

USW@Work

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Volume 18/3

A Powerful Voice for Workers

Let's Finish the Job: 2023 SOAR Canada National Conference

by Doug Macpherson

SOAR Vice President and Canadian National Coordinator

Almost 50 delegates from across Canada convened for a two-day SOAR National Conference in Toronto in April, to decide on issues of interest to our Canadian SOAR chapters and members. The delegates heard from NDP Health Critic Don Davies, the MP from Vancouver-Kingsway, who spoke about the importance of continuing SOAR's national fight and lobbying hard for a national, universal, publicly funded pharmacare program.



Doug Macpherson

Although the Liberal government has entered into a Supply-and-Confidence Agreement with the New Democrats, which includes a government commitment to pass enabling legislation to create a pharmacare program by the end of 2023, we cannot trust the Liberals. We must hold their feet to the fire.

Recent moves by the Liberals to interfere in the work of the Patent Medicines Price Review Board (PMPRB),

an arms-length independent committee to advise the government and set prices for Patent Medicines charged in Canada, the Minister of Health recently asked the PMPRB to hold off on a proposal to remove the two highest-cost countries, the U.S. and Switzerland, from its calculation on fair pricing.

The removal of these two countries from the calculations would have reduced the net price of medicines for Canadians, saving Canadians billions of dollars each year, and cut into big-pharma's profits. In doing so, the health minister was taking sides with the big-pharma lobbyists instead of ordinary Canadians, 20 percent of whom cannot afford proper medications.

SOAR delegates also heard from Natalie Mehra, Executive Director of the Ontario Health Coalition, who spoke about the created crisis in health care and long-term care in Ontario. The Ontario Progressive Conservative government under Doug Ford has consistently underfunded public hospitals and health care in the province, so much so, that some hospitals have had to close operating and emergency rooms.

The Tories even passed a law, Bill 124, limiting health and education workers to one percent annual

continued on page 8

SOAR members are also activists! Delegates were in Toronto in April to attend the SOAR Canadian National Conference.



Understanding Medicare Advantage Plans



BILL PIENTA
SOAR President

At the recent SOAR Executive Board meeting, held June 10 & 11 in Washington, D.C., it was decided that we as an organization should look at ways to assist our members in understanding the benefits and disadvantages of Medicare Advantage (MA) plans. While we understand that for some of our retirees, their retiree health care coverage is negotiated, many of our members must navigate the complicated jungle of plans available to them.

Some of the issues with MA plans were identified during a Senate hearing on May 17, 2023, titled “Examining Health Care Denials and Delays in Medicare Advantage.” The high-pressure sales pitch we all have heard, from phone calls made by sales representatives claiming to be from Medicare to TV commercials with celebrities offering benefits that are not actually available to many of us, were some of the topics covered in the hearing.

Many SOAR chapters invite representatives from insurance companies to speak at their meetings. Most often, the insurance company sends a salesperson who is trying to get more customers. A person from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) or the County

Office for the Aging may present a clearer picture of the type of coverage that could potentially be best for our individual needs. We should not depend on Joe Namath or some other celebrity to tell us what type of MA plan is best for us. Sometimes, a supplement plan may be the best and, in the long run, the cheapest for our specific needs.

A recent article in the AARP magazine claims, “rules that will kick in September 30 are part of a regulation designed to crack down on what the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) calls ‘misleading marketing schemes by health insurance companies.’” Among other provisions, the new rule would prohibit overly general ads about the MA program that often confuse and mislead individuals eligible to apply for MA insurance plans.

Your SOAR Executive Board does not endorse any product or claim any plan superior to another. However, we will continue to provide information on these types of plans to the best of our ability so that our members can make an informed decision on what kind of plan best suits their individual needs.

Source:
<https://www.aarp.org/health/medicare-insurance/info-2023/feds-crack-down-on-misleading-medicare-advantage-ads.html>



JULIE STEIN
SOAR Director

Conceding Nothing on Our Retirement Security

Debt ceiling negotiations concluded in June with President Biden and our allies in Congress conceding nothing with regard to Social Security and Medicare.

This comes after five months of activism by Steelworker members and retirees, as well as a major push during our annual Rapid Response Conference to urge lawmakers to stand strong against the calls of some in Congress

who have long sought to undercut the programs.

Additionally, on April 20, Dave McLimans, a former local union President (USW 1165 in Chester, Pa.) and currently a Steelworker Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Executive Board member, testified in front of the U.S. Senate Aging Committee.

McLimans spoke in detail about our union's long-standing commitment to defending every worker's right to retire with dignity, ranging from our unrelenting

defense of Social Security and Medicare to our successful efforts to pass the Butch Lewis Act, which rescued the pensions of nearly 3 million workers and families, including 120,000 active and retired USW members.

USW International President, Tom Conway, issued a statement praising the debt ceiling agreement and celebrating the hard work of USW members and retirees to ensure all Americans continue to enjoy the right to retire with dignity.

In Conway's words, Biden “reached across the aisle and found a path forward that allows our nation to meet its obligations without many of the cruel and unnecessary cuts.”

“SOAR and USW members worked diligently over the past five months calling on our leaders to preserve key programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. We're grateful President Biden listened to working Americans and held firm on these issues.”

See related article on page 3

SOAR Members Participate in Congressional Hearings

The Impact of Our Electoral Campaigns

We've said before that our union's work around elections is grounded in our commitment to get the best possible outcome for USW members, retirees and our families.

But, contrary to what you might think, the best possible outcome isn't always determined by merely looking at which candidate wins when all the votes are counted.

A Couple of Examples

Recently, two SOAR members were invited to share their perspectives with Congressional leaders in separate hearings hosted by the Senate Aging Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

On both occasions, these veteran Steelworkers offered valuable insights into lawmakers' important

role in defending workers' retirement security and protecting manufacturing jobs.

On April 20, Dave McLimans, former USW Local 1165 local union president in Chester, Pa., and currently a Steelworker Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Executive Board member, testified before the U.S. Senate Aging Committee.

In his testimony, McLimans, a Vietnam veteran, strongly opposed the efforts of some in Congress to

cut vital programs like Social Security and Medicare, saying, "I didn't serve my country, work and pay taxes for 44 years just to let my voice fade away or see younger generations lose benefits I fought for my whole life."

Upon concluding his testimony, McLimans reminded the committee, "We are the richest democracy on earth. We can afford to allow workers to retire with dignity."

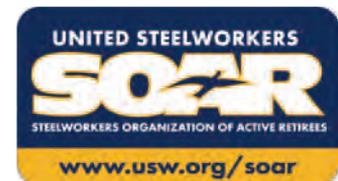
A few weeks later, on May 9, Thomas O'Shei, President of USW Local 135L and SOAR member, spoke at length with the House Ways and Means Committee about the impacts of unfair trade upon the workers he represents at Sumitomo Rubber in Buffalo, N.Y.

O'Shei explained how the USW had filed countless trade cases with the International Trade Commission and fought tirelessly to combat the threat posed by illegally dumped and subsidized tire imports.



Additionally, O'Shei told lawmakers that "Congress could do more to ensure a level playing field." Specifically, O'Shei suggested that Congress immediately add tires to the import-sensitive list and pass the Level the Playing Field Act 2.0, introduced by Terri Sewell (AL-7) and Bill Johnson (OH-6).

U.S. Senator Bob Casey, PA with Dave McLimans



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Tom Conway

BIDEN PROTECTED WORKING PEOPLE

Joel Buchanan owns his home, travels, donates to charitable causes and still has more than enough money to pay his bills on time—thanks in large part to Social Security.

Along with his union pension, it means the difference between enjoying his golden years or just scraping by.

Even so, the Pueblo, Colorado resident refused to panic in recent weeks as right-wing Republicans in the House of Representatives attempted to extort massive spending cuts in exchange for the votes needed to raise America's debt ceiling and avert global financial calamity.

The Republicans' recklessness threatened tens of millions of working people. But Buchanan, a member of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), trusted President Joe Biden to counter extremism with reason and save the day with steady-handed statesmanship.

That's exactly what happened.

Biden, a Democrat, reached across the aisle and struck a deal with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy that protects Social Security and other lifelines while raising the debt ceiling for two years and

safeguarding the world economy.

McCarthy himself credited Biden with saving Social Security and Medicare, saying he "walled off" any discussion about slashing them.

Yet Biden wasn't finished. He worked the phones and helped to line up the bipartisan votes needed to pass the deal through both chambers, even as some members of McCarthy's own party made clear that they'd prefer to let the nation default on its debts than give up demands to slash essential programs.

The House passed the deal on May 31st, and the Senate followed suit the next day. Biden noted that the legislation "protects key priorities and accomplishments."

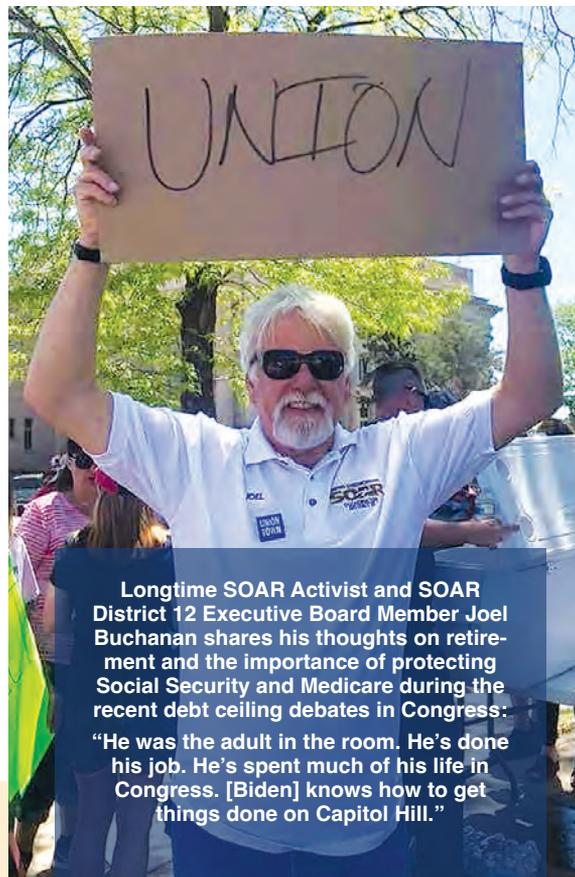
"He was the adult in the room. He's done his job," Buchanan said of Biden, who previously served as a U.S. senator for Delaware. "He's spent much of his life in Congress. He knows how to get things done on Capitol Hill."

Biden confronted the Republican-manufactured crisis with the same skill that enabled him to deliver

historic investments in America's infrastructure—the package includes billions for Colorado alone—and ramp up the production of semiconductors to safeguard national security.

And his approach to the debt ceiling reflected the same unwavering commitment to ordinary people that he demonstrated in capping insulin costs for seniors, enforcing workers' labor rights and saving dozens of failing pension plans that cover more than a million Americans.

While Biden cooperated with congressional



Longtime SOAR Activist and SOAR District 12 Executive Board Member Joel Buchanan shares his thoughts on retirement and the importance of protecting Social Security and Medicare during the recent debt ceiling debates in Congress:

"He was the adult in the room. He's done his job. He's spent much of his life in Congress. [Biden] knows how to get things done on Capitol Hill."



Photo of President Joe Biden with USW members in September 2022.

Democrats to protect working people and strengthen the nation, Republicans aimed to inflict as much harm and pain as possible.

“We default and crash the whole system?” Buchanan asked of the Republicans’ thinking. “Where’s that going to leave us? It doesn’t make much sense to me what they’re trying to do.

“First of all, this shouldn’t even be an issue right now. We have to pay our bills,” Buchanan said of the debt ceiling, noting that many of the same Republicans feigning concern over America’s spending also voted for the 2017 tax cuts that provided windfalls to corporations and the rich while jacking up the nation’s debt.

Biden staved off the extremists’ demands for devastating cuts across numerous federal departments—proposals with the potential to kick tens of thousands of disadvantaged children out of Head Start, end Meals on Wheels for many struggling seniors and slash housing support amid the nation’s growing battle with homelessness, among many other threats.

And the Republicans brazenly schemed to cut Social Security and Medicare, outraging Buchanan,

who began paying into the system when he was 16.

The Economic Policy Institute, a think tank in Washington, D.C., recently released a study noting that “millions of people are entering their retirement years with insufficient savings to cover basic expenses and medical bills.” The study called for expanding Social Security, not cutting it.

Yet McCarthy just announced a new commission “to look at the entire budget.” He continues kowtowing to the extremists in his party, including Buchanan’s own representative, Lauren Boebert, who opposed the deal to raise the debt ceiling but did not even show up for the vote.

“She’s down in Florida, visiting the former president, or down in Texas, complaining about the border, and leaves our issues behind. She doesn’t do anything,”

Buchanan said, describing her as out of touch with seniors and other Coloradans.

While Republicans seek to cut programs supporting average people, they give a pass to the richest Americans who refuse to pay their fair share.

The biggest earners represent a third of the nation’s unpaid taxes, costing the country \$175 billion a year. Fortunately, Biden’s debt ceiling deal saved funds allocated to ramp up enforcement and root out wealthy tax cheats.

Without efficient and fair tax collection, “how are we going to pay for things?” noted Priscilla Marco, president of a statewide SOAR chapter in New York. (Chapter 4-17)

Marco, an activist who’s long supported pro-worker candidates, said the Republican attempts to hurt working families and damage the economy underscore the need to place the right people in public office.

“We have to have more Democrats elected at the national level, and then we can have a different conversation,” observed Marco, who recently

worked on a petition drive to save Social Security and Medicare.

“This is the best deal he could get given the circumstances,” she said of Biden. “He and his people delivered.”



Priscilla Marco
SOAR Chapter 4-17 President and
District 4 SOAR Coordinator

Happy 60th!



Celebrating USW Local 6500's 60th Anniversary

SOAR volunteers from Chapter 6-02 did the barbecuing for USW Local 6500's 60th anniversary celebration on June 21 in Sudbury, Ont.

SOAR Mourns Those Killed and Injured on the Job

April 28 is the National Day of Mourning for workers who have lost their lives at work or through industrial disease. Ceremonies take place at workers' memorials in cities and towns across Canada to recognize the loss and call for stricter enforcement of health and safety laws. Many SOAR



chapters and retirees lay wreaths and participate in remembrance ceremonies. Rick Lewis, SOAR Chapter 3-12 President in Trail, B.C., visited the SOAR memory bench in the Memorial Gardens near the Workers' Memorial Centre.



ENOUGH is ENOUGH!

SOAR members joined the Enough is Enough rally on June 3, organized by the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) to protest Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative government's anti-worker agenda.

The campaign is fighting for real wage increases, to keep schools and health care public, to keep housing and rent affordable and to make the banks and big corporations pay their fair share. Here, SOAR Chapter 6-01 President Brando Paris joins the Steelworkers Toronto Area Council's Mike Hersh, Ontario NDP Leader Marit Stiles and NDP Member of Provincial Parliament Peter Tabuns at Queen's Park in Toronto.



LEO W. GERARD

Appointed to Highest Civilian Honour in Canada

Leo W. Gerard, the product of a hard-scrabble northern Ontario mining town who as International President of the United Steelworkers union (USW) became one of the globe's most indomitable labour leaders, was appointed to his country's highest civilian honour— Companion of the Order of Canada—on June 30.

Gerard's appointment was announced by the office of Governor General Mary Simon, who bestows the Order of Canada. Gerard is being recognized "for his vast and influential work in labour advocacy, notably as the seventh International President of the United Steelworkers union," the Governor General's announcement states.

Companion of the Order of Canada is the highest of the three levels of the Order of Canada. It is awarded for "outstanding achievement and merit of the highest degree, especially in service to Canada or to humanity at large."

Along with others appointed to the Order of Canada, Gerard will be invited by the Governor General to attend an investiture ceremony at a later date to receive his insignia.

"I am honoured and overwhelmed to be appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada," Gerard, 76, who retired in 2019 after serving 18 years as USW International President, said in a statement.

"I want to acknowledge the undeniable fact that this tremendous honour deserves to be shared by so many others, from my family to the members of my great union, to the countless other labour, social justice and political activists whom I was privileged to work alongside for five decades," he added.

"Leo Gerard's life mission has been to improve the working and living standards of workers in Canada, the United States and around the world," said Marty Warren, USW National Director for Canada.

"His impact on the lives of so many is indisputable, and it is entirely fitting that his achievements are being

recognized by his appointment as a Companion of the Order of Canada," Warren said.

Under Gerard's leadership, the USW grew as a force to be reckoned with at bargaining tables and in politics. A determined and irrepressible voice for working people everywhere, he was widely sought out as a media commentator on labour, economic, political and trade issues.

Gerard's priorities as USW International President included expanding the union's coalitions within the global labour movement. He championed greater international labour alliances to combat the forces of globalization, arguing Canadian and American workers would benefit as they helped to raise living standards and improve workers' rights worldwide.

"Leo's abilities to understand, forcefully represent and embody the values and culture of working people and to be able to communicate and be understood by those at the highest echelons of power are among his most unique and admirable qualities," said longtime friend Ken Neumann, who served 18 years as USW National Director for Canada, retiring in 2022.

In 2008, the USW joined Unite the Union in the U.K. and Ireland to form Workers Uniting, the largest global union with 3.4 million members. The USW also helped establish a new international labour federation, Industri-ALL, which now represents 50 million workers in 140 countries.

Gerard also spearheaded efforts to make the labour movement a partner with environmental organizations, advocating for sustainable industry and environmental solutions that protect and create family-supporting jobs with the benefits of union representation. He helped establish the BlueGreen Alliance coalition in the U.S. in 2006, followed by the USW's co-founding of Blue Green Canada in 2008.



Doug Macpherson Recognized for Service to SOAR in Canada

Being a retiree is hard work, especially if you keep working! SOAR Vice President Doug Macpherson is taking his “second” retirement, stepping down as the SOAR Canadian National Coordinator, a role he’s held since 2006.

Thank you to Doug for all the years of service—to the union and to SOAR.

As noted in the plaque the SOAR Executive Board presented him with in Washington, D.C., in June, “The foremost drive throughout your union career has steadfastly remained to fight for what is in the best interest of the membership.”

Doug isn’t fully retired yet, as he continues to hold his elected position as SOAR Executive Board Vice President.

Lena Sutton, SOAR District 6 Executive Board member, will take over as Canadian National Co-ordinator in September.



On June 6, the SOAR Executive Board honoured Doug Macpherson for his many years of exemplary service to the union and to SOAR in Canada as he announced his “second” retirement. Pictured from left: SOAR Director Julie Stein, SOAR Int’l President Bill Pienta, Doug Macpherson, and SOAR District 6 Executive Board Member Lena Sutton. Congratulations, Doug!

Let’s Finish the Job: 2023 SOAR Canada National Conference

continued from page 1

compensation increases at a time when the government was calling health care workers heroes for keeping us safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In February the Superior Court of Ontario struck down the law, thanks to challenge by a union coalition that includes the USW, but the government is appealing the decision.

Having created a staffing crisis and backlog of surgeries the provincial government is now allowing private, for-profit clinics and private, for-profit surgeries to be set up and paid for from the public purse, with the capacity to charge for additional services.

The famous lie to the citizens is that we will continue to pay with our Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP) cards, not our credit cards—which is in reality a huge transfer of public money to the private sector! What happens in Ontario is sure to spread to other provinces in Canada, the majority of which are controlled at the moment by right-wing or conservative governments. We have our work cut out for us, to stop this erosion of our treasured public universal health care program in Canada.

The SOAR delegates also heard from SOAR Director Julie Stein on the need to grow SOAR, and some of the initiatives being tried in the U.S. to do that, including asking USW staff to lead by example, and if aged 45 or older, to join SOAR and encourage others to do likewise.

The staff representatives’ initiative has been approved by the Canadian Directors and has rolled out in Canada. Our newest chapter in Canada is Chapter 3-30 from

USW Local 7884 in District 3, in Elkford B.C. The local adopted a standing motion to pay a 10-year SOAR membership for every retiree, thereby ensuring a constant supply of new members to the SOAR chapter and sufficient funds to keep it viable. The chapter adopted its first motion to open membership to any USW retiree in the Elk Valley. Both of these examples are for others to follow.

Good News on the Legislative Front

A significant victory for working people, recently the Senate in Canada passed Bill C-228, an Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (BIA), the Companies Creditors’ Arrangement Act (CCAA), and the Pensions Benefit Act so that pensioners are paid out following a corporate bankruptcy ahead of others, including public institutions such as municipalities and school boards.

SOAR members have been fighting for this law for at least 20 years, with SOAR member Scott Duvall leading the fight and making it a national issue when he was an NDP Member of Parliament (MP) for Hamilton Mountain. While his bill did not get passed into law, he set the groundwork for this most-recent success.

We are lobbying hard for passage of a federal anti-scab bill this year and although this will not cover all labour disputes, it will set the standard for provincial and territorial legislation, covering significant numbers of Steelworkers employed in the rail, air transportation and telecommunications sectors.



Ronnie Watson, District 8
SOAR Exec. Bd. Member



USW VP At Large Roxanne Brown,
Priscilla Marco, SOAR Activist and
USW Sec.-Treasurer John Shinn

SOAR Shows Up and Shows Out in D.C.

We had a great week with our SOAR folks at the Rapid Response, Legislative, and Policy Conference held in Washington, D.C.! While there, we had the opportunity to address the SOAR Executive Board during their meeting and to hear their concerns on subjects like Medicare Advantage, staffing situations in long-term care facilities, and how Rapid Response can be more helpful in amplifying our message to our retirees.

Members of SOAR who attended were gracious in sharing their experiences with the over 700 delegates, many of whom were first-time attendees. We are always so excited to see the mentorship that happens when our retirees are with our active members, and we are so appreciative of that.

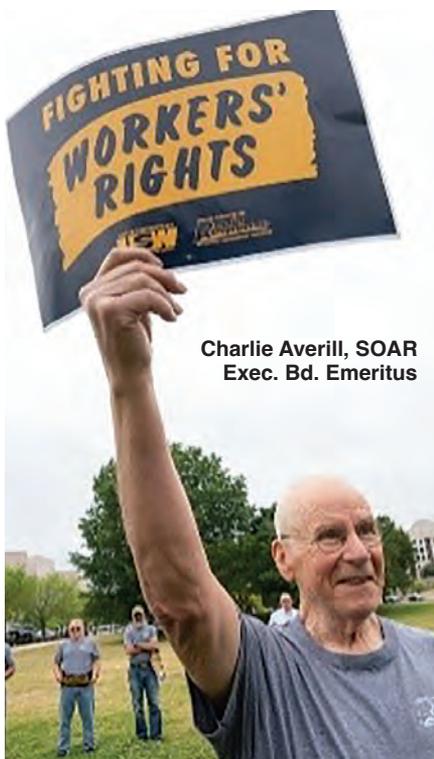
In addition, we had the opportunity to thank our SOAR activists for their efforts in our No Cuts to Retirement Security campaign, who showed up and showed out by passing over thirty chapter resolutions! Your efforts were key in making sure our legislators kept their hands off our Social Security and Medicare!

Our SOAR delegates also joined us on lobby day, where the morning was kicked off with a rally. We heard from many of our friends in Congress, and then hit the Hill for more than two hundred fifteen office meetings with our legislators.

We are always so thankful for our incredible network of retirees and what they do to engage in Rapid Response on not just their issues, but issues that impact every American. Thank you so much for making our conference a huge success and for all that each of you do every single day. Onward!



Dave McLimans, D10 SOAR Exec. Bd. Member and Denise Edwards, SOAR Exec. Bd. Sec.-Treasurer



Charlie Averill, SOAR
Exec. Bd. Emeritus



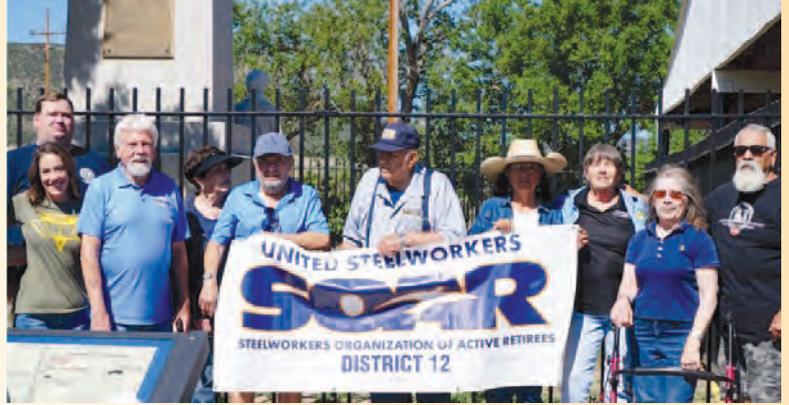
SOAR activists participate at the 2023 RRL&P Conference in Washington, D.C.

SOAR in ACTION



Chicago, IL—On July 13, SOAR members of Chapter 31-9 supported Starbucks Workers United with their cross-country “The Union is Calling” bus tour in a new “counter-offensive” in their campaign to pressure the company to negotiate with them over wages, benefits and working conditions. The tour started in Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN. It hit Starbucks locations in 13 cities, including Atlanta, Chicago, Knoxville, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Eugene, Portland, and Seattle. Pictured holding the SOAR flag, from left: SOAR Vice President Scott Marshall, SOAR Activist Bea Lumpkin, and NextGen Activist and Scott Marshall’s grandson, Levi.

104-year-old SOAR Activist Bea Lumpkin speaks at the Chicago event.



Ludlow, CO—On June 25, SOAR Chapter 38-3 members attended the Ludlow Massacre Memorial Service commemorating the 109 years since striking coal miners and their families were murdered for standing up for economic, social justice and the right to organize.

This national historic site memorializes the violent deaths of 20 people, 11 of them children, during an attack by the Colorado National Guard on a tent colony of 1,200 striking coal miners and their families in Ludlow, Colorado, on April 20, 1914.

“Remember the dead, but fight like hell for the living!” Mother Jones



Aurora, MN—Members of SOAR Chapter 33-4, the Steelworker Retirees of Aurora, MN, gathered on July 3 for their area Patriotic Days celebration and parade. This chapter has proudly marched in this annual parade since 1985! From left, Ed Casey, Chapter 33-4 President; George Brown, chapter member; Bob Kaldahl, Trustee; Pam Belange, Vice President; and Regena Kaldahl, chapter member. In solidarity!



Cleveland, OH—SOAR Chapter 1-979 recently announced the winner of their SOAR scholarship essay contest on the topic of “Why Unions are Important to Young People,” or “How Unions Have Helped My Family.” Pictured is the winner Cooper Clark who was presented with a \$500 check, along with his mother Barb Clark, and his grandfather Lou Toth, a member of SOAR 979. Next to them is Bob Parker, Vice-President of SOAR 979 who presented the check to Cooper. Congratulations Cooper!



Cape May County, NJ—Robert “Archie” W. Archibald, a retired member of USW Local 4-406 and member of SOAR, recently received the George Meany Award for outstanding service to youth through the programs of the Boy Scouts of America. The George Meany Award is a national recognition approved by the AFL-CIO Executive Council. It is presented to union members who have made a significant contribution to the youth of their community through Scouting. Archie served on the local Executive Board for many years while being involved with the Boy Scouts of America. Congratulations, Archie! And thank you for your continued activism in your community!



Cleveland, OH—Stand Up for Majority Rule! On July 11, several SOAR 979 members and friends met to write postcards opposing Issue 1 in Ohio in an August 8 special election that the United Steelworkers in District 1 actively opposed. If passed, Issue 1 will deny

Ohioans the right to put Constitutional Amendments directly on the ballot for voter approval with a simple majority, a right they’ve had since 1912. In solidarity—Vote NO on Issue 1!



DUNKIRK, NY

SOAR Chapter 4-1, also known as the Steelworker Retirees of Dunkirk, New York, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held April 25, 2023. James Bickhart serves as the SOAR chapter president.



NEW BEDFORD, MA

SOAR Chapter 4-16, also known as the ATI/New Bedford – LU 1357 SOAR Chapter, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held April 20, 2023. Donald Rei serves as the SOAR chapter president.

Thank you, and solidarity forever!

SOAR Chapters Sign On to “NO CUTS” Campaign



BETTENDORF, IA

SOAR Chapter 11-4, also known as USW Local 105 Retirees, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held May 4, 2023. Bonnie Carey serves as the SOAR chapter president.



WEIRTON, WV

SOAR Chapter 8-5, also known as the Tri-Valley Weirton Chapter – LU 2911 in District 8, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their annual picnic held June 22, 2023. John Balzano serves as the SOAR chapter president.



PASADENA, TX

SOAR Chapter 13-PC-3, also known as the SOAR Pasadena, TX Chapter – LU 227 in District 13, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held April 13, 2023. Kenneth Dearing serves as the SOAR chapter president.

CANTON, OH

SOAR Chapter 27-27, also known as the I.W. Abel SOAR Chapter, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held May 2, 2023. Thomas Treisch serves as the SOAR chapter president.



BEAUMONT, TX

SOAR Chapter 13-PC-2, also known as the Greater Beaumont Area Chapter, of USW Local 13-243, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held May 9, 2023. Robert Hill, the guy on the far left (back row), serves as the SOAR chapter president.

RIVER ROUGE, MI

SOAR Chapter 29-1, also known as the Steelworker Retirees of LU 1299, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held May 17, 2023. Cesar Randazzo serves as the SOAR chapter president.

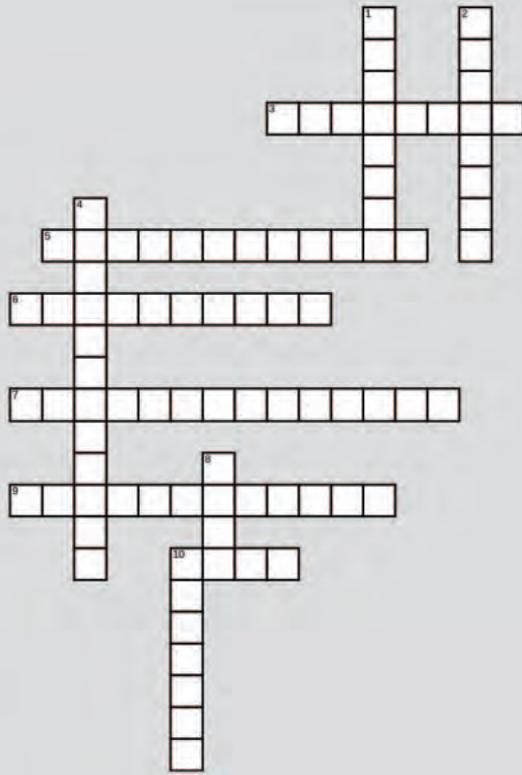


LUTCHER, LA

SOAR Chapter 36-4, also known as the Lutchter SOAR Chapter, passed the “No Cuts to Retirement Security” resolution at their chapter meeting held May 9, 2023. This was their first official meeting since COVID. David Delaneuville serves as the SOAR chapter president.

SOAR Fun Page

SOAR Crossword ~ Forth of July Fun



Wordsearch ~ Born This Way



ACROSS

- 3 Explosion in the air; Katy Perry song
- 5 Holiday, celebrating the freedom of America (3 words)
- 6 Last name of the first president of the USA
- 7 "Theme song" for the USA (2 words)
- 9 Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
- 10 Stars and stripes

DOWN

- 1 America's pasttime
- 2 How many original colonies were there?
- 4 Document that starts with "We the people"
- 8 Monument in Philadelphia. The Liberty _____
- 10 Liberty, the state of being free

WORD LIST

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| BELONG | FAIR | PERFECT | SURVIVOR |
| BIASED | FIGHT | PRIDE | TRUST |
| BLOOM | GROWTH | PROUD | UNIQUE |
| BULLY | HATE | RAINBOW | VALIDATE |
| CELEBRATE | HOPE | REVOLUTIONARY | VICTIM |
| COURAGE | HUMAN | SAME | WINS |
| DEFINE | IMPERFECT | STRIVE | WORTHY |
| DIFFERENT | LOVE | STRUGGLE | |

Solutions on page 14



American Workers Need New Trade Tools to Compete with China!

It's no secret that China's government uses predatory trade practices to undermine American workers and businesses. Their unfair tactics have led to millions of lost jobs and countless factory closures—and are one of the reasons why the United States has seen such a shortage of things like medicine and semiconductors.

New bipartisan legislation called the “Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0” would create new trade enforcement mechanisms so American workers and manufacturers can fight back against China's increasingly sophisticated trade cheating.

The threats posed by the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) predatory industrial policies and unfair trade practices are an everyday reality for U.S. manufacturers and their workers. Relief from persistent unfair trade attacks is too often granted only after factories have already been forced to shutter or scale back operations and only after workers have lost their jobs.

To make matters worse, China and other serial trade cheats then find ways to circumvent the duties that have been put in place to level the playing field. Action is urgently needed by Congress to strengthen our unfair trade tools so that companies in the steel, engine, furniture, solar, paper, seafood, tire and other sectors can fight back against China's anti-free market practices.

“The Chinese Communist Party has flooded the global market with dumped and subsidized steel and other products for decades,” said Alliance for American Manufacturing President Scott Paul. “The trade cheating has had very real consequences for communities around America, eliminating millions of family-supporting jobs. In addition to the economic havoc wreaked by China's cheating, these practices have also threatened to compromise our national security.

“Steel is an essential component of much of America's infrastructure and defense supply chain. Without a stable domestic steel sector, America endangers its ability to quickly respond to the needs of

war and grants our foreign adversaries access to our most sensitive systems, including infrastructure.”



This bipartisan, bicameral bill strengthens our anti-dumping and countervailing duty trade remedy laws to counter a litany of unfair trade practices that have contributed to the loss of millions of good, middle-class jobs and fostered a dangerous overreliance on far flung supply chains that jeopardize the safety and security of all Americans. The bill addresses “country hopping” circumvention tactics, expands existing authorities to

counter Belt and Road Initiative subsidies provided by the CCP to other countries, and accelerates the timeline for anti-circumvention inquiries.

As the House and Senate work to bolster U.S. economic competitiveness and national security, it is essential that any legislative package include the Level the Playing Field Act 2.0

(S. 1856 / H.R. 3882) and other policies designed to help our factory workers and manufacturers fight China's predatory trade practices and rampant trade cheating. Recent investments in manufacturing by the federal government and the private sector will all be for naught if China can continue to undermine U.S. companies and American workers through unfair trade.

We at the Alliance for American Manufacturing encourage our SOAR brothers and sisters to contact their members of Congress and let them know how important the Level the Playing the Field Act 2.0 is to the future of steelworkers and all Americans working the manufacturing sector.

Please contact your Senators and members of the U.S. House of Representatives at their state or district offices. They can also be reached by phone by calling the U.S. Capitol at (202) 224-3121 and asking to be connected directly to your representative's office.

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



Photo by Getty Images

Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0

This Bill is a Potential Game Changer for America's Factory Workers

By Blue Wilson, Vice President
SOAR Chapter 29-4, Local 2659

The Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0 would give manufacturers and workers new, modern tools to fight China's most egregious unfair trade practices. It's time to get it passed.

"Unfair Trade" isn't just a talking point. I know that firsthand.

I worked at McLouth Steel here in Michigan for over 25 years. It was a

good-paying job, the type you could raise a family on. I was proud to make carbon and stainless steel that went into many of America's products and appliances.

But, for nearly my entire time there, it wasn't enough for all of us in the mill to just do our jobs. We constantly faced the threat of dumped and unfairly traded imports that threatened our livelihood. We went through several rounds of layoffs.

So, we had to become advocates — holding rallies and marches, and meeting with lawmakers to demand policy to level the playing field.

All these years later, America's factory workers are still doing double duty. They're still fighting unfair trade. But now help could be on the way.

New legislation called the Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0 would create new, improved tools to equip America's workers and manufacturers with what they need to take on trade cheats and compete globally.

This new bill is desperately needed.

As it stands now, it takes American workers years to win a trade case, even when they can definitely prove unfair trade is taking place and causing harm.

But even that's not enough, because foreign companies have found creative ways to get around trade enforcement, like moving production to a new country. That means the trade case must start from scratch.

The Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0 would speed things up, making it easier for U.S. workers to receive trade relief, especially from repeat offenders. It also will help address some of China's most egregious practices, such as subsidizing production in third party countries.

I'll be honest with you: Congress hasn't always been that much help to our factory workers.

It truly baffles me that it's taken decades — and multiple crises like the pandemic and the supply chain shortage — for policymakers to finally see the crucial need to strengthen American manufacturing.

This bill is decades in the making, and we must seize the moment!

My Brothers and Sisters at McLouth Steel eventually lost our fight against unfair trade. The com-

pany shuttered in 1996. We weren't alone, of course, as tens of thousands of American factories have closed.

But if this bill becomes law, America's current factory workers will be better equipped to keep up the fight!



The McLouth Steel mill in Trenton, Mich., shown in the early 1990s. Transkahr via Wikimedia

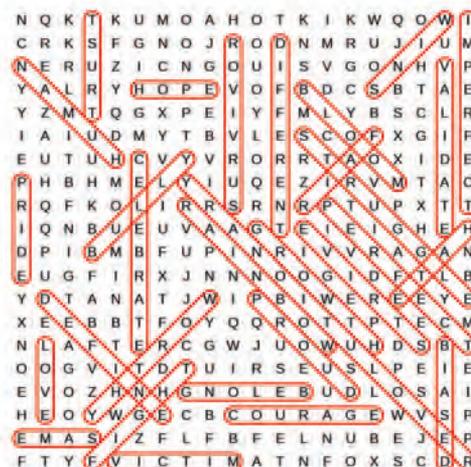
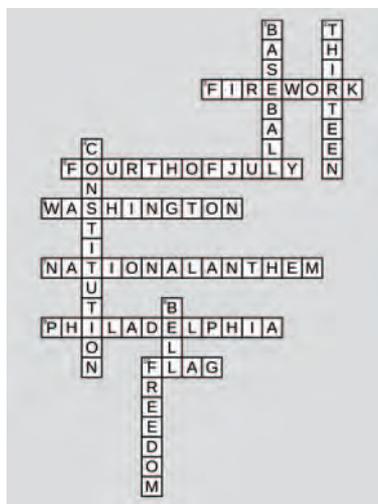
I've written to my Members of Congress in support of the Leveling the Playing Field Act 2.0. Please join me in doing the same.

Take action by going to:

<https://americanmanufacturing.salabs.org/ltpfa2023/index.html>

Cleofus "Blue" Wilson, Vice President
SOAR Chapter 29-1, Local 2659

Puzzle solutions





Drug Industry Files Multiple Lawsuits to Stop Medicare Drug Price Negotiations

By Robert Roach, Jr.

By giving Medicare the ability to negotiate drug prices, President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, once implemented, will save taxpayers and patients \$25 billion.

In an effort to protect their profits, Merck & Co., the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Bristol Myers Squibb and PhRMA, the drug industry's trade association, have all filed separate lawsuits against the Biden-Harris administration to block Medicare's authority to negotiate lower prices. More suits may follow as drug corporations ultimately try to get the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down the law.

The lawsuits have elevated an epic battle over the federal government's efforts to bring skyrocketing drug prices



under control. More lawsuits give the industry additional opportunities for success, and PhRMA's suit, filed in a Texas court, means the case could eventually

be heard by the resolutely conservative 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.

PhRMA CEO Steve Ubl has argued that the provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act that will allow Medicare

to start negotiating prices for certain drugs are essentially "a government mandate disguised as negotiation."

The Alliance, health advocates, and consumer organizations note that negotiating a fair price for drugs is nothing new and is a hallmark of a free market economy — governments and insurance companies around the world negotiate drug prices on behalf of their citizens on a daily basis. The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs and the Medicaid program already negotiate prices in this country. Furthermore, federal, state, and local governments routinely negotiate the cost of other goods, from military equipment to office supplies, they purchase from private sector companies.

The first wave of negotiations is slated to start in September but will be limited to 10 drugs. The drug industry should quit complaining and start negotiating a fair deal. We should be building on this law to make sure people can afford the drugs they need to remain healthy.



Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously the General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW.

For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.

Senate Budget Committee Holds Hearing on Strengthening Social Security

Rep. Larson Re-Introduces the Social Security 2100 Act

As Social Security celebrates its 88th birthday on August 14, the program has been in recent news with Senate Budget Committee Chairman Sheldon Whitehouse (RI) holding a hearing entitled "Protecting Social Security for All: Making the Wealthy Pay Their Fair Share" and Rep. John Larson (CT) re-introducing the Social Security 2100 Act as HR 4583.

The Senate hearing focused on S. 1174, the Medicare and Social Security Fair Share Act, introduced by Sen. Whitehouse. The legislation extends Social Security's solvency indefinitely while extending Medicare's solvency by 20 years by requiring Social Security taxes to be paid on all wages, self-employment, and investment income above \$400,000.

Currently, Social Security taxes are only paid on the first \$160,200 in annual earnings. In addition, the Medicare tax rate would be increased for income above \$400,000. Rep. Brendan Boyle (PA) has introduced a House version of the bill, HR 4535.

Rep. Larson's bill, HR 4583, was re-introduced on July 12th. It has more than 175 House co-sponsors and would require Social Security taxes to be paid on wage income above \$400,000. It increases benefits by 2% across the board for all Social Security beneficiaries for the first time in 52 years, expands benefits to boost lower-income seniors, and improves benefits for middle-income widows and widowers from two-income households. It also repeals the Windfall Elimination

Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) that currently penalize many public servants. Sen. Richard Blumenthal (CT) introduced the Senate version of the bill, S. 2280.

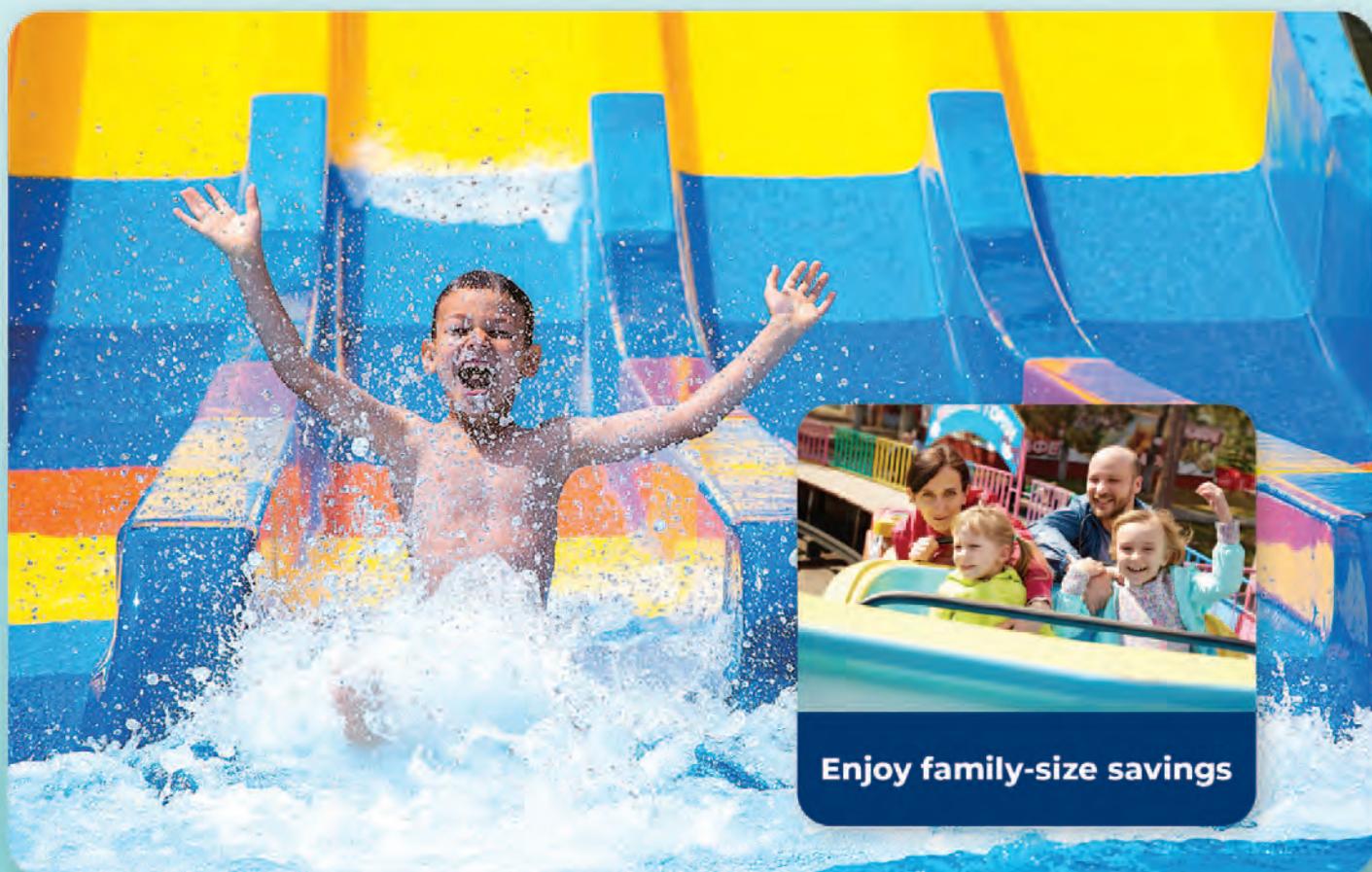
"The Alliance supports both of these bills. They demonstrate how we can strengthen Social Security and ensure that the vast majority of Americans do not continue paying a much larger percentage of their income into Social Security than billionaires," said Robert Roach, Jr., President of the Alliance. "This is a welcome contrast to the proposals from other members of Congress who talk about raising the full retirement age for Social Security, privatizing it and creating special commissions to slash it."



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