



IAM District 26 News Alert

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CT Congressional Delegation Calls on Obama to Halt Cheshire/CARO Pratt Closings

December 7, 2009 Kensington, CT – Connecticut’s Congressional delegation sent a united message to President Barack Obama, asking him to **“use every measure at your disposal”** to convince United Technologies Corporation to keep its Cheshire and CARO Pratt & Whitney facilities open.

The letter was delivered to the White House as President Obama focused attention on the issue of joblessness across America. The CT delegation concurred with the urgency of the issue, stating: **“We believe that every effort must be made to preserve America’s industrial base.”** Closure of Cheshire and East Hartford’s CARO operations would result in more than 1,000 Pratt employees losing their jobs, with up to 3,000 more Connecticut workers also ending up unemployed as a result of the Pratt job cuts.

The delegation letter to the President was signed by both **Senator Dodd and Senator Lieberman**, as well as **Representatives Larson, Courtney, DeLauro, Himes and Murphy**.

Last week the International President of the International Association of Machinists, **Tom Buffenbarger**, also sent a letter to President Obama, to **“respectfully request your help to keep the Pratt & Whitney jobs in Connecticut.”** As both the IAM’s Buffenbarger and the Congressional delegation pointed out, Pratt workers and the State of Connecticut offered a king’s ransom -- **\$180 million in concessions and incentives** – to United Technologies to keep the work here. The corporation turned these offers down.

United Technologies Corporation undoubtedly bristles at the idea of “government interference” in their “private business.” But federal taxpayers have underwritten UTC since its inception. In the past three years, three divisions of UTC – Pratt & Whitney, Hamilton Sundstrand and Sikorsky – have collectively received **more than \$8 BILLION in federal contracts**. Agreeing to a request by their biggest single customer – the US

Government – to keep open profitable work centers at a time of massive economic distress is not an unreasonable request.

This latest initiative follows requests from the executive offices of the State of Connecticut, including Governor Rell, Attorney General Blumenthal, Comptroller Wyman and Secretary of State Bysiewicz, earlier this Fall to UTC, asking reconsideration of the decision. The overwhelming majority of the Connecticut General Assembly has also asked management to keep the work in Connecticut. State Treasurer Denise Nappier, who safeguards state pension fund investments that include UTC, suggested that **UTC’s top executives could take a modest pay cut** that would eliminate the company’s financial concerns.

IAM District 26 has filed suit in federal court to force Pratt & Whitney to abide by agreements to work with the Machinists Union on ways to keep work in Connecticut. Between the State of Connecticut and the IAM offers, Pratt & Whitney has more than sufficient incentives to continue these operations here.

James Parent, chief IAM negotiator for UTC issues, stated: “We are grateful to the Connecticut Congressional delegation for taking this extraordinary step. It shows that they understand that Connecticut cannot afford to absorb job losses of this size – there’s too much suffering out there already without needlessly adding more people to the unemployment rolls.

Parent continued: “We urge the President to act on this request and reach out to UTC. The company needs to be reminded that taxpayers are among their biggest customers, and we don’t want to pay for corporations to throw people out of work and send jobs overseas. Especially during such hard times.”

The IAM will this week encourage its members and people across the state to get in touch with the White House, through its website or switchboard, to **urge President Obama to do whatever he can to help save these Connecticut jobs.** The White House website is <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>. The White House can be reached by phone at: 202-456-1111.

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