

# The United Worker

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## UIW President Sacco Retires After Long, Successful Career

Michael Sacco, the longest-serving president in United Industrial Workers (UIW) history, has retired. Sacco also relinquished the reigns of leadership in his role as the president of the UIW's parent union, the Seafarers. He'd held both posts since the late 1980s.

"I am in good health and good spirits," he stated. "But I have often heard that you simply know when it's time to retire, and this is the time."

Sacco, 86, formalized his plan Feb. 13 during a meeting of the SIU Executive Board near Orlando, Florida.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said, "Mike Sacco's distinguished career in trade unionism is an inspiration to all of us. Mike's leadership at the Seafarers International Union benefited generations of merchant mariners and all working people. Mike led his union with integrity and a fighting spirit that he learned as a rank-and-file member. It's been an honor to have him serve on the AFL-CIO Executive Council for more than three decades, always quick to offer sage advice and guidance about the future of our movement. We wish Mike nothing but the best in retirement and know he'll always be ready to take up any fight that boosts working people."

Former UIW Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel, who was unanimously approved to succeed Sacco as president of the SIU and UIW by the unions' respective executive boards (see related story), described Sacco as "an inspiration to members and officials alike. Under Mike's leadership, the SIU has become a respected powerhouse in maritime circles around the globe. We've been together since I was a trainee back in the early 1970s, and I know Mike has dedicated his whole life to the SIU. We



President Sacco at last year's MTD convention

all owe him a debt of gratitude."

Heindel added, "On behalf of the entire organization, I also thank Mike's family, and in particular his wife, Sophie, for their sacrifices and support of his time that was required to foster the SIU's growth. It has been great working with Mike over the years. And while he may be dropping an anchor, he has agreed to

continue to be an advisor as President Emeritus. Here's to a well-deserved and happy retirement, Chief!"

Sacco served as president of the SIU's Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters (AGLIW) for nearly 35 years, beginning in June 1988. He also worked as president of both the Seafarers International Union of North America (a federation of auton-

ous unions that includes the UIW) and the Maritime Trades Department (MTD) throughout the same period.

Moreover, in November 1991, at its 19th Biennial Constitutional Convention, Sacco was elected a vice president of the AFL-CIO, the federation of 60 national and international unions representing more than 14 million workers in the United States. He eventually became the senior vice president of the AFL-CIO Executive Council as its longest-serving member.

A protege of the late SIU President Paul Hall, Sacco from 1980 to 1988 directed the SIU AGLIW's Great Lakes and Inland Waters division as vice president. Based in St. Louis, he served as secretary-treasurer of the Greater St. Louis Area and Vicinity Port Council (an MTD-chartered organization) and as an executive board member of the Missouri State AFL-CIO.

Sacco also was vice president of the Seafarers Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship from 1968 to 1979. The school, located on the grounds of the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Maryland, prepares men and women for a career aboard U.S.-flag commercial vessels and provides upgrading opportunities to active members. The school also employs UIW members.

He became associated with the SIU in 1958 and shipped aboard U.S.-flag merchant vessels until he came ashore during the 1960s to serve the SIU in a succession of union posts, including those of patrolman, port agent and headquarters representative.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Sacco served in the U.S. Air Force from 1954 to 1958.

### Heindel Succeeds Michael Sacco As UIW President

Following unanimous approval of the UIW's Executive Board, David Heindel has been named to succeed Michael Sacco as president of the UIW, effective immediately.

The board convened March 7 via video conference to elevate Heindel to the union's top post. Heindel had previously served as UIW secretary-treasurer.

Subsequently, the board unanimously approved the appointment of Tom Orzechowski as UIW secretary-treasurer. Orzechowski had served as vice president of the SIU's Great Lakes and Inland Waters sector since 2003.

"Dave will do a great job and he

has my complete confidence," stated Sacco, who recently retired as president of both the SIU and UIW. "He has proven himself throughout his lifetime of service to the SIU. We are also fortunate to have outstanding leadership throughout our executive board, and I know this will be a seamless transition."

Heindel began his career with the SIU in 1973, when he graduated from the program for entry-level mariners conducted at the union's affiliated training facility in Piney Point, Maryland. He primarily sailed aboard deep-sea vessels as a member of the engine department before coming ashore in 1980 to work as a patrolman in his native New Orleans.

Among the other jobs he has held with the union are patrolman at the SIU halls in Philadelphia and Baltimore, port agent at the Philadelphia hall, and assistant vice president of the SIU's Gulf Coast region.



David Heindel  
UIW President



Tom Orzechowski  
UIW Secretary-Treasurer

Heindel also formerly served as a vice president of the Pennsylvania State AFL-CIO and the Philadelphia Central Labor Council. He also was

secretary-treasurer of the Delaware Valley and Vicinity Maritime Port

See *Heindel*, Page 3



## From the President

### We're a Winning Team

Although I am new to the office of president, the UIW – along with my family – has long been a focal point of mine, as many of you know. I started sailing with our parent organization, the SIU, as a teenager, eventually came ashore to work for it, and am grateful to have enjoyed the membership's support which allowed me to remain part of this great organization. Before becoming your president, I served as secretary-treasurer.



David Heindel

Following in the footsteps of Mike Sacco is no easy task. However many accolades Mike receives for his 35 years at the helm as our president and his lifetime of service, he deserves all of those and more. He's truly one of a kind and he did a fantastic job.

It's no overstatement to say that Mike was a force of change in the labor movement. He came in at a difficult time and began turning things around right away, even though it wasn't easy. Those of us who worked for Mike know that he was tough but fair. He

demanded results, but he was reasonable.

Mike's charisma and energy are readily apparent to anyone who's met him. He always made himself available to talk with UIW members. Something else that has always stood out to me is his foresight. His vision and determination were the foundations of so many key developments for the UIW.

While Mike and I have different styles, his policies will continue in my administration. Mike designed a winning model and put together a winning team. I'm not about to fix something that isn't broken. At the same time, I of course will bring my own vision and my own approach to the office. And don't think for a minute that I'm too proud to call Mike if I need advice. He is the ultimate lifeline, and I'm grateful to know he's available.

Throughout my entire time with the UIW, I've always believed that the first priority of every official should be supporting the rank-and-file members. You have my pledge that I will continue doing so to the best of my ability – and we will get the job done. We will stay on our toes and we'll win the battles so that UIW can continue to grow and prosper.

#### Union membership increases

This year's government report on union membership showed an increase of 273,000 members across the nation in 2022 – a relatively modest gain that nevertheless carries significance. It's also worth noting that some of last year's landmark organizing efforts aren't showing up in the Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers yet because workers are still fighting for a first contract.

Even when there's a pro-worker administration in Washington, it's usually difficult to win a traditional organizing campaign. That's true even when there's overwhelming support for unionization within a potential bargaining unit.

I won't repeat the details as to why that's the case, but the short version is that our nation's various labor laws are either badly outdated or rarely enforced, or both. Corporations spend hundreds of millions of dollars every year to stop workers from joining unions, often illegally. That's why the AFL-CIO and its affiliates, including the UIW, continue pushing for enactment of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, which will hold union-busting companies and organizations accountable and give workers the negotiating power they deserve. Those bills will help ensure that anyone who wants to join a union on the job can do so.

Meanwhile, a report released by the National Labor Relations Board late last year found that in fiscal year 2022, union election petitions increased by 53% from the previous year. And, as you may know, according to a recent Gallup poll, union approval is at its highest level in nearly 60 years, with 71% of Americans supporting labor unions. Studies show that 70% of hourly workers say they would join a union if given the opportunity.

These are positive trends, and our movement must and will capitalize on them. The UIW, through its parent organization the SIU, will continue working with Congress and the administration and the rest of the labor movement to make it happen.

# Illegally Fired Workers Could Win More Money Though NLRB Ruling

*Editor's note: The following article was written by Mark Gruenberg of Press Associated Union News Service. It has been slightly edited to conform to local style.*

In a decision that could put more money into illegally fired workers' pockets—and that may make bosses think twice about breaking labor law—the National Labor Relations Board has ruled fired workers must get not just net back pay, but compensation for all the other costs they shouldered to keep themselves and their families alive while battling for their rights and reinstatement.

That includes “costs such as out-of-pocket medical expenses, credit card debt, or other costs that are a direct or foreseeable result of the unfair labor practices” by their bosses and employers, NLRB Chair Lauren McFerran wrote in the ruling.

“The board determined compensation for those losses should be part of the standard, make-whole remedy for labor law violations,” she added in its decision, one of three notable pro-worker judgments the NLRB issued just before the holidays.

All three were by 3-2 votes, with the Democratic board members, named by President Joe Biden, siding with the workers and former President Donald Trump's two holdovers voting against the workers. In one case, involving Musicians Local 21 in San Antonio, the majority, as directed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for D.C., reversed an anti-worker ruling from the former Trump-named Republican board majority.

The big deal that could put more money in workers' pockets came out of Northern California in 2021, after Thryv, Inc., a marketer of Yellow Pages ads, unilaterally laid off its six outside sales reps, members of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1269 of San Francisco, almost two years before.

The union tried to bargain against the layoffs, and then against their effects. Thryv didn't give Local 1269 the information it needed to do so, the board's administrative law judge ruled, and the NLRB agreed. But the board majority used the Thryv case to clarify what the “make-whole” remedy for labor law-breaking is.

Until now, it's only been net back pay. Now it's going to be a lot more. Reaching back to individual cases in 1938, 1941 and 1955 where NLRBs said all expenses illegally fired workers incurred should be counted, the board made that the rule.

“Upon careful consideration of our remedial authority and our history of addressing the effects of unfair labor practices, we find that standardizing our make-whole relief to expressly include the direct or foreseeable pecuniary harms suffered by affected employees is necessary to more fully effectuate the make-whole purposes” of labor law, McFerran wrote.

After all, she pointed out “make-whole” is in section 10 of the National Labor Relations Act to produce “restoration of the situation, as nearly as possible, to that which would have obtained but for the illegal discrimination” against the unionists,

Just as happens now, the board must specify how much each worker is owed, and the NLRB's administrative law judge must hold a hearing on the figures, and the boss's reply. But McFerran also indicated, deep in the decision, that the board might not stop with making the workers whole for all their expenses.

“We emphasize we do not conclude this reflects the limits of the board's statutory remedial authority or that some other form of make-whole relief might not” be ordered, she said.

Only the so-called National Federation of Independent Business posted a reaction on its website. It said it filed a brief with the NLRB arguing the board should stick only to net back pay—which unions point out is minimal and doesn't deter labor

**The National Labor Relations Board has ruled fired workers must get not just net back pay, but compensation for all the other costs they shouldered to keep themselves and their families alive while battling for their rights and reinstatement.**

law-breakers. “The act does not authorize ‘consequential damages,’” the lobby declared.

One of the other two cases pitted “contractors,” the musicians of the San Antonio

Symphony, members of AFM Local 21, against the bosses of the Tobin Center, the hall the symphony rents. That technically made the musicians “contractors.”

In a 2017 contract fight, the musicians leafletted Tobin Center attendees outside the hall until the bosses called the cops, and threatened to arrest the unionists for leafletting there. The center won a ban when three Trump nominees controlled the NLRB, but Local 21 went to the appeals court in D.C. It ruled in their favor, finding the Trump majority's reasoning violated the National Labor Relations Act.

By the time the judges sent the case back to the NLRB for a second try, the board's lineup had changed and Local 21—and “contractors” in general, the board said—re-won their right to picket, too.

The other case, involving Operating Engineers Local 139, saw the board majority reaffirm a 1964 NLRB decision cracking down on the “inherent danger of coercion” when bosses question workers as bosses prepare to defend themselves against labor law-breaking complaints. Again, the two Republicans said bosses do nothing wrong.

“The employer must communicate to the employee the purpose of the questioning, assure that no reprisal will take place, and obtain participation on a voluntary basis,” the three-member board majority ruled. Bosses must not be hostile to union organization and “questioning...must not be itself coercive in nature. Questions must not exceed...the legitimate purpose by prying into other union matters.”



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**Midwest Region:** Chad Partridge, vice president

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## UIW Well Represented During Maritime Trades Department Event



UIW officials were out in force during the Feb. 17 union-affiliated Maritime Trades Department Executive Board Meeting near Orlando, Florida. Pictured above (from left) are: Asst. UIW National Director John Merchant, UIW VP West Coast Region Nicholas Marrone, UIW Tacoma Business Rep Warren Asp, UIW Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel, UIW VP Atlantic Region Joseph Soresi, UIW Norfolk Business Rep DeCarlo Harris, UIW President Michael Sacco, UIW Jacksonville Business Rep Ashley Nelson, UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, UIW Puerto Rico Business Rep Amancio Crespo, UIW Wilmington Business Rep Laura Lopez, UIW VP Caribbean Region Jacqueline Dickenson, UIW Baltimore Business Rep John Hoskins and UIW VP Great Lakes Region Monte Burgett. (Editor's note: David Heindel on March 7 was approved to succeed Michael Sacco as UIW President by the UIW Executive Board. Sacco, who also served as the president of the UIW-affiliated SIU, formalized his plan to retire Feb. 13 during a meeting of the SIU Executive Board near Orlando, Florida.)

## Heindel Assumes Post As Union's New President

*Continued from Page 1*

Council of the AFL-CIO's Maritime Trades Department.

In August 2002, he was elected vice chairman of the International Transport Workers' Federation's (ITF's) Seafarers' Section. Since then, he extensively has worked – both domestically and as part of U.S. delegations in international forums – with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the International Labor Organization and the International Maritime Organization on shipboard and port-security issues as well as the international project for a new Seafarers Identity Document. He helped protect mariners' rights under the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (which took effect July 2004), and he helped secure a new agreement for tens of thousands of mariners worldwide under the ITF's International Bargaining Forum.

During the ITF Congress in August 2006, he was elected to a four-year term as first vice chair of the Seafarers' Section. At the ITF Congress in August 2010, he was elected chair of the ITF's Seafarers' Section, thereby becoming only the second American ever to hold that post. He was re-elected at

the ITF Congress in August 2014, then re-elected again in October 2018.

In 2015, he was appointed to the U.S. Labor Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations and Trade Policy. He was reappointed to that position in 2017.

Orzechowski graduated in 1991 from the trainee program in Piney Point. He sailed in the deck department, both in the deep sea and inland divisions.

Orzechowski came ashore in 1996, when he was elected port agent at the SIU hall in St. Louis.

Two years later, in 1998, he was elected vice president of the SIUNA-affiliated Seafarers Entertainment and Allied Trades Union (a position he still holds). In 2000, he was elected to the SIU executive board as vice president of the union's Lakes and Inland Waters sector. He was re-elected in all subsequent elections and also serves as a vice president on the Seafarers International Union of North America Executive Board.

Additionally, for the past several years, he has served as acting vice president of the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, which employs UIW members.

## Union Leaders Meet with Lula



The AFL-CIO on Feb. 10 hosted President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil (left) for a discussion with officials from the federation and its affiliates, including the SIU. He's pictured with then-SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel (who has since been appointed as the UIW/SIU president). Following the meeting, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler stated, "Lula has spent his entire life fighting for the working class as both a union and political leader.... The significance of today's meeting is heightened as a momentous step forward in the longstanding bond between our two movements. Four years ago, while Lula was wrongfully imprisoned, the late AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka traveled to the country's federal police building to demand justice and organize for Lula's release. We stood by him then and we will continue to stand alongside Lula, his Workers' Party and the Brazilian labor movement in their fight to defend democracy and build a better world for working people."



# PRO Act Introduced in Congress Again

## Legislation Aims to Boost Workers' Rights

A bipartisan group of legislators on Feb. 28 introduced a comprehensive proposal to protect workers' right to come together and bargain for higher wages, better benefits, and safer workplaces.

The bill, dubbed the Richard L. Trumka Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act of 2023 (H.R. 20), was introduced in the House of Representatives by U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Virginia), ranking member on the Committee on Education and the Workforce. Scott was joined by U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, (R-Pennsylvania). The Senate companion bill was proposed by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), who serves as chair, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

"Congress has an urgent responsibility to ensure that workers can join a union and negotiate for higher pay, better benefits, and safer workplaces," said Scott.

"Passing the PRO Act is the most critical step we can take this Congress to achieve that goal," he continued. "I urge my House and Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in advancing the most significant update for workers' labor organizing rights in more than eight decades."

"At a time of massive income and wealth inequality, when too many workers are falling further and further behind, we need to make it easier for workers to exercise their constitutional right to form a union and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions," said Sanders.

"We need to hold CEOs accountable for flagrantly violating labor laws, illegally firing pro-union workers, and closing down pro-union shops," the Vermont senator continued. "If we are going to reverse the 40-year decline of the middle class, reduce the widening gap between the billionaire class and everyone else, and take on the unprecedented level of corporate greed in America, we have got to rebuild the trade union movement. That is what the PRO Act is all about and I am proud to be introducing this bill in the Senate."

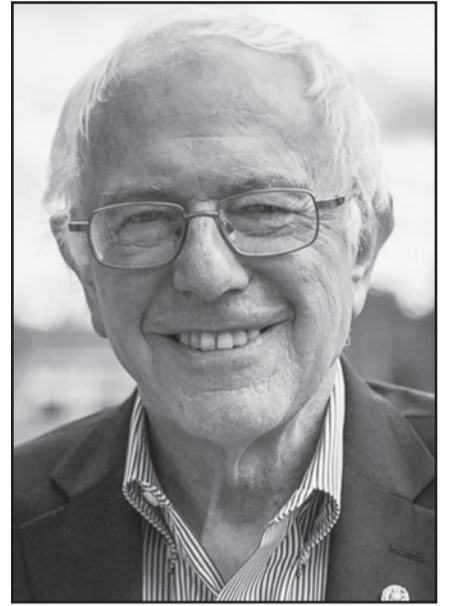
"The PRO Act is how we level the playing field," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said in a statement. "It is how we stop the intimidation, the lies. This is how we let workers, not wealthy corporations, decide for themselves if they want the power of a union."



U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott  
(D-Virginia)



U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick  
(R-Pennsylvania)



Sen. Bernie Sanders  
(I-Vermont)

Named after the late labor leader and longtime friend of the SIU, the Richard L. Trumka PRO Act, would protect the basic right to join union. According to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), the bill, if passed into law, would:

### Give workers more control

Under the PRO Act, workers and the National Labor Relations Board, not employers, control the timing of union elections and employers can't force employees to attend anti-union meetings.

### Impose real penalties when employers break the law

According to the proposed legislation, employers and corporate executives would be penalized for illegally retaliating against workers trying to organize, and workers would get monetary damages or other remedies if they are illegally fired or harmed; fired workers must also be reinstated while their cases are pending.

### Create a roadmap to a first contract

Terms of the new bill state that employers and workers have a set pro-

cess to follow to negotiate a first union contract, and if they can't reach an agreement, they go to binding arbitration.

### Strengthen the right of workers to strike

Under the PRO Act, employers are prohibited from permanently replacing workers when they strike, and workers are no longer banned from engaging in so-called "secondary" activity, such as boycotts, seeking leverage in negotiations.

### Crack down on worker misclassification

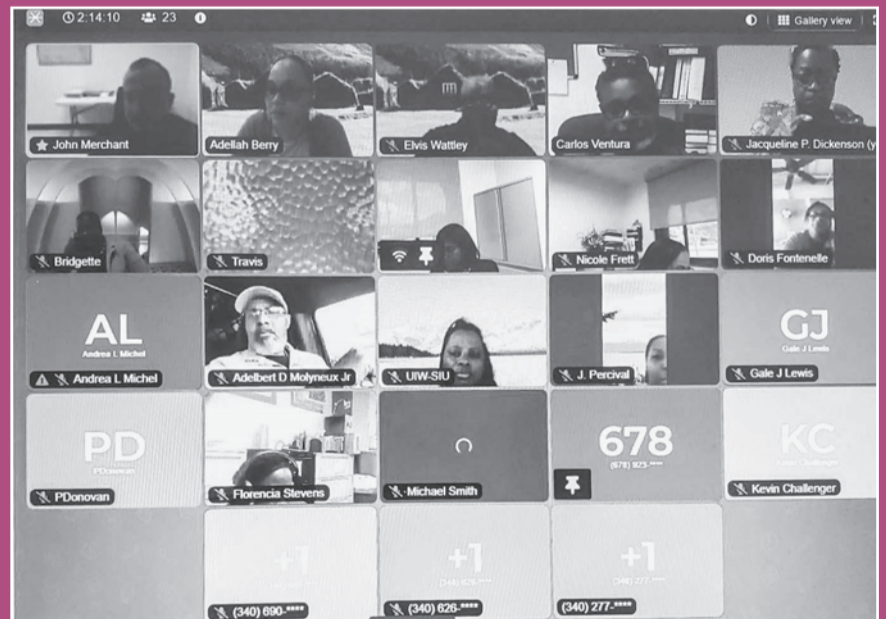
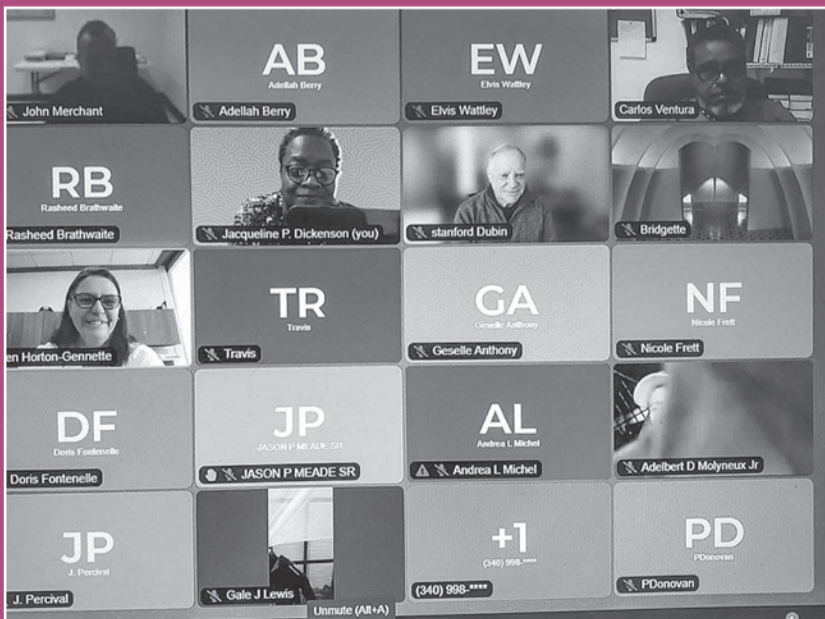
Details of the new bill specify that workers can't be wrongly deprived of their organizing and bargaining rights by being misclassified as supervisors or independent contractors.

The move to pass the PRO Act comes on the heels of a year that was characterized by an unprecedented spike in strike activity by organized labor and historic public support for unions. A recent Gallup poll showed that more than 70% of Americans approve of labor unions and many workers want to have them in their workplaces. Yet, overall union membership has waned in recent decades.

The decline is due in part to the decades-long, systematic attack on foundational labor laws that has created a hostile environment for workers seeking to organize. An EPI analysis found that employers were charged with violating federal law in 41.5% of union election campaigns, by firing, threatening, or otherwise retaliating against workers who dared to come together in their workplaces to bargain collectively. The penalties for violating current labor law are not sufficient to deter employers from infringing on workers' rights under the National Labor Relations Act. The PRO Act is needed to restore the basic rights of workers to organize their workplaces and bargain collectively for better pay, benefits, and working conditions, advocates say.

The PRO Act passed the House in both 2020 and 2021 but never reached the floor for a vote in the Senate. In that chamber, the legislative filibuster requires at least 60 votes to pass most bills. Last year, Sens. Kyrsten Sinema (I-Arizona), Mark Kelly (D-Arizona), and Senate Republicans refused to back the bill.

## Virtual Shop Steward Training in U.S. Virgin Islands



Union officials and representatives from all UIW-contracted worksites in the U.S. Virgin Islands (St. Croix and St. Thomas) on December 5, 2022 conducted a one-day virtual shop steward training workshop. Hosted by VP Caribbean Region Jacqueline Dickenson in St. Thomas, the workshop's agenda focused on two major topics: Processing Grievances and Family Medical Leave. In addition to Shop Stewards from the various worksites, UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, SIU/UIW Associate Counsel Stan Dubin and UIW Asst. National Director John Merchant also participated. Altogether, some 25 people partook in the seminar. The screen shots above show some of those who chimed in during the training.





## Queen Mary on Schedule to Fully Reopen

UIW members in Long Beach, California, in December received welcome news: The RMS Queen Mary will soon fully open for business.

A hub of employment for hundreds of UIW members over the years, the famed vessel was shuttered to the public in March 2020 amid the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, nearly 400 UIW members lost their jobs via layoff.

"This is fantastic news for hundreds of our union members," said UIW National Director Karen Horton. "I could not be happier for them. Although we lost some members to retirement during the Queen Mary's closure, hundreds more are still in the workforce and are looking forward to reclaiming their jobs aboard the vessel when she is again fully operational. As a matter of fact, some already have returned."

"We are currently in contract talks with Evolution Hospitality, the company that will manage the day-to-day operations of the Queen Mary's hotel, food and beverage facilities, entertainment attractions and ship-related events going forward," she continued. "Negotiations are still in the early stages, but so far everything

is going well. We hope to have positive news on a collective bargaining agreement for our members before too long."

When it closed, the vintage World War II-era liner had fallen into a state of massive disrepair, which prompted its continued stoppage while critical repairs were identified and conducted. While the ship remained closed to the general public, it continued to be available for filming and

other special events.

However, the entire landscape started to change in mid-December when Long Beach City officials launched a phased reopening and started to welcome visitors back on board the vessel for the first time in nearly three years. The phased reopening will continue throughout the spring of 2023 and is expected to include hotel rooms, retail, some full-service food

offerings, tours and event spaces. The remaining rooms, restaurants and other services will be phased in over the summer months and into autumn.

*(Editor's note: The photos above and immediately below show UIW members enjoying themselves during local holiday gatherings shortly after the start of the vessel's phased reopening.)*



### UIW Rep Visits Heavy Materials Company



UIW Rep Adellah Berry (standing fifth from left) on January 3 paid a how goes it visit to Heavy Materials Company. Standing to her immediate left is Shop Steward Juan Santos. In addition to meeting with Santos, Berry said the purpose of her visit was to meet and greet the 11 union members who work on the job site and to become acquainted with members of the company's management team. "My visit to the work site paid huge dividends," said Berry. "In addition to meeting and talking to our members, I had positive interactions with several members of the company's management team. I also was treated to a tour of the facility and received an up-close view of how operations are conducted." Based on St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, Heavy Materials is a business unit of Vulcan Material Company, South Division. It produces and supplies building materials. The company offers ready mixed concrete, construction aggregates and sand, soil cement, bagged cement, and masonry blocks.



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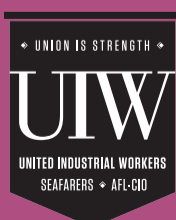
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# Labor Official Says Marginalizing Workers Boosts 'Fascist Ideology'

*Editor's note: The following article was written by Mark Gruenberg, head of the Washington, D.C., bureau of People's World and editor of the union news service Press Associates Inc. The piece has been edited to conform to local style and sensitivities.*

Disrespect, disenfranchisement and disinheritance of workers—of whatever race, color or creed—produces “a fertile environment” for hate and “fascist ideology.”

So said Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in a speech to the AFL-CIO convention in 1961, and that's still true today, says AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond.

Which is a big reason, he told the federation's annual Martin Luther King Jr. commemorative conference on Jan. 13 that organized labor and the civil rights movement should have united then—labor was reluctant—and must stay united today.

Redmond, who chaired the conference, followed his leadership partner, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, to the podium. Both were tough on democracy's foes, though neither specifically identified them by political party or by name.

The 700-plus conferees met in D.C. just two years and a week after more than 1,000 rioters ransacked the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, in an attempt to keep then President Donald Trump, in power by overturning the 2020 presidential election.

“Over the past few years, we've seen the rise of misinformation, of political polarization dividing our communities, the rise in attacks on our basic freedoms like the right to vote and organize a union, and attacks on our democracy itself,” said Shuler.

“As a labor movement, we have to respond. We know how to use our voices to fight back against those in power who want to weaken and diminish us. We know how to leverage the power of collective action. It's by speaking together, in one clear voice, demanding change, is one of the best hopes our nation has not only for a continuing but also a thriving democracy.”

Redmond hit the same points during his keynote address to the annual conference, which this year made defense of democracy one of its top themes. Its title: “Claiming our power, protecting our democracy.” But he reminded listeners the labor-civil rights alliance didn't always exist.

“Dr. King had made his connection to our movement known time and time again. In fact, when he addressed the AFL-CIO convention in Florida two years prior, he said the two most effective voices for social and economic justice are the labor movement and the civil rights movement,” Redmond explained. “Dr. King made an appeal for our two movements to join together to lift up the concerns of workers and those who have been disrespected, disinherited, disenfranchised in our communities.”

But in a difference between then and now, Redmond recalled Dr. King's “call went unanswered.” And when the civil rights leader approached then-AFL-CIO President George Meany for labor to help fund the now-fabled 1963 March on Washington that August, Meany turned him down.

Auto Workers President Walter Reuther stepped forward with the needed dollars, though—and became the only white leader to address that



AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond delivers remarks to guests and delegates during the Feb. 17 meeting of the UIW-affiliated Maritime Trades Department Executive Board Meeting near Orlando, Florida.

march's crowd. He declared that white workers must be part of the movement for political and economic justice, too, Shuler said.

“Let us answer that call” by Dr. King “today,” Redmond urged. “Because his concerns remain. Workers are still being disrespected. Workers are still being disinherited. Workers are still being disenfranchised.”

“These issues don't just affect their lives in the workplace. These concerns deepen inequality everywhere, in every aspect of life. And places where workers don't feel valued or respected are a fertile environment for misinformation and disinformation to seed hate and fascist ideology.

“And when those hateful feelings are fomented, they put our very democracy at risk. They lead to policies of voter suppression designed to take away the very tools that give us a voice in who governs us.”

“Dr. King knew that. That's why he knew it would take both movements—the labor and civil rights movements—working as one, to create true opportunity, true equality, true democracy. He knew a good union job protected workers from discrimination, and that union workers had higher wages, health care, safer jobs.

“He knew a good union job was often the first step in generating wealth and creating economic power. It made the difference for folks who had little opportunity. It allowed them to buy a home and save for retirement and give their kids a start with a solid footing. One by one those jobs supported and lifted up communities all across the country.

“A good union job was often the first step in reversing an unequal system that has caused generations of damage. I say ‘the first step’ because that economic power also translated into political power, at the ballot box and on Capitol Hill. It gave people a voice at work and in our nation. That's why Dr. King worked so hard to bring together” the two movements.

In the days after Shuler's and Redmond's speeches, delegates brainstormed how to strengthen the labor-civil rights alliance, forge alliances with other progressive groups and tackle causes ranging from implementing organizing to battling structural racism to campaigning for equal rights and eventual full citizenship for undocumented people.

But they also realized that while they're committed to action, they must bring their union colleagues along.

“I'm going to have to think about how to get more people involved to change these policies” that oppress workers and people of color, said Andre Francis, Secretary-Treasurer of Steelworkers Local 13-243—an oil refinery workers local—in Beaumont, Texas, after attending a small-group breakout session on how to battle the threat to democracy.

“I've got to get them educated on who, what, when, where and why” labor and civil rights members and activists support each other—and do so all year round, not just at King conferences or in election campaigns.

“I'm learning a lot about inequality and politics, especially as it involves my members.” As for candidates, he added, “We have to be aware of their agendas.”



# Coronavirus Pandemic Over? 'Not So Fast,' Says Federation

*Editor's note: The following article was written by Mark Gruenberg of Press Associates Union News Service. It has been slightly edited to conform to space limitations and local sensitivities.*

Amid a headlong political rush to proclaim the coronavirus pandemic virtually over, by many politicians on Capitol Hill, the AFL-CIO is saying, in so many words, "not so fast."

And so is the data on illnesses and deaths. It shows that cumulatively at least 1.107 million people have died in the U.S. in the three years since the pandemic was officially declared in early 2020.

That's equal to killing off San Jose, the U.S.'s tenth-largest city (1.036 million people) plus 81,000 in its suburbs. And the total may be low since state reporting all COVID-19 (coronavirus) deaths is now optional.

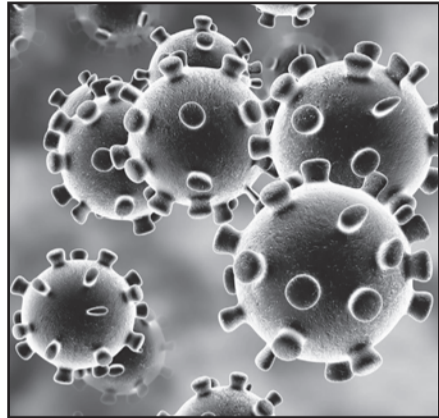
Nevertheless, U.S. House Republicans plan votes on three pieces of legislation to end the pandemic's restrictions, including one ending the national emergency announced in 2020. President Joe Biden is planning to end it as of May 11.

The federation opposes all the repeals, whether they come from Republicans or President Biden.

"The AFL-CIO urges Congress to oppose the Pandemic Is Over Act (HR 382), legislation to end the COVID-19 national emergency (House Joint Resolution 7) and the Show Up Act (HR 139). These bills will severely disrupt the administration's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic," federation officials said in a series of tweets.

The Show Up Act also concerns federal worker unions—a favorite punching bag for Republicans. It mandates workers return to their offices, rather than work from home, within 30 days, the federation pointed out. Current teleworking both mimics the situation in the private sector and is a mandatory health care bargaining subject in negotiations, the federation noted. Passage of the bill would be another serious attack on collective bargaining rights, the federation notes.

A bigger concern is the continuing death toll and the end of anti-COVID care. It also, though the AFL-CIO didn't



explicitly say so, ends an emergency-imposed ban on private insurers refusing to cover people with COVID-19. The nation can afford to continue both, public health scholars told the Public Broadcasting System on Jan. 31.

"These bills will also eliminate important access to COVID-19 testing and treatment and cause millions to abruptly lose Medicaid coverage and free testing. Our nation can simultaneously provide resources to keep Americans healthy while moving our economy to full capacity," they explained.

"COVID-19 is still claiming the lives of thousands of Americans and straining our healthcare system. In the past week alone, 3,756 people died from COVID-19 and many of its victims continue to suffer the debilitating effects of Long COVID," the federation warned.

The federation isn't the only group concerned with the abrupt ending of anti-coronavirus measures. National Nurses United (NNU), which now represents more than 240,000 RNs nationwide, is particularly worried about the lasting impact of "Long COVID"—the damage that will linger among people for months and years.

NNU's even offering a continuing education course to members on treating Long COVID, including scientific updates on the course of the disease and its implications for patients, nurses, and quality of care. Many hospitals still report buckling under the load of COVID patients.

"The COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread unabated around the world

due to a near complete abandonment of public health measures and dissembling about the ongoing pandemic," the union warned.

"Repeated surges in COVID infections, hospitalizations, and deaths put nurses and other health care workers at heightened and perpetual risk for infection and moral injury. As more individuals are continually exposed to and infected by" the coronavirus, "reports of long-term health consequences have also increased" from Long COVID.

Though President Biden announced he would end the COVID health emergency on May 11, his Office of Management and Budget opposes the Republican legislation. It calls the measures "a grave disservice to the American people."

"An abrupt end to the emergency declarations would create wide-ranging chaos and uncertainty throughout the health care system—for states, for hospitals and doctors' offices, and, most importantly, for tens of millions of Americans," OMB explained.

That's why, as part of the laws the last Congress enacted, it mandated at least 60 days advance notice of the emergency's end. Otherwise, state budgets, which partially pay for Medicaid to treat COVID-19 victims "would face a radical cliff" as the extra money for that is cut off—and the patients are, too.

Ending the emergency, OMB said, also means the end of special extra Medicaid funding to states "to ensure tens of millions of vulnerable Americans kept their Medicaid coverage during a global pandemic.

"If the public health emergency were suddenly terminated, it would sow confusion and chaos into this critical wind-down. Due to this uncertainty, tens of millions of Americans could be at risk of abruptly losing their health insurance, and states could be at risk of losing billions of dollars in funding.

"Additionally, hospitals and nursing homes that have relied on flexibilities enabled by the emergency declarations will be plunged into chaos without adequate time to retrain staff and establish new billing processes, likely leading to disruptions in care and payment delays."

## New UIW Pensioners

**James Coffee**  
Crown Cork & Seal  
Abilene, Texas

**Gregory Cook**  
Paulsen Wire Rope  
Sunbury, Pennsylvania

**Juanita Curnell**  
Kingsford Products  
Pleasantville, Ohio

**Jose Flores Garcia**  
Queen Mary  
Long Beach, California

**Clifford Frand**  
Crown Cork & Seal  
Magnolia, Texas

**Charles Gayle**  
Plymkraft, Inc.  
Hampton, Virginia

**Nelson Palmer**  
Church & Dwight  
London, Ohio

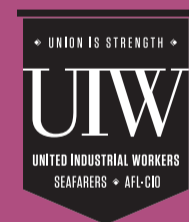
**Joseph Reed**  
Church & Dwight  
West Jefferson, Ohio

**Vicki Stout**  
Franklin International  
Hillsboro, Ohio

**Warren Walters**  
Progressive Driver Services, Inc.  
Broadalbin, New York

**Veronica Westbrook-Houston**  
Franklin International  
Columbus, Ohio

**Clyde Yarnall**  
A&E Products  
Wilburton, Pennsylvania



## Gone But Not Forgotten

### CAROL DENNIS

Pensioner Carol Dennis, 78, passed away November 6. A native of Ohio, Sister Dennis signed on with the UIW in 1973 while working at Church and Dwight. She began receiving stipends for her retirement in 2007. Sister Dennis resided in her native state in the city of London.

### WALTER EVANS II

Pensioner Walter Evans II, 75, died November 18. Born in North Carolina, Brother Evans was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He joined the union in 1980 while working at Franklin International. Brother Evans called an end to his career in 1991 and went on pension. He lived in his home state in the city of Lumberton.

### JOSEPH KENT

Pensioner Joseph Kent, 82, passed

away March 20, 2022. Brother Kent hailed from Pennsylvania and came under the union umbrella in 1962 while working at Victory Refrigeration. He started receiving compensation for his retirement in 2001. Brother Kent was a resident of Philadelphia.

### ROBERTO LOPEZ

Pensioner Roberto Lopez, 75, died December 2. Born in Puerto Rico, Brother Lopez signed on with the UIW in 1972 while working at ATC Management, Inc. He retired and went on pension in 1998. Brother Lopez made his home in Jackson Heights, New York.

### IMMACOLATINA MIGLIARESE

Pensioner Immacolata Migliarese, 98, passed away October 30. A native of Minturno, Italy, Sister Migliarese signed on with the UIW in 1964 while

working at Trenton Textile (later Tara Textile). She started receiving compensation for her retirement in 1986. Sister Migliarese resided in Hamilton Township, New Jersey.

### CHARLES ONTIVEROS

Pensioner Charles Ontiveros, 73, died November 7. Born in Houston, Texas, Brother Ontiveros joined the union in 1972 while working at Crown Cork & Seal. He began receiving stipends for his retirement in 1987. Brother Ontiveros was a resident of his native city and state.

### RONALD PEFFER

Pensioner Ronald Peffer, 73, passed away February 15. A Pennsylvania native, Brother Peffer signed on with the UIW in 1979 while working at Paulsen Wire Rope. He began receiving retirement stipend in 1992. Brother

Peffer resided in his native state in the city of Winfield.

### JOSEPH REEVES II

Pensioner Joseph Reeves II, 66, passed away November 6. Brother Reeves hailed from Springfield, Ohio, and joined the UIW ranks in 1975 while working at Church & Dwight. He retired and went on pension in 2019. Brother Reeves called London, Ohio, home.

### PHILLIP TACKETT SR.

Pensioner Phillip Tackett Sr., 80, died November 14. Born in Paintsville, Kentucky, Brother Tackett was a U.S. Military veteran. He signed on with the UIW in 1972 while working at Bron-Shoe. Brother Tackett started receiving compensation for his retirement in 2004 and lived in Johnstown, Ohio.





**RMS Queen Mary on Schedule  
To Fully Reopen Following Long Closure**  
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## IRS Provides Tips for 2023 Filing Season

To help taxpayers navigate the beginning of the tax filing season, the Internal Revenue Service on Jan. 31 offered a checklist of reminders for people as they prepare to file their 2022 tax returns.

From gathering paperwork to filing a tax return, these easy steps will make tax preparation smoother in 2023:

### Gather tax paperwork and records for accuracy to avoid missing a deduction or credit

Taxpayers should have all their important and necessary documents before preparing their return. This helps people file a complete and accurate tax return. Errors and omissions slow down tax processing, including refund times.

Some information taxpayers need before they begin includes:

- Social Security numbers for everyone listed on the tax return,
- Bank account and routing numbers,
- Various tax forms such as W-2s, 1099s, 1098s and other income documents or records of digital asset transactions,
- Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace statement,
- Any IRS letters citing an amount received for a certain tax deduction or credit.

### Remember to report all types of income on the tax return

This is important to avoid receiving a notice or a bill from the IRS. Don't forget to include income from:

- Goods created and sold on online platforms,
- Investment income,
- Part-time or seasonal work,
- Self-employment or other business

activities,

- Services provided through mobile apps.

### File electronically with direct deposit to avoid delays in receiving a refund.

Avoid paper returns. Tax software helps individuals avoid mistakes by doing the math. It guides people through each section of their tax return using a question-and-answer format.

For those waiting on their 2021 tax return to be processed, here's a special tip to ensure their 2022 tax return is accepted by the IRS for processing. Make sure to enter \$0 (zero dollars) for last year's adjusted gross income (AGI) on the 2022 tax return. Everyone else should enter their prior year's AGI from last year's return.

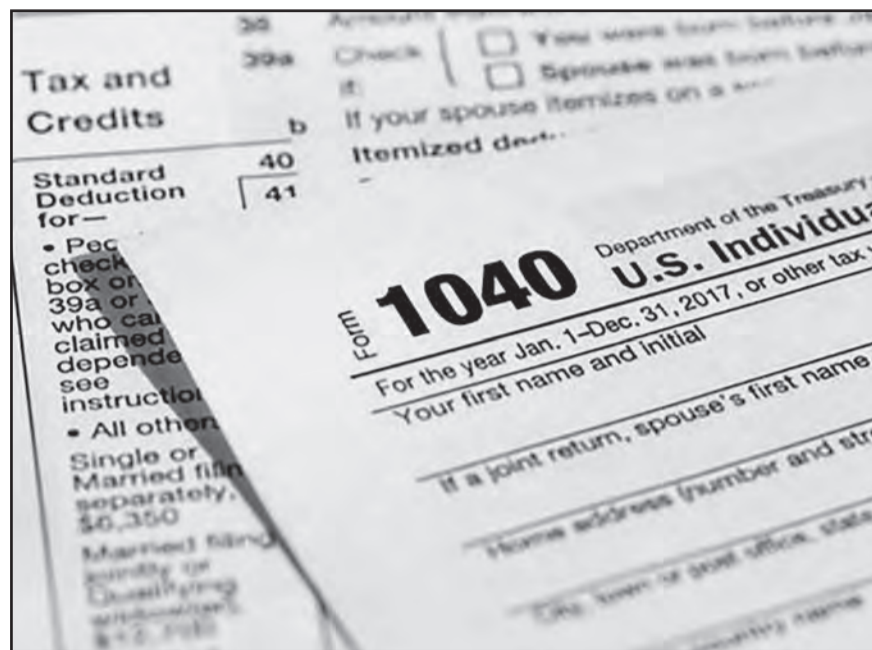
### Free resources are available to help eligible taxpayers file online. Free help may also be available to qualified taxpayers.

IRS Free File provides a free online alternative to filing a paper tax return. IRS Free File is available to any individual or family who earned \$73,000 or less in 2022.

With IRS Free File, leading tax software providers make their online products available for free as part of a 21-year partnership with the IRS. This year, there are seven products in English and one in Spanish. Taxpayers must access these products through the IRS website.

People who make over \$73,000 can use the IRS' Free File Fillable Forms. These are the electronic version of IRS paper forms. This product is best for people who are comfortable preparing their own taxes.

Qualified taxpayers can also find



free one-on-one tax preparation help around the nation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs.

### Choose a tax professional carefully

Most tax return preparers are professional, honest and provide excellent service to their clients. However, dishonest tax return preparers who file false income tax returns do exist. The IRS has a Directory of Federal Tax Return Preparers with Credentials and Select Qualifications and more on choosing a tax pro on IRS.gov.

### Avoid phone delays; use online resources before calling the IRS.

To avoid waiting on hold, the IRS urges people to use IRS.gov to get

answers to tax questions, check a refund status or pay taxes. There's no wait time or appointment needed — online tools and resources are available 24 hours a day. The IRS' Interactive Tax Assistant tool and Let Us Help You resources are especially helpful.

Additionally, the IRS suggests taxpayers stay up to date on important tax information online by:

- Following the IRS' official social media accounts and email subscription lists to stay current on the latest tax topics and alerts.
- Downloading the IRS2Go mobile app, watching IRS YouTube videos, or following the IRS on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram for the latest updates on tax changes, scam alerts, initiatives, products and services.

## Union Membership Grows

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) annual report, released Jan. 19, shows that union membership grew by 273,000 in 2022 even as giant corporations such as Amazon and Starbucks ratcheted up illegal efforts to intimidate, harass and fire workers who are forming unions. The growth in union members was spurred in large part by workers of color.

While the report indicates a slight drop in union density from 2021 to 2022, the data don't capture the surge in worker organizing across every sector, from teaching assistants to baristas to museum workers, construction workers, video game developers and many more. With the resurgence of union organizing and unprecedented federal investment in job creation, the labor movement is poised to grow significantly in the coming years.

"In 2022, we saw working people rising up despite often illegal opposition from companies that would rather pay union-busting firms millions than give workers a seat at the table," said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. "The momentum of the moment we are in is clear. Organizing victories are

happening in every industry, public and private, and every sector of our economy all across the country. The wave of organizing will continue to gather steam in 2023 and beyond despite broken labor laws that rig the system against workers."

These statistics highlight the need for the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, which will hold union-busting companies and organizations accountable and give workers the negotiating power they deserve. The AFL-CIO calls on Congress to urgently enact legislation that will ensure that anyone who wants to join a union on the job can do so.

A report released by the National Labor Relations Board in October of last year found that in fiscal year 2022, union election petitions increased by 53% from the previous year. According to a 2022 Gallup poll, union approval is at its highest level in nearly 60 years, with 71% of Americans supporting labor unions, and studies show that 70% of hourly workers say they would join a union if given the opportunity.

## U.S. Employers Charged With Violating Law in 41.5 Percent Of Union Election Campaigns

Data show that U.S. employers are willing to use a wide range of legal and illegal tactics to frustrate the rights of workers to form unions and collectively bargain.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, employers are charged with violating federal law in 41.5% of all union election campaigns. And one out of five union election campaigns involves a charge that a worker was illegally fired for union activity.

Employers are charged with making threats, engaging in surveillance activities, or harassing workers in nearly a third of all union election campaigns. Beyond this, there are many things employers can do legally to thwart union organizing; employers spend roughly \$340 million annually on "union avoidance" consultants to help them stave off union elections. This combination of illegal conduct and legal coercion has ensured that union elections are characterized by employer intimidation and in no way reflect the democratic process guaranteed by the National Labor Relations Act.

Far more U.S. workers want unions than have the benefit of representation today. When workers are able to win union representation and collectively bargain, their wages, benefits, and working conditions improve. On average, a worker covered by a union contract earns 13.2% more than a peer with similar education, occupation, and experience in a nonunionized workplace in the same sector. Union workers are more likely to have employer-sponsored

health insurance, and their employers contribute more toward those plans. They are also more likely to have paid vacation and sick leave. Union workers are more likely to have retirement plans, with their employers contributing more toward those plans than comparable nonunion employers do. Unions also create safer workplaces. And union workers are covered by due process protections, so that, unlike nonunion workers in the U.S., union workers cannot be fired "at will," with no warning and for almost any reason.

Policymakers must take action on legislative reform to restore and strengthen workers' rights to organize and collectively bargain. The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, (see related story of Page 4 of this edition of *The United Worker*), introduced by Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Virginia), U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, (R-Pennsylvania) and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), includes many critical reforms. The legislation will help ensure that workers have a meaningful right to organize and bargain collectively by streamlining the process when workers form a union, bolstering workers' chances of success at negotiating a first agreement, and holding employers accountable when they violate workers' rights. Indeed, the PRO Act addresses many of the most significant tactics of aggressive employer opposition. This type of legislative reform is needed to restore workers' rights to join together and bargain for a better life.