



Our Top Two Issues of Concern



Many of you recently attended a USW sponsored town hall meeting to discuss issues that are important to active and retired members regarding endorsement of a candidate in the upcoming election. Also, SOAR and active members filled out a survey to identify their main concerns. It should come as no surprise that a significant number of active and retired members agreed on what the two most important issues were to them. On many occasions I have stated SOAR and the active members of our union share many concerns because they impact all of us during and after our employment with the company end. These results support that position.

The USW has published the results of the top concerns of our members who attended the town hall meetings or filled out the survey. The top concern of those who expressed concern was Affordable Health Care/ Prescription Drugs. This issue was identified as the top issue by 87 percent, followed by Retirement Security with 86 percent.

The results of this survey not only help the USW in the selection of candidates to support, but it also shows the close connection between active and retired members in our Union. Just because we have left our employer, there is no reason to leave our Union and no reason for our Union to leave us. While the International fully supports SOAR, many locals do not. They view SOAR simply as a retiree club and see no connection between the groups. We need to stay involved if we expect to have any impact on our level of retirement and we need to form more active and involved SOAR chapters in our union.

Stay safe, healthy and active.

Bill Pienta, SOAR President



Oh, So True!

Former SOAR Director, the late Oliver Montgomery once said, “Once a soldier, always a soldier and once a union man, always a union man.” Oliver understood that there is power in unity and to get anything good accomplished requires that we all work together. That’s where the power is.

Charlie

Voting During COVID-19



Casting your ballot in-person on Election Day might be how you’ve always voted. However, we’ve also never seen a global health pandemic like the coronavirus, which could in all likelihood be a real obstacle to in-person voting come the November election. Luckily, that does not mean you should expect any difficulty in voting.

Did you know that in 36 states you don’t even have to turn out to the polls on Election Day to cast your ballot? Instead, a growing number of states are going to great lengths to protect voters, expand access, and ensure everyone can vote regardless of who you are or what your barriers to in-person voting are.

Making voting easier for everyone isn’t a partisan issue. Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle have been elected in states that allow for no-excuse/absentee mail balloting.

If anyone wants to make the false claim that “convenience voting” favors a particular political party, then they aren’t being honest. “Convenience voting” favors voters. Period. It can be confusing to think about all the different ways Americans vote. But, finding out how you can vote most easily isn’t difficult at all!

In fact, the USW has developed an easy online tool for our members and families to find out more information about voting in your state. You can link to this tool and search for your state by going to www.uswvoices.org/state-voting-information

If you have any difficulty using the above link for any reason, you can call the Int’l SOAR Office toll-free at 866-208-4420, and we would be happy to assist you.

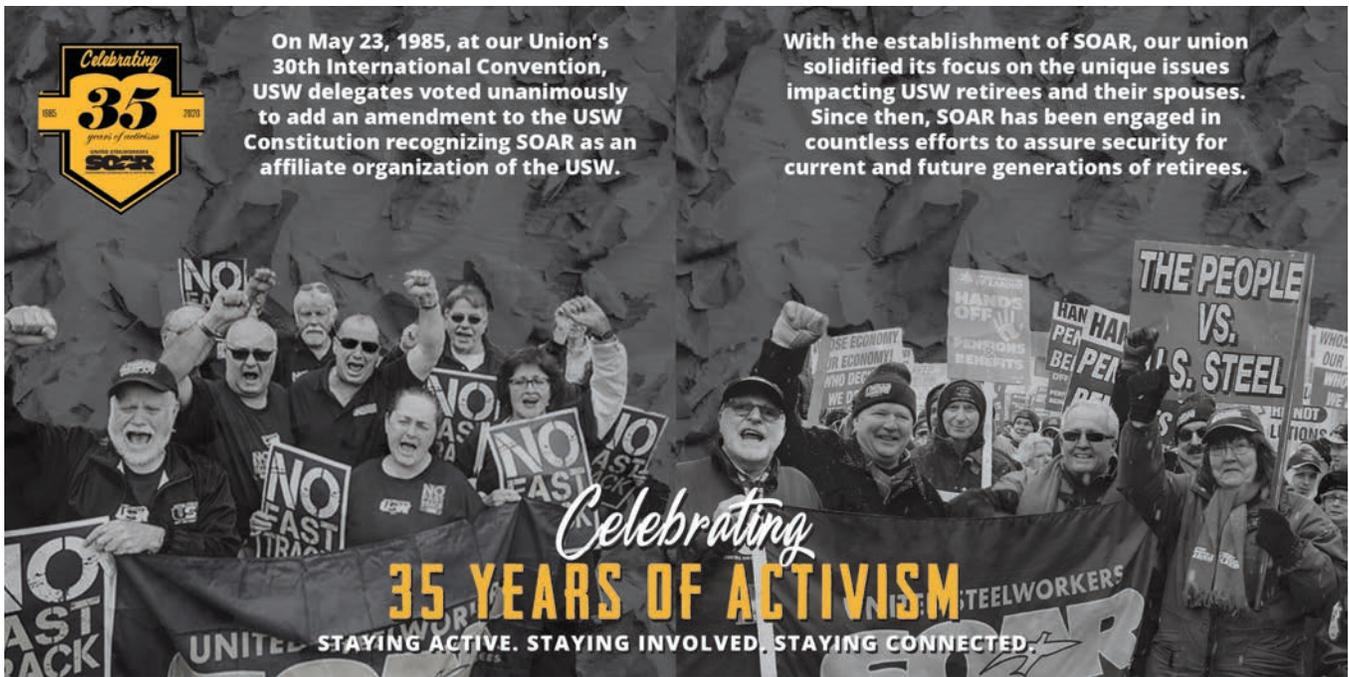
Julie Stein, SOAR Director

USW Endorses Joe Biden for President in the 2020 Presidential Race

“Vice President Biden has long been a friend of workers and our union,” said USW International President Tom Conway. “The USW is proud to stand with him now as he seeks to put our country back on a path toward shared prosperity through responsible leadership.”



The decision was the culmination of a months-long process that began last fall when the union sent all the prospective presidential candidates a detailed questionnaire to determine where each of them stands on key issues affecting working people.



Postponed!! 2020 Constitutional Convention

As our union continues to grapple with the COVID-19 crisis, the International Executive Board (IEB) made the difficult decision to pass a resolution postponing our 2020 constitutional convention. Our SOAR conference will also be postponed until 2022.

A Message from the SOAR Office:



Due to the precautionary measures taken to slow the spread of COVID-19, the USW headquarters and the SOAR office, in Pittsburgh, are still temporarily closed.

The printing of SOAR dues refund checks (that normally would have been processed in April) will be delayed until the USW headquarters reopens. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Please continue to follow all safety measures to keep your family and friends safe and healthy. The SOAR Office will resume full-operation as soon as it is determined to safely do so.

The 2020 Census is happening now. You can respond online at 2020census.gov, by phone or by mail/
Source: <https://2020census.gov/en.html>



**SOAR Chapter
Connection**

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Old Charlie Sez



Take It from Old Charlie:

Don't ever take the drug hydroxychloroquine without first seeing your doctor. It could cause heart problems.
Stay home as much as possible.
Wear a face covering when you're unable to stay at least six feet distance from others.
Wash your hands more often than usual...Take a nap and stay safe.

Elaine Says...

I believe there is a special place in heaven for the wives/husbands/partners (WHP) of active and retired union members. You know who you are. You are the ones who have supported, and encouraged, your WHP for many years. Through thick and thin.

You are the ones who sat at the back of union halls through endless meetings and conferences. You are the ones who waited in parking lots, hotel hallways and lobbies to join your loved one. You are the ones who gladly, without complaint, attended rallies, picket lines, and many tasteless dinners (although those meals were a treat for me as I didn't have to prepare them.)

You are the ones who cheered your WHP when a political bill they were supporting passed. Or a contract ratified. Or a grievance won. And, we were proud. And, we cheered when our loved one was recognized for their sacrifice and service.

You are the ones who gladly went to parent-teacher night, little league games, and high school events because our WHP had a union meeting or important event.

When he gave a speech, I admired Leo Gerard for thanking his wife and family for their love, support, and sacrifice through the years he was USW president. Nice!

Take care, be safe, stay healthy! And wear your mask!!



District Articles and Photos

Please send District and Chapter articles and photos to the SOAR Director, Julie Stein at jstein@usw.org

Photos should have a short caption included. The deadlines for the SOAR in Action magazine will be July 3 and August 31.

Thanks so much.

Julie Stein, SOAR Director

Payroll Tax Cut, Payday Lending Scheme Each Threaten Social Security



The coronavirus crisis requires creative solutions and Americans need economic relief. But White House officials are instead promoting dangerous ideas that would threaten retirement security by gutting our hard-earned Social Security benefits.

President Trump has repeatedly said that he would veto any additional coronavirus stimulus relief unless Congress cuts the payroll tax, Social Security's funding source. Eliminating the system's dedicated funding stream threatens to starve the program and puts those benefits at risk.

It is also going to make it harder to climb out of this economic crisis. Social Security benefits inject more than \$800 billion into the economy each year. When benefits are received they are spent, acting as a counterbalance to declines during a recession. And, of course, cutting the payroll tax will do nothing for the more than 38 million people who have lost their jobs.

The administration is also seriously considering a second plan that asks Americans to use their future Social Security benefits now and pay the money back with interest that will add up until they retire. This is essentially a bad payday lending scheme that asks workers to jeopardize their own retirement security in order to get by during the pandemic.

This ill-conceived idea would force working people to decide whether they prefer food on the table now or when they retire. Meanwhile, the wealthiest corporations and individuals continue to reap in billions from the 2017 tax scam, as well as bailouts and giveaways from the recent coronavirus stimulus legislation.

The pandemic is taking a terrible toll on older people. It should not be used as an excuse to slash Social Security, gut the system, and harm working families. We need to expand benefits, not risk our future by harming Social Security's solvency. Do not fall for false claims that the answer to our economic problems is to rob the one program that has never missed a payment when we need it most.

Robert Roach, Jr., president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org

Our Memorial Day Tribute

SOAR and the Alliance remember all of the Americans, including millions of union members, who have served the country and sacrificed their lives.

"Thank you to all who died so that we can have peace and freedom," said President Roach. "We appreciate your patriotism and will not forget you."

It's Time to Bring American Manufacturing Back Home



Since its inception in 2007, the Alliance for American Manufacturing has advocated for the strengthening of American Manufacturing through smart public policy. It starts by enforcing our trade laws. China and other countries should not be allowed to cheat the system at the expense of American workers.

But the manufacturing base in the United States has continued to deteriorate as more and more companies have moved their production overseas costing American workers millions of good-paying jobs. And this relocation for profit has seriously destroyed America's ability to provide essential goods for its own citizens.

It has never been more evident than today during the current coronavirus pandemic, a health crisis that has killed approximately 100,000 Americans and infected more than 1.5 million people in the U.S.

The Covid-19 disease was first discovered in China and it is in that Asian nation where an enormous amount of American companies decided to manufacture their products. So, when this deadly pandemic reached the U.S., our country was not properly prepared to provide the critical health supplies that were once manufactured on American soil.

Despite the efforts of many individual U.S. manufacturers to make critical personal protective equipment (PPE) and other medical supplies needed by health care workers and essential employees, the U.S. was woefully unprepared to ramp up production of the things our workers needed most. This time, it was not just jobs and money that was lost. It has cost American lives.

Let us hope there is soon a cure or vaccine to stop the coronavirus in its tracks but the lesson of the importance of manufacturing in America should no longer be put on the back burner.

It is time to bring our once-prosperous American manufacturing companies back home. It is essential for our livelihoods - and our lives.

Jeff Bonior is a staff writer at the Alliance for American Manufacturing



While you're at it, check out Charlie's Blog at:

<https://charlieaverill.blogspot.com>

facebook.com/groups/uswsoar

Two Pet Attacks

Together, we've mobilized hard against the Trump White House's two pet attacks on our Social Security system—Jared Kushner's "Eagle Plan" to raise the retirement age and Trump himself's push to take away Social Security and Medicare's dedicated funding (what he calls the payroll tax).

Now, there's another front in the Republican war on seniors: Sen. Mitt Romney is pushing for Congress to pass his TRUST Act, which would create a fast-track process to cut Social Security and Medicare benefits, behind closed doors.

At a time when current Republican policy is to let seniors die of COVID-19 by the tens of thousands without lifting a finger to help, it is beyond shameful that Mitt's focus is to rob those same older Americans of their earned Social Security and Medicare benefits.

Source: Social Security Works

Save USPS: Demand Emergency Coronavirus Funding From Congress

If we don't act, the Postal Service as we know it may not exist past September. Millions of seniors rely on the U.S. Postal Service to deliver important mail and packages, and voters of all ages will need the option of voting absentee in November.



U.S. Postmaster General Brennan says the coronavirus pandemic is threatening the postal service's ability to operate. Without support, it may be forced to shut down.

The Trump Administration is singling out the Postal Service -- and refusing to provide any help so it can survive during the coronavirus crisis.

Please call your congressperson and tell them it's outrageous and that the U.S. Postal Service should not be used as a political pawn. Congress must include funding to protect the postal service without delay.

Source: Alliance for Retired Americans

What to Do Next:

After you phone your congressman about the Postal Service (see above article), why not buy some postage stamps and write a letter to that person who lives alone or the older lady or gentleman who might like to hear from you or to a veteran or retired friend of yours. You'll be glad you did...*Charlie*

Message From President Conway: Happy Birthday to Our Great Union!



Seventy-eight years ago, on May 22, union activists came together in Cleveland and formed the United Steelworkers of America.

Over the years, we've grown and joined with other important unions, merged our traditions, fought many battles with difficult employers, advanced and improved the lives of working people in both the United States and Canada and have so often been at the forefront of the fight for social justice and equality.

While there have been times over the past 78 years that we've been challenged and felt under siege, our

union has never been broken. And because of our determination, solidarity and willful purpose, we never will be broken. Our founding principles, adopted all those years ago, continue to guide us today.

Our work is crucial for keeping in check greedy employers seeking to put profits over people, and we are and always have been an important voice in the political and legislative processes of our nations.

Our great union has, as we all know, made each of our lives more meaningful. It has allowed each of us to live in dignity and to know with certainty that we will never have to stand alone against the troubles that too often hurt hard-working people.

We should all hold our heads up high today, knowing that each of us play a real and lasting role in keeping this great institution vibrant and relevant in today's society. The work we do each day helps not only our fellow members but also others who need us. We have much to be thankful for, and we should all be proud to be a part of this noble union.

Hang in there, my friends. We'll weather this crisis as well.

In solidarity,

Thomas Conway

USW International President