



PENNSYLVANIA

NEWS FOR THE UNITED STEELWORKERS IN

# DISTRICT 10

**W**e've had a busy and inspiring start to the fall season here in District 10 as we continue the fight for the working class. It all started with an incredibly educational experience at the USW Health, Safety and Environment Conference in Pittsburgh where we were able to learn from each other and experts in the field on how to make sure we and those whom we work with make it home safely every day.

We were also honored to be visited by Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su, who was able to meet one-on-one with our members at Blue Bird and Kumho Tire in Georgia. It is vital to have labor supporters in the highest levels of office, including the Department of Labor, who listen to our concerns and fight on our behalf every day.

This inspiring momentum continued in early September when workers at the new battery storage plant in Pittsburgh, EOS Energy, voted overwhelmingly to join our union. They aim to make their green jobs safer and more flexible, and we can't wait to help them do just that.

As federal funds from the Inflation Reduction Act pour into the renewable energy sector, we must ensure the industry's workers are treated fairly and are able to exercise their right to collective bargaining.

Of course, we are also gearing up for this November's general election, one that will define this country and our values for generations to come. Members across our great district are pounding the pavement to talk with fellow voters about the issues that matter to us, issues identified through the USW's Your Union, Your Voice campaign.

These issues include fair trade, affordable and equitable health care, retirement security, collective bargaining, domestic issues like infrastructure and

manufacturing, and safety and health.

These core principles are established through surveys and dozens of town halls, where we listen to your concerns and use them to guide our endorsements. This political activism is essential to building a platform to shape legislation that affects our members, their families, and their workplaces.

We also know that we cannot let partisan politics become a wedge between us. It should allow us to focus on what we can do to build more collective power and create a society that works for all of us.

This activism is how we end up with major wins for workers like the Butch-Lewis Act, which was part of the American Rescue Plan that protected the pensions of 120,000 active and retired USW members. We also now have a worker-centered National Labor Relations Board and an administration that passed the first infrastructure bill in decades.

Our advocacy matters. It is the only way we can create the change we deserve.

This year's Labor Day celebrations were a great reminder of that commitment, and I want to thank everyone who joined us in parades and celebrations across the state. The working class built this nation and continues to do so. Our voices deserve to be heard and uplifted.

It is also essential for every union member to be a part of this democratic process and to cast their vote this November. There are elected officials who would love nothing more than to take that right away from us, and it is our duty to turn out to the polls in record numbers to show them we are not going back.

We are the USW, and we aren't going anywhere.

## 2024 D10 EVENTS AND TRAININGS

**Oct. 13-16**

Civil & Human Rights

**Oct. 11- Nov. 11**

District 10 Health and Safety Training

**Oct. 27-31**

Workers' Compensation - West

**Nov. 6-7**

2024 GMP Assembly

**Nov. 7-8**

2024 USW Glass Industry Conference

**Dec. 2-5**

2024 Public Sector Conference



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**BERNIE HALL**  
DISTRICT 10 DIRECTOR

# SOME THINGS THAT EVERY UNION MEMBER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT A SAFETY COMMITTEE

## (PART TWO)

All work-related injuries and illnesses are the result of exposure to some sort of hazards - there are no exceptions. To work safely, hazards must be eliminated or reduced, and barriers to safety (e.g. production pressures, excessive job demands, fatigue, poor training, inadequate tools, etc.) must be removed. The best way to find hazards is for Union safety and health reps to talk to **every worker** about his or her job, and how to make it safer and easier.

Union safety reps should think of themselves as organizers, promoting safety and health in a way that builds the membership's loyalty and commitment to fellow workers and their Union. That means involving members whenever and wherever possible, and communicating with them effectively, both in written form and in person. Enlisting members in pushing for improvements is a good way to bring membership together to create a safer workplace and a stronger Union.

Celebrate our wins. It is important for the Union to celebrate our wins every time we succeed in addressing a safety issue or concern. Our members should know about it, that way we make them aware and they know their Union is working for them and is promoting unity and solidarity. You are not alone. The International and District are here to support you, and can provide you with the resources you need. Every district has a safety and health coordinator, and our International Health, Safety and Environment Department is second to none. Our previous and current track record is proof of that.

Our 2024 International Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) Conference has now concluded and was very successful. Over fifteen hundred Union Safety representatives from all over Canada and the United States met for five days in Pittsburgh. There were over 300 break out training sessions held to give the attendees the knowledge and tools to make our workplaces safer for our members. Of special significance were the industry sector breakout meetings that members could attend to focus on and address issues specific to their industries and workplaces.

The conference was a success due to the

commitment and dedication of USW Director of Health, Safety and Environment Steve Sallman, Tony Mazzocchi Center Director Ashlee Fitch, as well as many TMC and HSE staff and the scores of local union activists who assisted with registration and conducted trainings and breakout sessions. It must also be noted that several governmental agencies recognize the USW as a true leader and advocate in protecting workers from unsafe and hazardous environments.

On the first day of the conference, attendees had the opportunity to listen to a wonderful presentation from Julie Su, the U.S. Secretary of Labor. Secretary Su recognized the USW for their relentless goal of providing safe workplaces for our members. On the second day, attendees listened to presentations by James Frederick (former Director of the USW HSE Department) Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA). Deputy Assistant Secretary Frederick addressed the group on the positive gains that have occurred with OSHA in the past three years. Also addressing the group was Chairperson of the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board Steve Owens. Chairperson Owens spoke at length on the safety improvements in the Chemical industry. Concluding the Tuesday plenary session was Duronda Pope, Director of the USW Emergency Response Team, which assists our members and their families in the event of a fatality or serious injury in one of our workplaces. When it comes to workplace safety, the USW is second to none.

As we move slowly from the cooling season into the heating season, it is important that we all have our heating systems inspected, system filters changed and flues inspected for obstructions that may have occurred during the summer months. This will keep our home heating systems functioning safely and efficiently. An ounce of prevention will keep all of us safe as we head into the fall and winter heating seasons.

*Jim Watt, District 10  
Health, Safety & Environment Coordinator*



RAPID RESPONSE IN THE DISTRICT HAS BEEN VERY BUSY IN BOTH FEDERAL AND STATE LEVELS. WE ARE WORKING ON TWO BILLS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL AND SIX AT THE STATE LEVEL. ALL FEDERAL AND STATE BILLS ARE IN THE SENATE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH.

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## FEDERAL

### **H.R. 4276 SUPPORT TRADE IMPACTED WORKERS AND RENEW TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE**

The Department of Labor's (DOL) Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides robust job training benefits for workers who lose their jobs because of dumped and subsidized imports, changes in tariffs, and trade agreements.

### **DEFEND INSTITUTIONS FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS – SUPPORT FUNDING AND STAFFING FOR THE NLRB**

The NLRB is the federal agency tasked with the responsibility to “assure fair labor practices and workplace democracy nationwide.” Workers around the country depend on the NLRB to do its essential job of protecting and advancing workers’ rights.

## STATE

### **H.B. 299 – PUBLIC EMPLOYEES OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT**

The bill would ensure that the basic right of all employees to work in an environment free from hazards and risks to their safety is also afforded to Commonwealth employees.

### **H.B. 1481 – UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (UC) ELIGIBILITY FOR STRIKING WORKERS**

The bill would amend Section 401 of the existing UC law by allowing a claimant, who files a UC claim and meets the existing eligibility provisions, to be eligible for UC benefits if the claimant is unemployed due to stoppage of work caused by a labor dispute. In the case of a strike, there shall be a 30-day waiting period, but the waiting period shall not apply in the event of a lockout.

### **H.B. 930 – EXPANDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION (WC) FOR PERMANENT DISFIGUREMENT**

Current PA law excludes certain types of workplace injuries from receiving WC benefits; fixing the loophole by ensuring all workers who are seriously or permanently disfigured are eligible for WC.

### **H.B. 760 – DIRECT DEPOSIT FOR WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

H.B. 760 would allow WC benefits to be delivered via direct deposit rather than being paid through the mail; ensuring there will be no lost checks and a host of other issues.

### **H.B. 1626 – AN ACT AMENDING TITLE 51 (MILITARY AFFAIRS)**

The bill requires the following content: Contact information for the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (VA) U.S. Department of VA Crisis Line, and County Directors of VA. Information and contacts for a range of federal and Commonwealth benefits for veterans, such as: substance abuse and mental health treatment, educational, workforce, and training resources, tax resources, PA drivers’ license and ID card veteran designation, unemployment insurance resources, and legal services resources.

### **S.B. 365 – WORKERS' COMP FOR FIRST RESPONDERS WITH POST TRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY**

The bill would remedy the situation by providing clearer criteria to help first responders receive the benefits they need.

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It is critical to have our members engaged in the work of Rapid Response. It gives power to our members to influence law makers in both state and federal levels and helps our members see that their Union is doing work on their behalf to assist in the day-to-day functions of their locals and work life. Having our members involved helps our Union understand the issues that impact them at work. We often get a heads up on policies that could be good or bad for our locals from the members themselves; who are our eyes and ears. When members communicate at their worksites, it builds solidarity in the local and that equates to better bargaining outcomes. Education is key. We want to bring that to every member wherever we can. Having a constant presence in the state and federal levels is critical in making sure our issues are represented.

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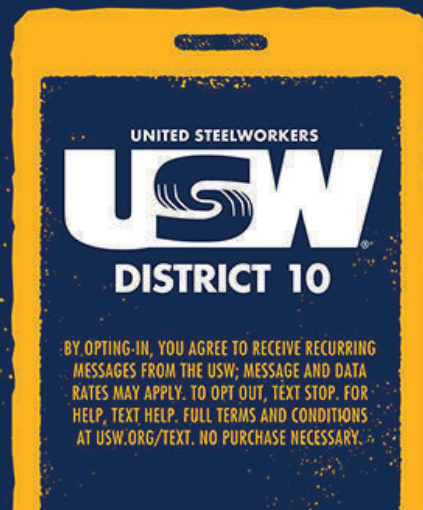
# STAY CURRENT ON DISTRICT 10 UPDATES



**D**istrict 10 undertook the extensive task of building a new communication network this year to help you, our members, stay connected with what's happening around the state. Hopefully, you've already seen some of our messages!

This new network includes creating an email and text messaging system so that we can share information about the latest news, trainings and events, member and retiree highlights and so much more. If something is happening, we want you to know about it.

To sign up for the email updates, go to [www.usw.org/districts/10](http://www.usw.org/districts/10) and click on "sign up for the email updates." To sign up for text updates, send the message D10 to the phone number 47486 or you can scan the QR code to get started.



## GET INVOLVED

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