

insight

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Contract 2025



On February 9th, Union Brothers and Sisters braved the inclement weather to gather in the newly refurbished Grace Baker Hall at Local 1746. There, they were addressed by President Howard Huestis and the elected members of East Hartford's Negotiating Committee to discuss and vote upon proposed changes to the bargaining agreement. Many of those proposals came from members throughout the shop, submitted through the surveys that were distributed late last year. Most of the proposals were approved by the membership, although some were not. Members also had an opportunity to add proposals that were then voted on and approved or disapproved by their peers in the room.

This Contract Proposal meeting was really the last good chance for members to add language to the upcoming contract. No pictures or recordings were allowed because, quite frankly, it's important to keep our cards close to the chest at this point. From here, our Negotiating Committee will compare notes with Middletown's Committee and develop a unified front to present to the Company in April. An exact schedule has yet to be determined, but we're almost into March now, so commencement of talks is probably just a little more than a month away now.

A Strike Authorization vote will be forthcoming in the next few weeks, and it's important to deliver a strong message to the Company that we will strike if we are not offered a fair contract. Our current CBA expires on May 4th, and on that date the full membership will cast their votes on the Company's last, best, and final offer, which is only such if we agree that it is. Nobody wants a strike, but nobody wants to be short-changed either, and it's important that we give our Negotiating Committee the tools they need to deliver us a great contract.

It's Time To Put Workers at the Center of the Tariff and Trade Discussion

By Brian Bryant, IAMAW President
& David Chartrand, GVP Canada

The 600,000-Member International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Union, for decades the largest aerospace and defense labor union in the U.S. and Canada, is relieved that President Donald Trump has paused his tariff war with Canada.

The IAM is all for the strategic use of tariffs to rebuild domestic manufacturing, enforce workers' rights, and stop trade cheating. But slapping tariffs on goods traded between the U.S. and Canada will drive up prices and cripple demand, leading to job losses in several industries across both nations.

When it comes to U.S. and Canadian aerospace trade, for example, the proposed 25 percent tariffs would be fatal friendly fire. The proposed across-the-board tariffs would threaten the livelihoods and families of manufacturing and other workers in aerospace and defense in both nations, as well as the future of an industry vital to national security, transportation, and innovation.

Our members assemble civilian and military aircraft, build missiles and rockets, and manufacture parts and components. They also provide skilled, technical maintenance, repair, and overhaul services for such equipment.

Our workers have already been slammed by decades of imbalanced and unenforced trade agreements and policies. We have seen mass offshoring of vital jobs in the aerospace industry, thanks to trade policies that treated workers as pawns. Millions of good-paying, high-skilled U.S. and Canadian jobs were shifted to countries where workers have little to no labor rights so wages are low and conditions are dangerous.

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Tariffs and Trades, continued

The proposed tariffs would be a direct assault on the deeply integrated supply chains that provide the backbone of aerospace manufacturing. The consequences could be devastating: production delays and lack of military readiness, increased costs and, most critically, the potential loss of thousands of IAM Union jobs in aerospace, shipbuilding, and defense manufacturing across the U.S. and Canada.

Why? The U.S. and Canadian aerospace industries are tightly linked. Many Canadian aircraft contain numerous U.S.-made parts. Canadian companies source components from major U.S. corporations as well as countless small- and medium-sized businesses across every U.S. state. This symbiotic relationship also means that Canadian aerospace and defense companies employ a significant number of people in the U.S.

Imposing tariffs on Canada would be like cutting off our nose to spite our face. It would disrupt U.S. exports, break well-established supply chains, and undermine the competitiveness of our aerospace and defense industries just as China is making historic investments to build its own air and sea capacity. Indeed, according to the U.S. International Trade Administration, Canada is the second-largest destination for U.S. exports of civil aircraft, engines, and parts while the U.S. is the biggest destination for such Canadian exports.

The tariffs would decimate an industry that contributes more than \$874 billion to the U.S. economy, and nearly \$30 billion to Canada's GDP. It also supports more than 2 million American workers in good jobs worth an average of \$104,577 in total wages and benefits, and 218,000 such jobs in Canada.

The U.S. and Canadian aerospace and defense industries are a rare bright spot—together, we export more than we import. Plus, goods trade between the U.S. and Canada is balanced if you control for Canadian oil exports. These tariffs could destroy that success.

Rather than engaging in short-sighted trade wars, we need a comprehensive, long-term strategy that strengthens manufacturing and prioritizes workers' interests. This reprieve offers the opportunity for workers and unions from both countries to participate in developing these solutions.

A new strategy requires a fundamental shift in approach. We need a united front—government, businesses, industry associations, and labor—working together to forge a trade policy that benefits all stakeholders. Workers must have a voice in decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihoods, and must not be treated as bargaining chips.

And IAM's high-skilled and experienced workforce has a lot to contribute to creating a winning approach. We stand ready to engage in meaningful discussions with our nations' leaders, share our expertise, and work towards solutions that ensure a stable, prosperous future for U.S. and Canadian aerospace, defense, and manufacturing.

To defend our nations, maintain our global standing and rebuild our production capacity and resilient supply chains, we must invest in developing future generations of well-trained workers.

This is not just about protecting jobs. At issue is preserving and strengthening a critical sector that contributes significantly greatly to both the U.S and Canadian economies and national security.

This opinion article originally appeared in Newsweek on February 14, 2025



2025 Workers' Memorial Day Scholarship Essay Contest

Sponsored by the CT AFL-CIO Safety & Health Committee

Each year in April, we gather together for Workers Memorial Day to honor the memory of those workers who have lost their lives on the job. During the ceremonies, we speak of the sacrifices made by these workers and of the families left behind, and we are inspired to work harder on behalf of all workers.

This year, the Connecticut AFL-CIO Health and Safety Committee is again offering a scholarship essay contest to inspire public high school seniors to think about the importance of workplace health and safety.

In this scholarship essay contest, public high school seniors in Connecticut are asked to respond in 1,000 words or less to one of the scenarios

below with serious thought, research and most importantly, awareness of the true cost of workplace hazards on the lives of workers. Entries will be judged anonymously on content, originality and clarity of vision.

The essay topics this year include reflecting on a significant health and safety event in Connecticut's history, how government safety agencies protect workers, and how climate change impacts worker health and safety.

Students are asked to seriously think about the importance of workplace health and safety, and the consequences that arise when workers are forced to toil in unsafe working conditions.
1st Place: \$2,000 2nd Place: \$1,500 3rd Place: \$1,000

Visit <https://ctaflcio.org/news/scholarships-available-health-safety-essay-contest> for more info. Deadline is April 1, 2025. Questions can be sent to Pamela Puchalski at pamela@ctcosh.org

Legislative Update: IAM Members Testify at State Capitol

Earlier this month, members of Locals 700 & 1746 testified before the Labor and Public Employees Committee in support of Senate Bill 8 and House Bill 6904 calling for Connecticut to pass into law Unemployment Insurance for Striking Workers. Below is the testimony of LL 1746's Legislative Chair, Joe Durette.

Good evening, Senator Kushner and distinguished members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee. My name is Joe Durette I live in South Windsor. I work as a Quality Inspector at Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford, I am a member and Health and Safety Representative of Machinists Local 1746. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 8 and HB 6904.

Today marks the third straight year that I have spoken before this committee in regard to Unemployment Insurance for Striking Workers. I've spoken on the impact the threat of a strike had upon our family of seven when I was growing up, and I've spoken on the impact a strike had upon our members dealing with serious medical conditions at the time. I joined dozens of my fellow Union Brothers and Sisters in engaging our Legislators across the state to stand up for working families in the face of corporate bullies. And we succeeded in helping to push a UI bill forward with bipartisan support.

Unfortunately, Governor Lamont didn't see it that way. After throwing cold water on the bill in 2023, he hemmed and hawed about it in 2024, provoking lawmakers to submit a compromised bill that he vetoed anyway. I'm told that he got cold feet after receiving a call from the CEO of my employer, threatening to end all hiring in CT if he signed the bill into law. Our membership has seen this before: we've heard the "Anywhere But Connecticut" mantra, we've seen lawmakers give tax breaks to our corporation in appeasement, and we've given concessions to the company only to see plants shuttered and workers laid off.

Last fall, union members and advocates mobilized across the state in support of candidates from both parties who support the causes of working families. We knocked on doors, conducted phone calls and texts, and mailed countless postcards and fliers to thousands of our members to get out and vote for our endorsed candidates. The results were staggering: from office of U.S. Senator Chris Murphy on down to the most local level, candidates clearly benefited from our support. In fact, 33 members of elected state house and senate members are union members, a whopping 25% of the entire legislature. In short, we delivered.

Now we are calling on this Committee, and the State Legislature as a whole, to deliver for us. In just 80 days, District 26 of the Machinists Union – which includes my Local 1746 in East Hartford as well as Local 700 in Middletown—will vote on a new contract with Pratt & Whitney, the same company whose CEO reportedly leaned on Governor Lamont hard to veto this bill in the last session. While it's true that this bill won't be signed into law before our contract negotiations conclude, keep an eye on how our membership is treated during our upcoming negotiations, including threats and intimidation tactics. Also, watch the current Federal administration, which has already taken steps to undermine worker protections, for signs of putting their thumbs on the scale in favor of corporate billionaires.

If a longstanding union like ours struggles in the face of these grim dynamics, think about the courage smaller, newer unions must summon against their corporate bosses to get a fair shake. And then consider how you, as Connecticut lawmakers, have a unique opportunity to send a message to the nation that our state stands with workers and their families. Governor Lamont may hem and haw about this bill and try to keep his political powder dry until the end, but this time you have an ace in the hole—the numbers to override his veto, and as one of many constituents who knocked, called, wrote and rallied for you—I urge you do so if and when the time comes.

More on this to come...stay tuned!

IAM Union Urges Reinstatement of Illegally Fired Labor Board Member



IAM Union is calling on President Trump to immediately reverse his decision and reinstate Gwynne Wilcox to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). IAM Union believes this action is critical for ensuring that working Americans receive the full protections they are entitled to under U.S. Labor Law.

On Jan. 27, President Trump unlawfully dismissed Wilcox, the first Black woman to serve on the board. This decision was not only a violation of legal processes, but also a direct assault on the rights of American workers.

By reducing the NLRB to only two members, the president has effectively crippled the board's ability to function, leaving workers vulnerable to union-busting tactics and retaliation.

"The IAM urges President Trump to reverse the unprecedented and illegal firing of National Labor Relations Board Member Gwynne Wilcox, restore the Board's independence, and protect workers' rights," said IAM International President Brian Bryant in a letter sent to members of Congress.

Thanks in large part to the IAM's advocacy, a bipartisan group of 265 lawmakers, including every single U.S. House and Senate Democrat, as well as U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.), sent a letter to President Trump urging him to reinstate Wilcox "to restore the NLRB's ability to protect the rights of American workers to organize and collectively bargain, which have already been impaired by understaffing at the agency and now are effectively lost by the lack of quorum on the NLRB."

TAKE ACTION: Call 866-832-1560 or visit aflcio.org/take-action to urge your representatives to support Wilcox's reinstatement. (reprinted from goiam.org)



**The next Monthly Meeting
will be held on March 9th
in Grace Baker Hall
at 11 a.m.**



Remember Our Troops Red-Shirt Fridays!!!

January RIDII Winners

**Diane Walton
Justin Davis
Sebastian Corsino
Brendon Foremen
Franklin Diaz
Christopher Plunkett
Scott Greaney
Barbara Zabbara**



A big shout out to all of our members and their spouses who pitched in to prep the Hall for the new floors, and for helping the Local get back to normal after the contractors had finished their work. It was a ton of work but they all came in on their own time and got it done. They are:

President, Howie Huestis
Secretary/Treasurer Joe Swain
Janitor Deb Beacham & husband Butch
District S/T Taylor Salman & husband Brandon
Conductor/Sentinel Steve McLaughlin & wife Heather
Shop Committeeman Vinny Perugini
Shop Committeeman Ryan Tyrol
Shop Committeeman Marc Parent
Club Committeeman Andy Santini
Retired Member Steve Merrick
Business Rep Tony Walter
Business Rep Al Soares
Office Manager Shay



Did we mention the floors look *great*? That 70's look is definitely a thing of the past now. Below are some pics of the front lobby, Grace Baker Hall, the kitchen, and the bar. Call the Hall at 860-568-3000 to schedule your next event today! (Sorry, **rentals are for Members only**. We are not renting to the public.)



WEBSITES:

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

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