

**International  
Association of  
Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers**



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OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

GL 2 – IP Department

March 16, 2011

To All IAM Members:

Every American is now aware, by news reports over the past weeks, of the assault on collective bargaining rights of public sector union members. Workers in Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Florida and elsewhere are standing together in solidarity to defend the right to negotiate for economic justice and employment dignity. The struggles fought by public sector union members across our nation are not just their fight, but IAM members' fight also. The adage "an injury to one is an injury to all" could not be more true than what we witness today.

Today and I am proud to say, the entire American labor movement has awakened to the call for solidarity. Generations of union members who came before us fought these same battles many decades ago. They demanded fair wages, health care, and an eight-hour workday in a safe environment. They won pension plans and seniority systems. They negotiated "agreements" and stood firm against employers who refused to negotiate in good faith.

The process that brought forth the great American Middle Class is called "collective bargaining". Collective bargaining is a process whereby the interest of the individual is magnified by the power of many. The collective bargaining process is the very concept of the American ideal of democracy in the workplace, an idea championed by Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt. President Dwight Eisenhower often cited the practice of collective bargaining as the "glue" binding America's economic progress.

Now, the concept and practice of collective bargaining is under serious attack by the same political and corporate interests who would see America return to the times when our nation's workforce was subjugated and tyrannized. Today those corporations and their political puppets would replace democracy and fairness in the workplace with fear and intimidation.

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We, IAM members, cannot and will not let that happen. The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers are known by a well-earned moniker, "The Fighting Machinists".

Today I am calling upon all IAM members to take a stand as "Fighting Machinists" against those who would destroy the American labor movement and the right to collectively bargain for our present and our future.

Each and every member has a roll in this struggle. I encourage you to:

1. Personally participate in any and all rallies and demonstrations in support of collective bargaining rights.
2. Take this fight to the doorstep of your elected officials at all levels.
3. Use the print and broadcast media to explain to, educate and encourage the public to become actively involved in support of collective bargaining rights for all workers.
4. We need to use our voices, our pens and our feet to win this battle.

Lastly – I am asking each member to contribute \$5.00 to the cause. "Individually", \$5.00 is a small investment in this national debate. "Collectively" it is a huge commitment from the IAM to defend our members and all workers.

Every IAM Territory will be coordinating membership activities and solicit contributions for this "\$5.00 for the Fight" campaign.

I am personally appealing to every IAM member to stand with your union to defend and secure the very rights our union's founders and our forbears fought so valiantly for and passed on to us. It is now this generation of IAM members' turn to preserve our Union's proud heritage and stake our claim as "The Fighting Machinists".

In solidarity,



R. Thomas Buffenbarger  
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

RTB/lo