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CWA news



**WE JUST COME TO
WORK HERE.**

**WE DON'T
COME TO DIE.**

IT'S TIME TO TAKE ON WALL STREET



By CWA President Chris Shelton

Wall Street is transforming America, and not in a good way.

It's created a culture that puts greed ahead of human need. It rewards risk-taking, with other people's money, of course, yet punishes the poorest paid workers and those in our society who have next to nothing.

Greed is what emboldens Nokia-Lucent to collapse a pension plan covering retired CWA and IBEW members and move \$1.2 billion of our pension money to an underfunded management pension plan. CWA has filed a lawsuit against this power grab.

Greed is what drives bad trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership that would force U.S. manufacturing workers to compete with workers in Vietnam who are paid 65 cents an hour.

"WE'RE NOT LOOKING TO SHUT DOWN WALL STREET. BUT WE ARE LOOKING TO RESTORE FAIRNESS TO AN ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SYSTEM THAT'S BEEN ONE-SIDED FOR WAY TOO LONG."

Greed is what enables companies like Verizon and too many others to demand that the workers who have made the company's success possible take cuts in jobs, wages and benefits.

Greed, and worse, is what allows the children and residents of Flint, Mich., to be systematically poisoned by lead in their drinking water, while state leaders argue about cutting even more public services and pensions.

We're not looking to shut down Wall Street. But we are looking to restore some fairness to an economic and financial system that's been one-sided for way too long.

This issue of the CWA News continues to highlight our campaign. Together with allies like Senator Elizabeth Warren, Representative Keith Ellison and other leaders, and groups like Public Citizen and Americans for Financial Reform, we are taking on Wall Street and the Big Banks.

Why do hedge fund managers get a big tax break on their earnings, while working families struggle and too many communities are unable to provide basic public services?

Why are Wall Street traders allowed to continue a daily frenzy of buying and selling stocks, bonds, derivatives and other financial vehicles, with the sole purpose of enriching themselves?

Why can't we institute a very small tax of a few cents per hundred dollars on these Wall Street transactions, to stop the often destructive, high frequency trading and collect fair revenue from Wall Street churners and speculators?

Today, millions of Americans — Democrats, Republicans and Independents — are starting to wake up to what has been going on, and CWA is taking on this fight. We see the excesses of Wall Street and the Big Banks as a direct attack on our jobs, our wages, our pensions and our communities. CWA members, like all working families, are up against the

greed of Wall Street and the 1 percent, and we're determined to stop it.

Be sure to check out TakeonWallStreet.org for more information about the campaign and how you can join the fight.

This issue of the CWA News also looks at job health and safety affecting members across our sectors. Like the song goes, "we just come to work here, we don't come to die."

But tragically, for too many workers across our country and within our own union, job hazards and health risks still result in serious injury and death. The AFL-CIO report for 2015, "Death on the Job Report: the Toll of Neglect," looks at the state of safety and health protections for workers in every state.

We have made some important advances since the Occupational Safety and Health Act was first enacted in 1970. CWA, working with partners including the Steelworkers and other organizations, is determined to address the job hazards our members face. But as you'll read in these pages, there is a long way to go to ensure that working people are safe on the job.

Much more must be done, including stepping up enforcement, especially at employers who are repeat offenders; increasing the number of inspectors so that more workplaces can be inspected on a timely basis; moving forward on key standards like silica dust, combustible dust, infectious diseases, beryllium and chemical process safety; extending coverage to workers who now don't have the protections of OSHA; and strengthening civil and criminal penalties for violators.

That's how we'll know that the promise of safe jobs for working people is one that will be kept.



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International Union Headquarters
501 3rd Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20001-2797
Phone: (202) 434-1100
www.cwa-union.org

Address changes:

Inquiries or corrections for CWA News subscriptions should be addressed to CWA Membership Dues Dept.

E-Mail: subscribe@cwa-union.org

Produced by

CWA Communications Department

Director/Executive Editor

Candice M. Johnson

Senior Writer/Editor Michael Allen

Editorial Specialist Alicia Nestor

Technical Specialist Sarah Splitt

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TAKING ON WALL STREET



Working people are angry. Wall Street and the big banks are devouring this country's wealth – feasting on our jobs, our benefits and our pensions. We see it at the bargaining table, in bad trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, in attacks on workers' rights and in the corrupt campaign finance system that ensures that only the voices of the billionaire class are heard in our democracy.

FIGHTING BACK: CWA ACTIVISTS AND ALLIES ARE TAKING ON WALL STREET AND THE 1 PERCENT

About 10,000 CWAers and allies joined the kickoff of CWA's national campaign, Take on Wall Street. On a telephone town hall call in February, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), former Labor Secretary Robert Reich and CWA President Chris Shelton talked about how we will stop Wall Street abuses and the "too big to fail" banks.

Go to takeonwallstreet.org for fact sheets, actions and information about the campaign.

Listen to the call at takeonwallstreet.org/warren-reich-call/

“Washington works great if you're a big bank, if you have armies of lobbyists and lawyers and zillions of dollars to spend on super PACs. The only way we will change that is if we fight back.”

—Senator Elizabeth Warren



Shelton said that across the board, people, whether Democrats, Republicans or Independents, are fed up with Wall Street's overwhelming power in our nation's economy and politics.

“We've seen the 1 percent grow obscenely wealthy while everyone else's wages stagnate. We've seen the corporate push for job-killing trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and coordinated attacks on public and private sector workers from the Supreme Court to statehouses and every place in between. We see our democracy being drowned by the unchecked mega-contributions of the Wall Street “banksters” and hedge fund moguls. Behind all of these developments is the out-of-control power of Wall Street and the big banks,” he said.

Senator Warren, who Shelton described as Wall Street's worst nightmare, noted that after the Great Depression in 1929, “government put a cop on Wall Street, by creating the Securities and Exchange Commission. It made it safe for ordinary people to put their money in the bank, by creating the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). It separated ‘boring’ banking from high-flying, risky investment banking by enacting the Glass-Steagall Act in 1933,” changes that worked for more half a century, she said.

But in the 1980s, the political winds changed. Regulators looked the other way, financial institutions found new ways to trick people, on credit cards, loans and other products, and the wall between “boring” banking and risky investment banking came down, allowing bankers to use FDIC-insured deposits by ordinary people for outrageous investment schemes, Warren said.

Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich noted that in 1990, the five biggest Wall Street banks had 10 percent of all banking assets. Today, the top five banks control 45 percent of all banking assets.

“The relationship between wealth and power has become all too apparent. The more wealth that goes to the big banks, the more power they have to rig the game in their favor,” he said. “That's why we need the countervailing power of CWA to take on the big banks. It will be a long fight, and not easy, but we can do it,” he said.

“Homeowners and students can't use bankruptcy laws to reorganize their debts. But big corporations can.”

—Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich



HERE'S HOW WE DO IT

Allies in this campaign are Americans for Financial Reform, the AFL-CIO and other unions, digital, environmental and consumer groups, and many more. We'll work together to:

1. END “TOO BIG TO FAIL.”

We must stop bankers from using ordinary, commercial deposits for risky investment banking schemes. That will require new legislation, a Glass-Steagall Act for the 21st century.

2. PASS THE WALL STREET SPECULATION TAX.

A very small tax on the high volume of trades that Wall Street bankers make every day will limit this risky behavior and would restore some fairness to our tax system.

3. GET BIG MONEY OUT OF POLITICS.

Billionaires and wealthy corporations are calling the shots in our democracy, making mega-contributions and weakening the vote of everyday Americans.

4. MAKE HEDGE FUND MANAGERS PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE.

By eliminating the carried interest tax loophole, hedge fund managers and others will finally start paying their fair share of taxes.

CWA's goal is to get as many members as possible engaged in building this movement against Wall Street abuses, through training sessions and lobbying efforts that support national legislation. Training already has been held in the Northeast, another session is scheduled for Austin, Tex., in April.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

To learn more, go to takeonwallstreet.org.

WE JUST COME TO WORK

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY



NJ GOVERNOR VETOES LEAH'S LAW

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie vetoed "Leah's Law," endangering thousands of child welfare workers who are engaged in some of the most dangerous work in the state.

The bipartisan legislation was named for CWA Local 1038 member Leah Coleman who was stabbed more than 20 times by a deranged client in November 2014. The brutal attack, which nearly cost Leah her life, occurred just days after the Christie administration made the cost-cutting decision to pull all police officers out of New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) offices. Without security or metal detectors, the client walked into the building with a nine-inch kitchen knife in broad daylight. Thankfully, two CWA caseworkers were able to tackle and subdue the assailant, while three HPAE nurses treated Leah's wounds until the ambulance arrived.

Leah's Law would have required more police officers to be assigned to Human Services and stationed at offices. Police would accompany workers on potentially hazardous home visits and panic buttons would be installed in meeting rooms.

The Senate approved the measure last month by a vote of

33-0. It had passed the Assembly 52-17. But Christie balked, claiming that it was "tremendously costly" and that the state had already taken adequate steps to ensure the safety of caseworkers.

Yet, news reports pointed out that two caseworkers were attacked and injured by a client last July. In October, eight state child welfare offices received calls "threatening to shoot up the site or kill everyone in the building."

CWA's New Jersey Director Hetty Rosenstein said that since the assault on Leah, "there have been more than a dozen threats of bombings and shootings of DCF workers and workers have been threatened, held hostage and physically attacked in the field. The governor has shown a shocking disregard for the safety of these New Jersey heroes, who, every day, risk their lives rescuing abused and neglected children and saving families from violence."

She added, "After Leah's Law was passed by both houses, CWA requested a meeting with Governor Christie to try to discuss with him why he should support this desperately needed and responsible legislation. He never responded,



Leah Coleman

just as he has not once responded to any request from CWA to meet in the last six years. It is astonishing that the governor has time to meet with tens of thousands of people in diners in New Hampshire but can't spare a few minutes to make a call or send a card to one of his own employees injured in the line of duty, or to take a meeting to discuss their safety."

CWA is planning the next steps for this much-needed legislation to keep members safe.

CWA MEMBERS DIE ON THE JOB

Over the past year, there were several CWA members who were killed on the job. CWA safety and health activists in every CWA district and sector "work to prevent such tragedies by eliminating or at least minimizing members' exposure to hazardous working conditions and potentially related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities," said CWA Occupational Safety and Health Director Dave LeGrande.

Fred Bosch, a member of CWA Local 3112 with 15 years seniority, was electrocuted while performing aerial telecommunications work. Employed by AT&T as an outside plant technician, Fred was placing an aerial cable/strand when he came into contact with the live wire. CWA District 3 and CWA Local 3112 are conducting an investigation into Fred's death and working to provide support to his family. In addition, Federal OSHA is conducting its own comprehensive fatality investigation.

John Hare, a Verizon technician with 26 years seniority, died in December after falling from a ladder while performing aerial work. CWA Local 2222 is working with Verizon to deter-

mine the cause of this tragedy as well as to provide counseling and assistance to family members and co-workers. Meanwhile, the Virginia OSHA has launched a fatality investigation.

MOURN
FOR THE DEAD
FIGHT
FOR THE LIVING

Last November, Dennis Martin and Daniel Anderson, members of CWA Local 3676, died while performing their work at SPX Transformer Solutions, one of the largest U.S. manufacturers of medium and large power transformers. After

entering a large transformer to perform testing functions, they were suffocated by leaking nitrogen gas. CWA Local 3676 and CWA District 3 have joined forces with the employer to support the grieving families and co-workers. Following the incident, North Carolina OSHA initiated a comprehensive investigation to determine the cause and identify steps to prevent future incidents.

Last summer, a TV news reporter and cameraman on assignment in Roanoke, Va., were shot dead during a live broadcast. This senseless act of violence struck close to home for journalists and other news media workers who are represented by the NewsGuild and NABET-CWA. Charles Braico, NABET-CWA president, said the attack raised awareness throughout the union and also demonstrated how cuts in staffing for news crews has put workers at risk. "Not so long ago, a two-or three-person crew was standard, but now, one camera operator often must do it all, taking away the ability to be aware of one's surroundings," he said.

HERE. WE DON'T COME TO DIE.

APPLIANCE PARK LEAN MANUFACTURING SAVES JOBS, SAFEGUARDS WORKERS' HEALTH AND SAFETY

Appliance Park in Kentucky was one of the biggest GE operations in the country, manufacturing washer/dryer units and other appliances. It also had been a huge offshorer of good jobs and manufacturing. In fact, employment, once at 9,000, had fallen below 2,000 by 2011. But IUE-CWA has been working to reverse that decline with the rollout of the Lean High Performance Manufacturing program, and now some 4,000 IUE-CWA Local 83761 members are building appliances at the Louisville facility.

Earlier this year, GE sold the unit to Chinese-owned Qingdao Haier Co. for \$5.4 billion; the company will keep its headquarters in Louisville. It also will continue the innovative manufacturing and safety procedures that Local 83761 members help put in place.

The Lean program tackles how the entire manufacturing process operates. This all-inclusive approach engages IUE-CWA members in the design and organization of their work, giving them more problem-solving control. The idea is that the workers on the floor often have the best insights on how to improve production.

Ergonomics – the science of arranging a workplace to ensure not only efficiency but worker safety – was a critical part of this effort. With the goal of reducing injuries on the job, IUE-CWA worked to eliminate bending, bad posture, over-reaching and lifting heavy items.



BEFORE: For eight hours a day, the operator looks down into a small mirror with a light shining in her eyes, to see the small holes that she fills with three screws. Her neck is bent and her knees are brushing the line.



BEFORE: Washing machine assembly put constant stress on workers' back, neck shoulders, elbows, hands and wrists.

"I want workers to walk out the door as whole as they were when they came in," said Mary Humphries, a union Lean ergonomic leader. "I want them to go home to their families and feel good and not be injured. I don't want them to walk out of here like my mother, who retired after 27 years. We didn't look at ergonomics then like we do today. We didn't take into consideration that bending over into refrigerators 1,500 times a day would affect our backs."

Fixes have included building platforms and tables, so workers don't have to reach down to the floor to grab parts. Cameras have been attached to screw guns so operators don't have to crouch under washing machines. Workers convinced GE that investing in automatic lifts to help them install 32-lb refrigerator doors would be more efficient than rotating through exhausted employees.

"Instead of hurting and being too scared to say anything, now workers know there's someone in the union they can call whenever there's a problem," said Sharon Brumfield, a union Lean ergonomic leader.

The plan beat out GE operations around the world last year to win an Ergonomic Excellence Award for a new line launch. IUE-CWA Local 83761 President Dana Crittendon said, "The passion for what these workers do really stands out and helps our members tremendously."



AFTER: Operator looks into the monitor to determine where the screws go. No bent necks, no constant light bothering her eyes, no knees touching the line.



AFTER: The ergonomic tilt line relieved the stress on workers' bodies, reducing injury and improving quality.

NY NURSES PUSH FOR 'SAFE STAFFING' BILL



New York nurses are fighting back against management pressure to take on 9, 10 or even more patients at once. They know that's not safe for patients or nurses. Research shows that when nurses care for two to three times the patients they can safely manage, the chances of preventable death, hospital acquired infections, and adverse outcomes increase.

But there is a solution: legislated safe nurse-to-patient ratios.

CWA District 1, Locals 1168 and 1133 and the New York State Nurses Association have been working together to for legislation to ensure that patients receive the quality care that they deserve under the Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act.

The bill would require all acute care facilities to meet minimum nurse-to-patient ratios, and also would require all residential healthcare facilities to comply with minimum care hours for registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nurses aids.

Together, health care workers are raising awareness that safe staffing saves lives – and can help reduce costs in our healthcare system.

- California's historic first-in-the-nation safe staffing ratios led to more lives saved, shorter hospital stays and general improvement in quality care.
- The odds of patient death increases by 7 percent for each additional patient the nurse must take on at one time.
- Safe nurse staffing reduces turnover in hospitals. When ratios are blown out of proportion, there is an increase in nursing turnover and a decrease in patient satisfaction. All of this increases the cost of care.
- Hospitals with lower nurse staffing levels have higher rates of pneumonia, shock, cardiac arrest, urinary tract infections and upper gastrointestinal bleeds.
- In California, hospital income rose dramatically after ratios were implemented, from \$12.5 billion from 1994 to 2003, to more than \$20.6 billion from 2004 to 2010.

Cities and counties across New York State are stepping up and passing resolutions supporting the Safe Staffing legislation. Erie County is the latest to approve such a resolution, joining Ulster County, Schenectady County, Amherst, Buffalo, Cheektowaga, Hamburg, North Collins, Niskayuna and West Seneca.

Learn more at nystaffingsaveslives.org.

WE JUST COME TO WORK

CWA HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Each year, CWA, working in partnership with the Steelworkers union and the Tony Mazzocchi Center, trains about 1,000 workers across all our sectors. The goal: to train a new generation of health and safety activists using the most up-to-date training programs and methodology and to build even stronger links among CWA activists and with health and safety activists throughout the labor movement and allies.

A key part of CWA's safety and health program is to link these campaigns to the broad fight for workers' rights, said CWA Safety and Health Director Dave LeGrande. "It's about union members taking aggressive action to identify, investigate and resolve workplace hazards, and not waiting around for employers to do the right thing," he said.

CWA and the Steelworkers hold a joint conference to develop strategies to improve day-to-day member working conditions, as well as expand workplace safety and health activities. Participants tackle topics like workplace stress, hazard mapping, attitudes about workplace injuries, and comparing management and union goals for health and safety.

The participants go on to conduct one and two-day training sessions with locals, districts and sectors throughout the country.

"We have to be vigilant," LeGrande said. "The employer's message is that health and safety problems occur because of worker carelessness, which totally avoids the issue of the hazard itself. Our message is the hazard must be fixed."

Grants from the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences and CWA's Health and Safety Strategic Industry Fund support this important work.

BY THE NUMBERS

The High Toll of Job Injuries, Illnesses and Deaths, for 2013

4,585 workers were killed
on the job in the United States and an estimated

50,000 DIED FROM OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES.

150 workers die each day from hazardous working conditions.

There are **7.6 million to 11.4 million**
work-related injuries and illnesses each year.

Workplace violence is the second leading cause of job fatalities
in the U.S., responsible for

773 WORKER DEATHS & **26,520** LOST-TIME INJURIES.

There are **1,882 inspectors**
(847 FEDERAL AND 1,035 STATE INSPECTORS) to inspect
the **8 million workplaces** under the OSH Act's
jurisdiction.

This means inspectors for federal OSHA can inspect workplaces once
every 140 years and state OSHA plans can inspect workplaces once
every 91 years

Source: AFL-CIO report, "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect," 2015.



150 U.S. WORKERS DIE EACH
DAY FROM HAZARDOUS
WORKING CONDITIONS

In 2013, 4,585 working people were killed on the job, and
some 53,000 died from occupational diseases.

PIEDMONT RAMP WORKERS FOCUS ON SAFETY

For airport ramp workers at Piedmont Airlines, safety is the top priority.

AB Barden and Crystal Alexander are ramp workers in Charlotte and members of CWA Local 3645. They talked about what it takes to be safe on the job:

"We work outside and are subjected to the elements in a very fast paced environment. We start our day out with stretching to prevent an injury as we are constantly stooping, bending, kneeling, lifting up to 70 pounds at any given moment."

"Ramp workers must constantly stay aware of our surroundings. There is no margin for error within the narrow spaces between the planes. At the same time, we need to be fully aware of the caterers, bag runners and vendors who are driving on the tarmac."

"We know that meeting and exceeding our performance goals depends on maintaining a safe work environment. We're committed to doing just that. Our group has been recognized several times for our safe work practices, most recently for 2014." (The 2015 awards haven't yet been announced.)

"We're proud to be a part of the Piedmont family and we're determined to do what it takes to keep our workplace safe."

**Piedmont Workers
Making Our
Voices Heard**

HERE. WE DON'T COME TO DIE.

FLIGHT ATTENDANTS FIGHT FOR 10



Flight Attendants are entrusted with the safety, health, and security of passengers. But they're often asked to perform duties on their "rest" time, resulting in getting less rest than required.

A top legislative priority for AFA-CWA is increased minimum rest requirements for Flight Attendants to be included in the Federal Aviation Administration's authorization.

Flight Attendants will "rally for rest" at the U.S. Capitol in Washington DC, on March 16, then lobby members of Congress to get these critical changes included in the FAA reauthorization.

Seven Flight Attendant fatigue studies, commissioned by Congress, have concluded that the best way to combat fatigue is to get more rest. Current federal regulation "rest" rules provide only 8 hours after a 14-hour day. But that "rest" time includes passenger deplaning, travel to and checking in at a hotel, preparing for the next day, travel back to the airport, transiting security, crew briefing and safety checks, passenger boarding and finally the aircraft release from the gate. This likely means just 4 to 5 hours of sleep before another long day, if everything goes well.

"Flight Attendant rest should equal pilot rest in order to do our work as aviation's first responders," AFA-CWA said. Pilots currently are provided with at least 10 hours of rest between shifts. AFA-CWA also is calling for a Fatigue Risk Management Plan that will admit Flight Attendant fatigue exists and help identify fatigue-related risks.

Nearly 90,000 Flight Attendants from all carriers would benefit, as would the flying public. Despite record airline industry profits, Flight Attendants are being forced to work to the point of exhaustion because of minimum staffing, delays and inexperienced schedulers.

IT'S TIME TO #FIGHTFOR10.

WHAT'S THE MOST STRESSFUL JOB IN AMERICA? ASK A CWA MEMBER

CWA members do many of them, from emergency dispatchers and first responders (Number 1) to call center workers and telephone operators (Number 3) to social workers (Number 8) to probation officers (Number 16). The list was compiled for Business Insider using US Bureau of Labor Statistics and O*NET OnLine data.

A Health magazine survey found that nursing home and child care workers, social workers, health care workers and nurses face the highest rates of depression, with jobs that are heavy on stress, unpredictable or long hours, or little control.

Other surveys of the most stressful occupations included newspaper reporter, airline professionals, broadcasters, taxi driver and other jobs done by CWA members.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health define stress as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.



Notice Regarding Union Security Agreements and Agency Fee Objections

As a general matter, employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement containing a Union security clause are required, as a condition of employment, to pay an agency fee equal to normal Union dues (and, where applicable, initiation fees). While the wording of these clauses is not perfectly uniform, none requires more than the payment of this agency fee to retain employment.

The Communications Workers of America policy on agency fee objections is the Union's means of meeting its legal obligations to employees covered by Union security clauses and of effectuating those employees' legal rights as stated in the applicable decisions of the United States Supreme Court (including *Beck v. CWA*) and the companion lower court and labor agency decisions. Under the CWA policy, employees who are not members of the Union, but who pay agency fees pursuant to a Union security clause, may request a reduction in that fee based on their objection to certain kinds of Union expenditures.

The policy provides an objection period each year during May, followed by a reduction in the objector's fee for the twelve months beginning with July and running through June of the following year.

Briefly stated, CWA's objection policy works as follows:

1. The agency fee payable by objectors will be based on the Union's expenditures for those activities or projects "germane to collective bargaining, contract administration, and grievance adjustment" within the meaning of applicable United States Supreme Court decisions. Among these "chargeable" expenditures are those going for negotiations with employers, enforcing

collective bargaining agreements, informal meetings with employer representatives, discussion of work-related issues with employees, handling employees' work-related problems through the grievance procedure, administrative agencies, or informal meetings, and Union administration. In the past, approximately 70-75% of the International Union's expenditures have gone for such activities. The percentages of Local Union expenditures on "chargeable" activities have generally been higher.

Among the expenditures treated as "nonchargeable," which objectors will not be required to support, are those going for community service (including participating in charitable events), legislative activity, cost of affiliation with non-CWA organizations, support of political candidates, participating in political events, recruitment of members to the Union, and members-only benefits (including members-only social events). In the past, approximately 25-30% of the International Union's expenditures have gone for such "nonchargeable" expenditures. The percentages of Local Union expenditures on "nonchargeable" activities have generally been lower.

2. Objectors will be given a full explanation of the basis for the reduced fee charged to them. That explanation will include a more detailed list of the categories of expenditures deemed to be "chargeable" and those deemed to be "nonchargeable," and the independent certified public accountants' report showing the Union's expenditures on which the fee is based. In addition to any other avenue of relief available under the law, objectors will have the option of challenging the Union's calculation of the reduced

fee before an impartial arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association, and a portion of the objector's fee shall be held in escrow while he or she pursues that challenge. Details on the method of making such a challenge and the rights accorded to those who do so will be provided to objectors along with the explanation of the fee calculation.

3. Objections for the period of July through June must be sent during May. Objections will be honored for one year unless the objection specifically states that it is continuing in nature. Continuing objections will be honored for as long as the agency fee payer remains in the bargaining unit. Agency fee payers who are new to the bargaining unit, or who are returning to the bargaining unit, may object within thirty days of receiving this notice. In addition, employees who resign Union membership may object within thirty days of becoming an agency fee payer. Employees filing these objections in either circumstance should so state that circumstance in their letter of objection. New bargaining unit members are to receive this notice prior to any demand being made upon them for the payment of agency fees. If, however, for any reason a new unit member begins paying agency fees prior to the receipt of this notice, he or she may object retroactively to the commencement of such payments and for the duration of the current annual objection period.

The letter of objection should include name, address, CWA Local number, and employer. Objections must be sent to the Agency Fee Administrator, CWA, 501 Third Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001-2797.

WE'RE HOLDING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR VOTES ON TPP

Activists warned members of Congress that voting to “Fast Track” the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would have consequences in election year 2016. Now, because of their votes, Reps. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and Ami Bera (D-CA), for starters are feeling the sting of being denied endorsements this election cycle.

By voting to Fast Track the TPP, Johnson and Bera sided with corporate lobbyists and big business instead of the constituents who asked for their help: workers, veterans, environmentalists, community activists and others.

In Texas, the Dallas AFL-CIO and Dallas unions made clear why they won't endorse Johnson, said CWA District 6 Vice President Claude Cummings.

In California, Democrats are making sure that Bera is held accountable for his vote. Bera failed to reach the 70 percent threshold needed to secure the support of the Sacramento County Democratic Party, after earlier failing to get the endorsement of two local Democratic clubs.

“It's an obvious showing that delegates in the district are not happy with Congressman Bera's voting record,” said Robert Longer legislative and political director for CWA Local 9421. “About 40 percent of the delegates decided that no endorsement is better than endorsing,” he said.

In North Carolina, activists from CWA, Food & Water Watch, North Carolina AFL-CIO, Black Workers for Justice, Greenpeace, the A. Philip Randolph Institute and many more put Representatives GK Butterfield, David Price and other North Carolina legislators on notice that the TPP must be rejected.



CWA Local 1103, Food & Water Watch, Hudson River Presbytery, Yonkers Federation of Teachers and the Westchester Putnam Central Labor Body have been working together for more than two years to fight the TPP. Rep. Elliot Engel, an ally in our fight, joined activists at a community meeting to discuss the continued fight against this bad trade deal.



CWA members and retirees from Locals 7400 and 7470, and activists from the Nebraska AFL-CIO, Nebraska Farmers Union and Bold Nebraska, rallied outside the University of Nebraska as President Obama followed his State of the Union speech with a visit to Omaha. The crowd of 8,000 people waiting to get into the stadium all filed past the “Stop the TPP” message.



TPP UPDATE



CWA President Shelton at Capitol Hill news conference.

CWA, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, ALLIES KEEP UP THE FIGHT AGAINST THE TPP

CWA President Chris Shelton joined members of Congress and environmental, labor and faith leaders at a Capitol Hill news conference. Their message: “the Trans-Pacific Partnership is too dangerous for us simply to stand aside and let it pass.”

“We'll lose hundreds of thousands of U.S. jobs to the TPP; we can't let that happen,” said President Shelton. “We can't compete with countries where almost slavery is allowed.”

Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), who is leading the congressional fight against the TPP, said, “after seven years of secrecy we can finally see the details of this deal in the light of day” and it's clear that no one has listened to the concerns of working people. “When the jobs and wages of working families are jeopardized by a bad trade agreement, we risk engaging in a global ‘race to the bottom’ that our country cannot afford, and that our middle class does not deserve,” she said.

In another action, more than 1,500 organizations – members of the Citizens Trade Campaign Coalition – signed a letter to members of Congress calling on them to reject the TPP. The letter outlined Americans' concerns about the trade deal, including the offshoring of U.S. jobs, undermining environmental protections, putting food safety at risk, increasing pharmaceutical costs, and placing corporate profits over human rights and democracy.

“TPP's labor standards are grossly inadequate to the task of protecting human rights abroad and jobs here at home,” they wrote. Read the letter here.

“All these organizations are made up of working people, people who could lose their jobs because of the TPP,” Shelton said. “We need to make sure that members of Congress who support the TPP lose their jobs.”

Senator Sanders Pledges That as President, He Will Refuse to Sign the TPP

“As president, I will not sign this disastrous trade agreement if passed by Congress.” That's the word from Senator Bernie Sanders, who says “trade has got to be fair. And the TPP is anything but fair.”

Sanders has opposed the TPP, the North American Free Trade Agreement and permanent normal trade relations with China since day one. NAFTA led to the loss of 700,000 jobs. The trade deal with China led to the loss of 3.2 million jobs. And since 2001, nearly 60,000 manufacturing plants

have been shut down and 4.7 million jobs have been lost.

Our trade policies have been a disaster, written by multinational corporations to throw American workers out on the street, Sanders said. “As your president, not only will I make sure that the TPP does not get implemented, I will not send any trade deal to Congress that will make it easier for corporations to outsource American jobs overseas.”