

Local Lodge 1746
357 Main Street
E. Hartford, CT 06108

Tel 860-568-3000
iamLL1746.org
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District 26 Machinists Engage Lawmakers at State Capitol



It's been full steam ahead at the State Capitol as the Connecticut's unions lobby to get support among our legislators to pass HB 5164, *An Act Concerning Unemployment Benefits*, which would allow striking workers to collect unemployment benefits after two weeks on the picket line. Two weeks ago, union members from across the state testified in person and via Zoom before the Labor and Public Employees Committee, co-chaired by State Senator Julie Kushner and Rep Manny Sanchez. They were joined by IAM members Mark Nati and Heather Merrick of Local 700, and Joe Durette of Local 1746, to tell the committee personal stories about the anxiety and sacrifice striking workers often endure when the companies they work for fail to bargain in good faith.

Brother Nati spoke of the decision each worker makes to either honor or cross a picket line, how those who choose scabhood are often ostracized far greater and far longer than they ever imagined, and how it often becomes a career-limiting decision for them. Sister Merrick testified how scary it was in 2001 when, as a new mother with a nine-month-old daughter, she walked off her job into a world of uncertainty as she pushed her daughter's stroller along the picket line. Brother Durette shared a true story about how a harrowing medical condition caused one member to make the wrong decision to cross the line, and about the division it created between the

member and the membership. He also asserted that such plights upon our membership only emboldens the company to resist bills like HB 5164 to keep their strategic advantage over the union.

2023, a similar bill had cleared the Senate and had the votes to pass the House, but House Speaker Matt Ritter reportedly got cold feet when news leaked out that Governor Lamont was skeptical about signing the bill. This year, following the spirited public hearing before the Labor and Public Employee committee, CT AFL-CIO lobbyists asked Lamont where he stood, and he told them he remained skeptical. This after a yearlong campaign to stress to him the points that Unemployment Insurance would only be afforded to striking workers after two weeks on the picket line, and would *not* include any union with a no-strike-no-lockout clause in their contracts. So we're talking about a very small sliver of the Connecticut workforce who would be eligible for UI benefits, certainly not enough to break the fund. So what's really going on here?



Brother Nati and Sister Merrick testify before Labor and Public Employees Committee

In the eighth hour of the hearing, when many of the testifiers had come and gone, a mundane report by the Director of Policy and Research at the anti-union Yankee Institute was hijacked by Senator Rob Samson. Sen. Samson seemed to wonder aloud why the Connecticut legislature ever had to get involved in negotiations between management and



IAM Scores Big Win at Allegion

Automatic door installation and service technicians employed by Allegion in Middletown, Conn., unanimously voted to become members of the IAM on Jan. 17. The technicians began the organizing process last summer by meeting with IAM District 26 staff and signing a clear majority of authorization cards.

"I want to congratulate the technicians at Allegion for choosing the IAM to represent them and for their unanimous vote," said IAM District 26 Directing Business Representative Jeff Perinetti. "We look forward to negotiating with Allegion to secure a first contract for our new members."

The new IAM members were emboldened by the company's move to force a vote after denying a recognition request by the IAM. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) vote exceeded the authorization card drive by two votes and still resulted in a unanimous decision that these workers wanted representation by the IAM.

"The efforts of District 26 were crucial to getting these new members the representation they asked for," said IAM Eastern Territory General Vice President David Sullivan. "It was a great team win."

Perinetti said, "We look forward to negotiating with Allegion to secure a first contract for our new members and I want to thank Eastern Territory Grand Lodge Representative Andrew Hounshell for his valuable guidance and board work, along with our staff — District 26 Assistant Directing Business Representative Jeff Santini, District 26 Business Representative/Organizer Tony Walter, Local 743 President Travis Williams and Local 1746 for their help

Reclaiming Our Future!

By Steve McLaughlin, Shop Steward

In a world with so many uncertainties it is our responsibility to make sure we are doing everything we can to be financially secure now and in the future. As I get older, the fiscal security of my family is something that's always on my mind. I was hired in August of 2019. Like a lot of you reading this, that means I missed the boat on having a pension in retirement. My retirement will consist of my own personal savings, a company matched 401k and a government "promised" social security check.

Like a lot of working people my age, I have zero faith in Social Security being there by the time we hit the retirement age. Especially with the political climate of today and the push for an increase in retirement ages.

We will be left to our own personal savings and 401k. I've been asking myself lately, why can't those who didn't make the "cut" have a pension as well. With the amount of money that Raytheon makes per year, I laugh when the argument is presented to me that Raytheon can't afford it. Raytheon Technologies operating profit in 2023 was \$604 million..



We are just over a year away from the expiration of our current Collective Bargaining Agreement. We are months away from electing a negotiating committee for the next contract. Let them know how you feel! ALL bargaining unit employees deserve the peace of mind that a pension brings to a worker, even if they were hired after 2016!

Hearing, continued

the union in the first place. As if he had never heard of the National Labor Relations Act. And while the senator droned on, you could almost hear Gov. Lamont whistling past the hearing room in the hallway outside. Ned would be the first to tell you he's a governor but he's also a businessman, and a wealthy one at that, so we don't have to stretch our minds too far to imagine who's whispering in his ear at State cocktail parties. "Hi, Ned! We're Matt & Britney from Pratt & Whitney! How much do you like us in Connecticut?"

As far Ned's skepticism is concerned, rumor has it that he's not likely to seek a third term in office, so perhaps we're dealing with Joe Lieberman 2.0. If he does decide to run again in '26, he'll have some explaining to do to all of the union members across the state who knocked on thousands of doors to help get him elected.



Brother Durette testifies at the State Capitol

Entries Are Now Being Accepted in the Annual CT AFL-CIO Workplace Safety Essay Contest

Each year during Worker Memorial Day ceremonies on April 28th, workers, legislators, members of organized labor unions, worker advocates and others gather to honor the memory of those workers who have lost their lives because of workplace injuries or illnesses. The ceremonies highlight the sacrifices made by these workers and of the families left behind and inspire us all to work harder on behalf of the welfare of all workers.

This year the Connecticut AFL-CIO Health and Safety Committee, as part of its efforts to “mourn the dead but fight like hell for the living”, is offering a scholarship essay contest to inspire high school seniors to think about the importance of workplace health and safety, of the consequences that arise when workers are forced to toil in unsafe working conditions and of the role that organized labor has played in protecting workers both in the past and present.

In this year’s scholarship essay contest, Connecticut high school seniors are asked to respond in **1,000** words or less to **ONE** of the three questions below with serious thought, some research (with cited sources), and, most importantly, awareness of the true cost of workplace hazards on the lives of workers.

1st Prize is \$2,000... 2nd Prize is \$1,500... 3rd Prize is \$1,000

All entries will be judged anonymously on content, originality and clarity of vision. The winners of this contest will be asked to share a portion of their essay during our 2024 Worker Memorial Day event on Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 12 pm, at the Bushnell Park Worker Memorial, Hartford.

In 1,000 words or less please respond to ONE of the following scenarios:

My _____ (parent/family member) is an Emergency Responder. He/She is a _____ Fire/Police/EMT/Dispatcher). What types of health and safety risks are they exposed to in their work, whether it be physical injury, exposure to toxic or infectious agents, mental stress, or other factors. As a child or relative of a first responder, does their work affect you and/or your family members? In what ways?

Workers at highway construction and maintenance projects are at risk from vehicle accidents. According to the Connecticut Department of Transportation and others, what are the primary causes of these accidents? How should employers enhance work zone safety? To the extent that some of these accidents are caused by distracted drivers (for example, using their phone, eating, etc.), what are some solutions to address this problem?

High numbers of Connecticut residents are overdosing on opioids on and off the job. What work-related factors cause workers to use opioid drugs, for example workplace stress, injuries, or other factors? Do you believe that Narcan should be made available in every workplace? Why or why not? Would there be any negative consequences to having Narcan available in every workplace?

This essay contest is open to all **Connecticut high school seniors**. Please email the completed essay and application to pamela@ctcosh.org or send to

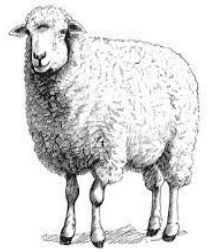
ConnectiCOSH
683 North Mountain Road
Newington, CT 06111
ATTN: Pamela Puchalski

The completed essay and application must be received by April 1, 2024.





The next Monthly Meeting will be held on March 10th in Grace Baker Hall at 11 a.m.



Remember Our Troops Red-Shirt Fridays!!!



New T-Shirts Are Arriving at the Hall On March 13th!!! Come get yours!



February RIDII Winners



Brian Wheeler	Douglas Forget
Richard Lapointe	Al Praska
Kevin Phan	Angelo Fusco
Tom Bieback	Mike Lester

WEBSITES:

www.iamLL1746.org
www.iamdistrict26.org
www.goiam.org
www.ctaflcio.org



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Your Union Needs YOU!

Here are some great ways to get involved with your union and try something new. Sign up sheets for various committees are at the Hall, or you can speak to a co-chair in person. Call 860-568-3000 and leave a message with Shay with your contact information and what committee interests you and a chairperson will get back to you.

By-Law Committee- Get together when there is a by-law to be added, deleted or changed. The committee meets only when this comes up, and votes on the proposed changes.

Building Committee- Help to maintain the Union Hall itself, and to assist with the facilitation of events in Grace Baker Hall.

Legislative Committee- Is politics your thing? Here's your chance to be a part of the bigger picture and help influence the ways our union interacts with our government, including support for legislation and endorsements for political races. There is an annual IAM Legislative Conference and lots of opportunities to get involved with the people and issues that affect unions and working families.

Community Services & Recreation Committee-The FUN committee. Help plan for activities like our annual Golf Tournament, Chili Cook-Off, Bingo night, and any other activities that can bring the membership and their families together. Get your creative juices flowing!

Organizing Committee- Get together to work on organizing non-union shops. This is an ongoing effort in our district when employees from non-union ships reach out to join the Machinists. It's hard work but very rewarding! Training will be provided.

Human Rights Committee- Work on complaints from the shop floor dealing with Human Rights or Women's rights issues.

Women's Committee-Collaborate with Local Lodge sisters to further issues that are related to women in our shop, and to help work on fundraisers for causes that help others.

Education Committee-Assist with Steward Training, and bringing in guest speakers for our monthly membership meetings.

Newsletter Committee-Yes, you too can be a part of this award-winning newsletter! Write and submit articles that can entertain, educate or otherwise speak to the membership.

The need for support on these committees is always there! Please consider volunteering to help make Your Union stronger!!!