

USW Committed to Reaching Fair Deal

(October 16) – We know many of our brothers and sisters who work at U.S. Steel are frustrated with the extremely slow pace of our negotiations. We understand and share your frustration. We also know that this slow pace, this frustration and the unpredictable state of our industry have led to uneasiness and uncertainty in our workplaces and our communities.

We can't predict the future, so we can't tell you what is going to happen in the economy or how U.S. Steel is going to react, but we are committed to making sure that everyone is informed as this process unfolds. We are also committed to continuing to do whatever it takes to win a fair contract. For the latest information on your local plant, please talk to your local officers and CAT coordinators.

What We Know

Our industry is in the midst of a crisis. We did not cause this crisis; rather, it is the result of unfair trade and a drop in oil and gas prices. This led to a glut of steel imports, less demand and lower prices for our products, and global overcapacity.

This has meant layoffs or threats of layoffs at a number of U.S. Steel facilities. The company earlier this year announced it would shut down the blast furnace and other operations in Fairfield, Ala., months before a new electric arc furnace comes online. While the USW is working hard to save every possible job and ensure that workers are treated with dignity and respect, this is still an extremely difficult time for many USW members and their families.

Earlier this year, U.S. Steel temporarily idled its Keetac and Minntac plants, decisions affecting hundreds of USW members and families in the Minnesota Iron Range. While some workers have been called back at Minntac, Keetac remains idle. In addition, there have been warnings of additional layoffs at our steelmaking and finishing facilities in Ecorse, Mich., and Granite City, Ill.

We Are Not Alone

Employers all across the country are attempting to take advantage of this temporary crisis to gut contracts and force our brothers and sisters to accept deep cuts. USW members who work at ArcelorMittal and Cliffs Natural Resources are also facing demands for deep concessions. In August, specialty steelmaker ATI locked 2,200 USW members out of their jobs in an attempt to force them into accepting deep cuts.

What We Can Do

Many of these decisions are the result of unfair trade, currency manipulation and other illegal practices by our trading partners, most notably China. The U.S. needs new and better laws and stronger, more timely enforcement to protect American manufacturing. Unfortunately, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a massive free-trade agreement headed for a vote in Congress, looks like it would only give us more of the same. You can find out more about the TPP by visiting <http://usw.to/TPPblog>. Soon, we will be asking all USW members to contact their Senators and Representatives to demand trade policies that benefit American workers. Stay tuned for more information from your Rapid Response coordinators about that effort.

As always, stay strong, stay in touch with your officers and CAT coordinators, and keep working safely. Our unity and solidarity have made a huge difference so far, and we are counting on all of our sisters and brothers to stand together through this process.

In Solidarity, Your 2015 U.S. Steel Bargaining Committee

Tom Conway, USW International Vice President
Committee Chairman

Mike Millsap, USW District 7 Director
Committee Secretary

Jim Allen, Local 1299
Lowell Carlon, Local 1938
Jason Chism, Local 50
David Clark, Local 1013
Bill Coe, Local 4889
Rafael Cruz, Local 2695
Jeremy Dickson, Local 9115
Donnie Ferrell, Local 2210

Michael Fields, Local 2122
John Grunsky, Local 1557
Dennis Hamilton, Local 1104
Jason Hughes, Local 5133
Jim Johnston, Local 1219
Rodney D. Lewis Sr., Local 1014
William "Billy" McCall, Local 1066
Carol Murphy, Local 404

Durwin "Oodie" Royal, Local 4134
Scott H. Sauritch, Local 2227
Dan Simmons, Local 1899
Dan Sykes, Local 68
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