”*

Stevedores, Longshoremen and Riggers Union of Washington Territory Frederick D. Sprague, President Henry Storey, Secretary August 7, 1886

After the graveyard ceremony, Americans and Canadians met at the Bastion Hotel in Nanaimo for lunch. Seattle Pensioner Vice President Ian Kennedy was the banquet emcee. Speakers included ILWU Canada President Mark Gordienko, Local 19 President Jason Gross, Seattle Pensioner President Carl Woeck and ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams. Comradeship between Canadian and American longshoremen was the theme of the remarks. All stressed that remembrance of the terrible tragedy had strengthened the bonds of friendship, and that we are part of a worldwide family who will always be considered brothers and sisters.

At the luncheon, it was noted that another longshore tragedy happened in Vancouver, British Columbia, on March 6, 1945. The steamship Green Hill Park blew up and killed six longshoremen and two seamen. Somehow, whisky, flares and sodium chlorate



Scores of ILWU members and pensioners attended the rededication of the plaque that marks the death of longshore workers killed in the 1886 coal dust explosion in the Port of Nanaimo, British Columbia.

had been stored together in ‘tween decks in Hold 3. The flammable cargo exploded and blew out a steel bulkhead that killed Donald G. Bell, Joseph A. Brooks, William T. Lewis, Morton McGrath, Montague E. Munn and Walter Peterson. Seamen Julius Kern and Donald Munn, who were in a room directly above the exploding cargo, also perished from asphyxiation.

Ronald Magden, historian; with Mark Gordienko, President ILWU and Charles Zuckerman, Local 500

## Legislative attack targets ILWU longshore workers

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would allow automation costs to be funded through federal government grants to ports.

The ILWU Washington office and the ILWU grassroots legislation action committee are working long hours to stop the Port Performance Act and government-funded automation from being considered in the House of Representatives. We are engaged in meetings with House members who serve on the Transportation Committee including moderate Republicans. We are broadening our coalition to include port managers and some terminal operators who may want to work with the ILWU rather than work against us.

If the Port Performance Act passes both Houses and is signed by President Obama, it would cause many negative – and some unexpected consequences.

**It would impose a top-down system of federal productivity measurements on port workers.** The bill calls on the federal government to collect metrics from ports, including a count of the number of crane moves made by operators at each of our nation’s largest ports. If the legislation becomes law, some unscrupulous terminal operators will try to speed up operations on the docks in order to appear more appealing to shippers, endangering worker health and safety. The Bureau of Labor Statistics lists the number of accident reports in the longshore industry at 6.6 accidents per 100 workers. This is twice the rate of accidents in the coal mining industry. If the proposed legislation becomes law, accidents are likely to increase, with more worker deaths and permanently disabilities.

A provision added to the Senate Transportation bill lists electronic

roads and driverless trucks within ports as a project that could be funded through federal freight transportation grants. If this federal subsidy is implemented at maritime facilities, funding for automation projects will expand because of federal tax dollars, not market demands, and the number of workers employed at our nation’s ports could be significantly reduced. Driverless trucks and electronic roads will not increase overall port productivity – but they will destroy thousands of jobs and harm local communities, while the federal subsidies create a windfall for terminal operators – most of whom are foreign-owned.

ILWU members can play an important role in stopping ant-union legislation from becoming law. Your member of Congress can be reached at 202-225-3121. Tell your Representative the following:

- You are concerned the Senate Transportation bill has been combined with the Port Performance Act and a government subsidy for automation on the docks.
- The Senate Transportation bill would kill jobs by funding driverless trucks.
- The Port Performance Act will lead to increased accidents, fatalities and injuries.
- The Act will harm communities who depend on good jobs at our nation’s ports.
- Ask that your member of Congress vote against any bill that includes these measures.

This report was prepared by the ILWU’s Legislative Director, Lindsay McLaughlin.



## IN MEMORIUM

# Frank "Goggles" Gomez

Many Local 13 members are mourning the loss of Frank "Goggles" Gomez who passed on July 22, after giving generously to his family, union and community.

Frank's commitment to his family (wife Mary and children Frank Jr., Tony, Marina and Lisa, plus many grandchildren) was a source of great pride and joy. His devotion to helping his wife Mary with her regular dialysis appointments was impressive.

At work, Frank was nicknamed "goggles" because of the large glasses that he wore, but he won respect for handling the job of dispatcher with fairness and efficiency. He was first elected to "work behind the window" in 2002 and continued serving as long as he could until being struck down by cancer.

Frank's career on the waterfront started early while he was still a teenager in the 1970's when he was hired to "throw bananas." He put in 20 years at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard before

it closed, became a registered casual in 1984 and got his book in 1995.

Frank was blessed with immense talent and creativity. He started playing guitar when he was just 7 years old, went on to play many different instruments and developed a strong voice. He mastered the hard-to-play trombone and performed in the Banning High School Marching Band, while also playing in bars at the Pike (the Long Beach amusement park that was demolished in 1979). Some of the bands he joined over the years included Tierra, Home Cookin and Azure – which he led for 20 years when it became "the" band in the Harbor that did tons of benefits and was a dependable favorite at Bloody Thursday picnics.

Two generations of Harbor kids who played baseball owe a lot to Frank. He was passionate about seeing that young players had good coaching, umping, and top-notch fields to play in at Banning Park and the John Mendez (Gibson) Baseball Park. His work as a coach and umpire provided men-

torship for hundreds of young people, including some like Jerry Martinez who grew up and eventually worked alongside Frank on the waterfront.

"Frank was my umpire at a little League game when I was 10 years old, and he threw me out of the game for mouthing-off. When I grew up, we worked together and he always kidded me about it. But he made the right call back then, and always gave me good advice," said Martinez.

Frank impressed co-workers by always finding time to help others, despite his own incredibly busy life. Former Local 13 member Bruce Yip who's now at Local 63, recalled that "Frank was always there if you needed help – and if he couldn't help you, he'd find someone who could."

Those who had the honor of knowing and working with Frank say they won't forget the contributions that he made to their union and community – along with the many fine examples that he left behind for others to follow.



On August 4, a widely-attended memorial service was held to honor Gomez. His passing was recognized by hundreds on the waterfront who saw that the cranes at Total Terminals (TTI) were lowered and silent for an hour out of respect.

"Frank was a man of great integrity and love for his family and his union. He will be missed by all and forgotten by nobody," said Local 13 President Bobby Olvera, Jr.

## IN MEMORIUM

# ILWU Unit 223 member David Adams passes

David Adams passed away peacefully at his home in Unalaska/Dutch Harbor, Alaska on Jan. 10, 2015, at the age of 60. He was a caring and devoted father, a loyal son, an adventurous spirit, a mischievous prankster and a terrific friend. He was a longtime member and A card in ILWU Unit 223, serving the Aleutian Islands port.

He was born in Hobbs, New Mexico on Oct. 15, 1954, and grew up in Texas, New Mexico, and Japan. He moved to Alaska as a young man, and lived in Homer for several years where he was a jack-of-all-trades, a commercial fisherman and operator of setnet site. He refurbished a houseboat that he maintained on MacDonald Spit. He moved to Unalaska where he was a longshoreman, crane operator and dispatcher for many years. He was a well-

known presence in McCarthy, Alaska where he built and owned a cabin regarded as having the best view of the Wrangell Mountains.

To say that David had a passion for adventure would be an understatement. He was a skilled dog musher. He spent three months driving a dog team 1,600 miles across Baffin Island near Greenland where the wind chill reached 126 degrees below zero and where his eyes froze shut. He pioneered several new cross country routes with a dog team from Bethel to Nome to Point Hope. He mushed dogs along the entire north coast of Alaska, at one point breaking trail for 56 miles in a pair of snowshoes. He crossed the Harding Ice Field. He helped guide the first woman to summit Mt. Iliamna.

David's adventures were not limited to Alaska. He was a world traveler. Earlier in life, he was a self-described "danger junkie." His travels included places such as Northern Pak-

istan and Kashmir. He also traveled to other places in India, including a winter-time visit to Ladakh. He explored Egypt, China, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and many other exotic locations. He once traveled on the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

In a note to a friend nearly thirty years ago, David wrote, "As you grow older, you'll find the only things you regret are the things you didn't do. If the creator had a purpose in equipping us with a neck, he surely meant us to stick it out." Although he was taken from us much too soon, David did not get cheated in this regard. He lived life to its fullest. He was a large man, in all respects. He had a long neck, and he lived to take chances.

David had a brush with death in 2007. He was in a coma for months as family and friends sat by his bedside. He had the misfortune to lose a leg. The courage David displayed in getting through that ordeal will be

forever remembered by those who witnessed it.

For all of his adventures, David will be best remembered for his loving devotion to his daughters Denali and Anna. He was very proud of them. No one could doubt that he would have traded all of his adventures to be their father.

David is survived by his daughters Anna and Denali, his brother Daniel, his sister-in-law Sierra, his nephew Kona, his father Tam, and several other extended family members including his cousin Gordon with whom he was particularly close. David was predeceased by his mother Margaret, who adored him. Among other relatives who predeceased David were his Uncle Doyle and Aunt Rachel.

David left us much too soon. His stories, humor, generosity, and love for family and friends live on.

– Jim Paulin

## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 8:** Paul E. Nizdil; **Local 10:** Jamie M. Villalvazo; John Paradela; Levaile Harbin; David A. Banks; Haywood Richmond; Alfred L. Chappell II; Kyser Wilson; **Local 13:** Richard J. Linares; Louie A. Delacruz; Kevin W. Mc Arthur; Paul D. Montiel; Lewis F. Ohle; Maria G. Torres; Antonio C. Solis; Mary E. Howard; Pio Fernandez; Louis A. Gonzales; Josefino C. Gabriel; Earl B. Davenport; Robert H. Simons; Douglas L. Guentert; Carlos M. Gonzalez; Alan Shiraki; Freddie R. Heredia; Haywood Marshall; Nathaniel Bridgette Sr.; **Local 19:** John B. Deleo; Timothy D. Sipes; David J. Stapleton; John Crudup Jr.; **Local 21:** John R. Lowe; **Local 23:** Alice B. Douglas; Steven A. Peterson; Ronald

W. Seitz; Chester T. Mostrom; Daniel D. Spence; William H. Matheson; Terry W. Huet; **Local 34:** William A. Bonner Sr.; Nick J. Gentile; **Local 40:** Robin S. Slyter; Peter E. Mscichowski; **Local 46:** Larry M. Carlton; Jose Puga; Armando M. Hernandez; Daniel R. Lopez; **Local 52:** Glen C. Anderson; **Local 63:** Linda M. Salkeld; Frank Onorato; David A. Aprodia; Margaret Calderon; Harold O. Montoya; Lillian V. Bishop; **Local 92:** Penny J. Jarigese; Kenneth W. Tallmon; Steven J. Hellem Sr.; **Local 94:** Paul R. Loveridge; James P. McGovern; **Local 98:** Kris L. Kossman;

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 8:** Milan J. Browne; James Brennan; **Local 10:** Harry Rougeau; Hector Nunes; Gerry Butler; Andrew Dulaney; Evans T. Young; George

Hillenbrand; Joseph C. Pereira; Regina L. Cooper; **Local 13:** Gary C. Kelleher; John W. Hanson; Anthony V. Dulcich; Donnie Mcguire; Felis D. Alvarez; Adolph Negrete; Leroy W. Hansen; Louis A. Gonzales; **Local 19:** Robert D. Woeck; Robert E. Henslee; Jimmy J. Collins; **Local 21:** Jere G. Cochran; **Local 23:** Harold R. Anderson; George M. Yelovich; **Local 24:** John G. Young Jr.; **Local 29:** Ismael Revelez; **Local 34:** Luiz C. Capela; **Local 40:** Randy E. Ross; Myron F. Van Alstyne; **Local 63:** Michael A. De Luca; **Local 75:** Robert Hromadnik;

### DECEASED SURVIVORS:

**Local 8:** Gerda I. Thomassen; Mary A. Johnson; Helen Meier; **Local 10:** Bertha Miller; Mary Lavin; Clara Richardson; Enedina M. Uribe; Arlene

Grissom; Estelle Young; Mary C. Westbrook; Doris E. Nunnery; **Local 13:** Anita Melgoza; Orena Spight; Virginia Finlay; Dolores R. Gomez; Mary Jensen; **Local 19:** Jacqueline Lacey; Alma R. Stage; Fannie Frazier; Burley M. Moran; Gina Stuart; **Local 21:** Iris M. Seidl; Dorothy J. Rider; **Local 23:** Grace M. Cady; **Local 24:** Billie J. Shade; **Local 29:** Shirley M. Boulder; **Local 34:** Laverne Mc Donnell; **Local 40:** Marion R. Granstrom; Mary J. Walsh; **Local 50:** Martha A. Hall; **Local 52:** Irene F. Dicey; **Local 54:** Elizabeth R. Rendell; **Local 63:** Clara L. Garrabrant; **Local 75:** Sumi I. Mullen; **Local 91:** Betty A. Leonard; **Local 94:** Mary L. Gordon;

# Fighting to save pensions

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## Social Security also threatened

America's Social Security program is an important type of national pension plan that faces trouble in several decades, but not if simple changes are made soon. For example, asking the richest wage earners to simply pay their fair share would fix any financial problems the plan faces now. Contributions are paid jointly by employers and workers, and they fund a non-profit system that follows workers in most jobs. But Social Security benefits are relatively meager and were never designed to provide a full retirement benefit – although millions of older Americans depend exclusively on them – and more will probably do so in the future. A recent poll reported that one-third of workers expect that Social Security will be their primary source of retirement income. Despite the system's limitations, Social Security remains a critical benefit for the working class that is now under attack from big business. Wall Street and anti-union politicians want benefits cut and the system privatized so that Wall Street could make profits by managing individual Social Security accounts, which would be a disaster.

## Step forward

"Pensions are just one part of the bigger challenge that workers and unions face today, but all of us can do something to help," says Luisa Gratz. "We're contacting members of Congress to tell them that we support the 'Keep our Pension Promises Act,' which is a small but important step."

Copies of the letter Local 26 members sent to Congress, urging support for the "Keep Our Pension Promises Act" can be requested at [ofc@ilwu26.com](mailto:ofc@ilwu26.com)

Members of Congress who sit on key committees will soon decide whether to support the "Keep Our Pension Promises Act." These members and their addresses appear below:

### California

Xavier Becerra: 1226 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Susan Davis: 1214 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Mark DeSaulnier: 327 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Linda Sanchez: 2423 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Mike Thompson: 231 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Mark Takano: 1507 Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20515

### Oregon

Earl Blumenauer: 1111 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

Suzanne Bonamici: 439 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515

### Washington

Jim McDermott: 1035 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515

## A Helping Hand...

...when you need it most. That's what we're all about. We are the representatives of the ILWU-sponsored recovery programs. We provide professional and confidential assistance to you and your family for alcoholism, drug abuse and other problems—and we're just a phone call away.

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(310) 547-9966

**ADRP—Oregon**  
Brian Harvey  
5201 SW Westgate Dr. #207  
Portland, OR 97221  
(503) 231-4882

**ADRP—Northern California**  
Hunny Powell  
[HPowell@benefitplans.org](mailto:HPowell@benefitplans.org)  
400 North Point  
San Francisco, CA 94133  
(415) 776-8363

**ADRP—Washington**  
Donnie Schwendeman  
3600 Port of Tacoma Rd. #503  
Tacoma, WA 98424  
(253) 922-8913

### ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

**DARE—Northern California**  
Teamsters Assistance Program  
300 Pendleton Way  
Oakland, CA 94621  
(510) 562-3600

### ILWU CANADA

**EAP—British Columbia**  
John Felicella  
3665 Kingsway, Ste 300  
Vancouver, BC V5R 5W9  
(604) 254-7911

## ILWU BOOKS & VIDEOS

Books and videos about the ILWU are available from the union's library at discounted prices!

### BOOKS

**Solidarity Stories: An Oral History of the ILWU.** By Harvey Schwartz. An inspiring collection of first-hand accounts from ILWU union leaders and rank-and-file workers. \$17.00.

**A Spark Is Struck: Jack Hall & the ILWU in Hawaii.** By Sanford Zalburg: A high quality re-issue of the informative epic account of Jack Hall and the birth and growth of the ILWU in Hawaii \$13.50 (paperback).

**The Legacy of 1934: An historical exhibit by the ILWU.** Produced as a catalogue to accompany the new traveling historical art exhibit about the origins of the ILWU in the 1934 maritime strike, this brief but vivid publication stands on its own as a pictorial history of the coastwise strike and an account of the extraordinary sacrifices and democratic principles of the founding members of the union. **Two (2) for \$5.00**

**Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the United States.** By Charles Larrowe. A limited number of copies of this out-of-print and useful biography are now available through the book sale by special arrangement with Bolerium Books in San Francisco, which specializes in rare publications and documents about radical and labor history. **\$10.00**

**The ILWU Story.** This book unrolls the history of the union from its origins to the present, complete with recollections from the men and women who built the union, in their own words, and dozens of rare photos of the union in action. **\$5.00**

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**The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront.** By David Wellman. The important new study of longshoring in the ILWU. **\$20.00** (paperback)

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**"Life on the Beam: A Memorial to Harry Bridges."** A 17-minute DVD of the original video production by California Working Group, Inc., memorializes Harry Bridges through still photographs, recorded interviews, and reminiscences. Originally produced for the 1990 memorial service in San Francisco. DVD **\$5.00**

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