View the list of labor-endorsed candidates in the East Metro on Page 3

The St. Paul Union Advocate

130th Year, No. 5, Issue 5502 | For union homes in Ramsey, Dakota, Washington and Chisago counties | November-December 2026

In This Issue

3 Don't skip ballot question on school funding

5 St. Paul to weigh regulations on driverless cars

7 Allina hospice nurses win first contract

8 Local elevator constructor gets national recognition

10 Video game workers vote to authorize strike

11 Arts unions tap solidarity in contract fights

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Connecting union members in Ramsey, Washington, Dakota and Chisago counties.

UNIONS RALLY BEHIND ENDORSED CANDIDATES



Union members rally with labor-endorsed Senate candidate Peggy Flanagan and Attorney General Keith Ellison before a door-knock in Minneapolis. The event also featured SEIU International President April Verrett, pictured to Flanagan's left. Union Advocate photo

Flanagan puts her commitment to workers in writing

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

Peggy Flanagan knows talk is cheap. That's why the labor-endorsed U.S. Senate candidate agreed to put her commitments to working Minnesotans in writing.

Flanagan last month signed onto a list of policy goals, from lowering costs to curbing the influence of tech billionaires and corporations, put forward by organized labor, endorsing the "Commitments with Working Minnesotans" pledge in front of union members during a press conference at the Minnesota AFL-CIO's headquarters in St. Paul.

To draft the 12-point agenda, advocates surveyed workers nationwide, held one-to-one organizing conversations and gathered input from unions. Flanagan said the commitments align with her vision of a Congress that puts working people first.

(Continued on Page 13)

Ellison earns labor support by showing up for workers, pushing back on Trump

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

Locked in a tight re-election campaign, Attorney General Keith Ellison deserves working Minnesotans' vote because he puts the power of his office to work for them, union members and labor leaders say.

And they have the receipts to prove it.

Hospitality workers at Target Field, members of UNITE HERE Local 17, have long raised questions about nonprofits that the stadium brings in to operate concession stands, purportedly raising funds for their charitable organizations.

When union members entered contract negotiations with Target Field's concessionaire, Delaware North, earlier this year, they proposed limits on how much of their work could be outsourced to the nonprofits. The employer showed no interest, Local 17 Secretary-Treasurer Sheigh Freeberg said.

But in July, Ellison announced that his office had reached a civil settlement to shut

(Continued on Page 14)



Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison joined a May Day rally with AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler (R) in 2024. file photo

Go Figure

45.8% Increase in gasoline prices in Minnesota since January 2025, when President Trump took office

16.3% Increase in ground beef prices in MN

11% Increase in the mortgage payment on a typical Minnesota home

$4,500+ Cost increases incurred by the average Minnesota household since Jan 2025

Source: jobsandwages.org (AFL-CIO)



Labor Voices: Kera Peterson

Support candidates who will listen to workers, not billionaires

Things are too expensive. That's not breaking news to anyone who's shopped for groceries or filled their gas tank lately. This economy is putting the squeeze on working people. Too many of us are living on the edge, working longer and harder for less in return and stressing over every bill, every purchase, every paycheck.

It shouldn't be this way. The U.S. economy is growing. Corporate earnings are up and so is the stock market. The S&P 500 hit an all-time high last month. American workers are more productive than ever, but our share in the economic growth that labor creates is at historic low point. An NBC News report found that the share of economic output going to workers' pay and benefits has sunk to its lowest level since the Department of Labor started tracking it in 1947. The pie is getting bigger, but our slice is getting smaller.

None of this is happening by accident. It's the direct result of policy choices – tariffs, healthcare cuts, foreign wars, attacks on collective bargaining – made by politicians who answer to billionaires and CEOs instead of working people. That's why our federation of local unions is working to elect labor-endorsed candidates Nov. 3 who will put us first and hold corporations and billionaires accountable.

Here in Minnesota, we know firsthand what's at stake in this election. We're less than a year removed from the federal government's shockingly violent and lawless occupation of our state in the name of immigration enforcement. Operation Metro Surge trampled on our rights, tore families apart and disrupted life in our neighborhoods, schools and workplaces. The occupation dealt an economic blow, too, costing our state 32,000 jobs, reducing economic activity – especially in the hospitality sector – and increasing security costs for local communities by an estimated $700 million.

The tragic failures of Metro Surge reflect a pattern that has repeated itself throughout Trump's second administration. Bad ideas go unchecked by enfeebled congressional majorities and a compliant Supreme Court, and the American people pay the price – literally. Trump's tariffs raised our cost of living, and his war in Iran has only made it worse. Minnesotans' real wages, adjusted for inflation, fell 1.4% in the first seven months of this year. And as predicted, the "One Big, Beautiful Bill" has forced more Minnesotans to go without healthcare coverage and increased premiums for those who remain insured.

"This election is our opportunity to begin putting an end to the chaos, and union members are stepping up to the challenge."
– Kera Peterson



This election is our opportunity to begin putting an end to the chaos, and union members are, unsurprisingly, stepping up to the challenge. Internal poling by the AFL-CIO shows that 83% of union members are "extremely motivated" to vote in the midterms – a 10-point increase from 2022. In Minnesota, union volunteers are talking with their neighbors and co-workers, encouraging them to make their plan to vote. (You don't have to wait until Nov. 3 if you vote early; go to mnvotes.org to learn how!) Others are signing up as election judges or training to serve as election protection volunteers.

If the challenges ahead feel overwhelming, I empathize. Instead of becoming demoralized, though, let's focus on what is possible when after Election Day if we make our voices heard. Together, we can help deliver majorities for pro-worker candidates up and down the ballot who will support our right to bargain for better pay and benefits, fight for affordable healthcare and stop the squeeze on working families.

– Kera Peterson is president of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. Learn more at stpaulunions.org.

Editor's Note: "Voices" is a forum for opinions from across the labor movement. It appears regularly in The Advocate. We encourage readers to respond to our columnists' opinions. To write a letter to the editor, see the upper-righthand corner of this page. To inquire about contributing to "Voices," call 651-222-3787, extension 1112. This column does not reflect the position of the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation or its assemblies.

Letters

- *Send letters to: 353 W. 7th St., Suite 201, St. Paul, MN 55102*
- *Email them to: mmoore@stpaulunions.org*

The Union Advocate

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Constitutional amendment would deliver funding for schools without raising taxes

Minnesota voters have an opportunity in the Nov. 3 election to send more funding to the state's public schools – without raising taxes – by voting "yes" on a proposed amendment to the state's constitution.

With high-profile races for governor and U.S. Senate dominating the media cycles and control of the statehouse up for grabs, the ballot question is, perhaps, flying under the radar this fall.

But its potential impact is significant, with benefits extending to every public school district in the state.

Education Minnesota, representing about 80,000 educators and school employees statewide, has endorsed a "yes" vote, as has the Minnesota AFL-CIO.

The amendment, if passed, would increase distributions from the state's Permanent School Fund, a trust created in 1858 that pays public schools each year using revenue from timber sales, mineral leases and investment returns on public land.

Since 2010, the fund has grown from about $675 million to more than $2.3 billion, but a law passed in the 1800s still governs how the fund's investment gains are distributed.

Last year, districts received a combined $58 million from the fund, or about 2.5% of its value. The proposed amendment would increase distributions to 4.5% of the fund's three-year rolling average value, a rate agreed upon by a non-partisan task force of investment, trust, legal and education experts appointed by the Legislature in 2024.

The proposed rate is more in line with practices used by university endowments and charitable foundations across the country, supporters say.

The immediate impact depends on investment returns, of course, but had the amendment passed last year, school districts would have seen an increase of about $33 per pupil from the fund.

For the White Bear Lake School District, that would have meant nearly $275,000 in added revenue. For Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, it would have drawn nearly $1 million in added funds.

The change won't impact the state's general fund or require any new taxes.

Votes in the Legislature to put the amendment on the Nov. 3 ballot drew bipartisan support, including a 134-0 vote in the House. Sen. Mary Kunesh, a DFLer and chief author of the amendment, called it "a responsible path forward."

"As a former public school educator and chair of the Senate Education Finance Committee, I know how vital it is to secure additional funds and support for our public schools, and this is one way to provide that support without asking taxpayers to pay one penny more," Kunesh added.

DFL and Republican leaders have voiced support for the ballot question, but advocates remain concerned on two fronts.

First, voters need to locate the proposed amendment on their ballot – it could be on the back side – and cast a vote. Minnesota constitutional amendments require a majority of all voters to mark the "yes" box, which means leaving the question blank counts as a "no" vote.

And educators, in particular, are concerned that the presence of the amendment question, which makes clear that the outcome will not raise taxes, could hurt the chances of local school funding questions that might also appear on the ballot, like a levy or bonding request.

While increased funding from the Permanent School Fund would help schools, Education Minnesota Vice President Marty Fridgen said, it won't solve all their financial struggles. Many districts will still need to pass levies this fall to avoid cuts.

"For some people, they're going to be going into the booth and also have an operating levy for their district," Fridgen said. "Thirty dollars extra from this fund is not enough for some of our school districts to alleviate the other needs they have. So we're nervous that people will vote yes on the amendment because it's not going to raise their taxes, but on the other question they're going to say no."

Learn more about the constitutional amendment at voteyesmnstudents.org.

– Michael Moore, UA editor

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GENERAL ELECTION • NOVEMBER 3, 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Governor: Amy Klobuchar
Lt. Governor: Ben Schierer
Attorney General: Keith Ellison
Secretary of State: Steve Simon
Auditor: Zack Filipovich
Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment: Vote 'Yes'

FEDERAL OFFICES

U.S. Senate: Peggy Flanagan
U.S. House District 2: Matt Little
U.S. House District 4: Betty McCollum
U.S. House District 5: Ilhan Omar
U.S. House District 6: Doug Chapin
U.S. House District 8: Trina Swanson

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- District 4: Rena Moran
- District 6: Mai Chong Xiong

County Attorney: John Choi
Saint Paul School Board (ISD 625): Stephanie Anderson, Omar Syed, Uriah Ward
White Bear Lake School Board (ISD 624): Amanda McFarlane, Chris Streiff Oji, Amy Puschinsky, Ryan Vernosh
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School Board (ISD 622): Caleb Anderson, Brittany LaBore, Nina Potter
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Operating Levy: Vote 'Yes'
New Brighton City Council: Graeme Allen

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- District 1: Mike Slavik
- District 2: Joe Atkins
- District 3: Laurie Halverson
- District 6: Jacob Borealis

Eagan Mayor: Mike Supina
Farmington Mayor: Nicholas Gessell
Farmington City Council: Christopher Pierce, Philip Windschitl

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- District 4: Karla Bigham

County Attorney: Kevin Magnuson
Forest Lake School Board (ISD 831): Jill Christenson, Andi Courneya, Claire Luger

stpaulunions.org/endorsements

MINNESOTA SENATE

District 20: Jason Lohmann
District 33: Nat Smith
District 36: Heather Gustafson
District 39: Mary Kunesh
District 40: John Marty
District 44: Sam Rosemark
District 47: Amanda Hemmingsen-Jaeger
District 52: Liz Reyer
District 53: Paul Cumings
District 55: Lindsey Port
District 56: Erin Maye Quade
District 57: Steven Schroer
District 58: Mark Legvold
District 64: Erin Murphy
District 65: Robyn Gulley
District 66: Clare Oumou Verbeten
District 67: Foung Hawj

MINNESOTA HOUSE

District 28A: Tim Dummer
District 28B: Dan Schmidt
District 33A: Angela Thompson
District 33B: Josiah Hill
District 36A: Jim DeMay
District 36B: Brion Curran
District 39B: Amáda Márquez Simula
District 40A: Aisha Elmquist
District 40B: David Gottfried
District 41A: Cole Birkeland
District 41B: Jen Fox
District 44A: Peter Fischer
District 52A: Christos Jensen
District 52B: Bianca Virnig
District 53A: Mary Frances Clardy
District 53B: Rick Hansen
District 55A: Jess Hanson
District 55B: Hunter Cantrell
District 56A: Robert Bierman
District 56B: John Huot
District 57A: Jenaro "JD" Delgado
District 57B: Brian Cohn
District 58A: Kristi Pursell
District 58B: Ed Fellows
District 64A: Meg Luger Nikolai
District 64B: Dave Pinto
District 65B: Sebastian Ellefson
District 66A: Leigh Finke
District 66B: Athena Hollins
District 67A: Liz Lee

CHISAGO COUNTY

Commissioner District 3: Cyle Cramer
Chisago Lakes School Board (ISD 2144): Sarah Aadland, Amy Forkner, Jen Penzenstadler
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Events & Opportunities

Construct Tomorrow to showcase trades careers

Students can get a hands-on introduction to apprenticeships in the building and construction trades at Construct Tomorrow events this school year.

Designed to accommodate high school groups, Construct Tomorrow events increase awareness of post-secondary career training opportunities in the union apprenticeship programs. The program has since reached over 50,000 students at events across Minnesota since 2013.

Apprenticeship instructors set up interactive stations that seek to simulate what it's like working in their crafts. They also talk with students about the benefits of earning while you learn in an apprenticeship program and provide follow-up services to participants who express interest.

Construct Tomorrow events in the Twin Cities metro this school year include Dec. 1 in Brooklyn Center and Feb. 9-10 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

Teachers and families can learn more at constructtomorrow.org/upcoming-events.

History Day help for students at ESFL

Know a student who's working on a National History Day project this year? Encourage them to check out the History Day Help Sessions available through the East Side Freedom Library in St. Paul.

ESFL's help sessions connect students with mentors who can help explore research questions, find sources and develop a thesis and argument. The library collection offers histories of workers, immigration, civil rights and communities whose stories deserve to be heard.

Mentors are available to help students build on their own ideas at all stages of their project.

Help sessions will take place from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturdays, Nov. 14 through April 24, at the ESFL, located at 1105 Greenbrier St. Before attending, organizers ask that students email peter@eastsidefreedomlibrary.org to make an initial appointment.

LES offers intro to handling grievances

Fall Community Classes at the U of M's Labor Education Service (LES) will wrap up with "Intro to Grievance Handling," Nov. 10 from 1 to 4 p.m. on Zoom.

Intended for unionists who are new to grievance handling, the class will cover the basics, from conducting investigations to preparing for discipline meetings. Learn more: z.umn.edu/LESCommunityClasses.



During a press conference at St. Paul City Hall, Twin Cities rideshare driver Abdikani Ali warns that autonomous vehicles would undercut workers in his industry, which generates over $500 million in annual economic output in Minnesota. Union Advocate photo

St. Paul takes step toward regulating driverless cars

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

At the urging of workers and labor unions, the St. Paul City Council last month put the city on course to regulate autonomous vehicles before companies like Waymo and Tesla's Robotaxi begin operating here.

The council passed a resolution Oct. 14 directing the Planning Commission to study the issue and send back recommendations for a regulatory framework that protects workers, prioritizes safety and accountability, safeguards people's privacy and protects public transportation systems.

"We need to understand these impacts for ourselves – not take big tech's word for it," Council President Rebecca Noecker, who led efforts to pass the resolution, said at a press conference inside City Hall before the vote.

Already, Waymo vehicles are surveying Minneapolis and St. Paul streets, although human monitors still ride inside. The Google-owned taxi company currently operates in 15 U.S. cities. Tesla robotaxis have gone live in six urban areas.

Uber and Lyft drivers, who recently began organizing a union with Service Employees (SEIU) Local 26, have lobbied city leaders in both Minneapolis and St. Paul to act now, before autonomous vehicles begin commercial operations here, to prevent widespread job losses.

Minnesota's rideshare industry generates over $500 million in total economic output, generating about $43 million in local and state tax revenues.

If local governments like St. Paul fail to act, Council Vice President Hwa Jeong Kim said, "hundreds of millions of dollars that today support working families across St. Paul would instead flow to Silicon Valley CEOs."

Rideshare drivers like Abdikani Ali agreed. Ali supports his family by driving for Uber and Lyft, working as many as 16 hours in a day to make ends meet.

"I don't want Waymo or Tesla to come into the St. Paul community and take away the jobs that people like me depend on," Ali said. "I also don't want the money and wages that we're (earning) to leave our community and go to companies and corporations run by Elon Musk and Google."

Council members in Minneapolis last month attempted to protect rideshare drivers' jobs with an ordinance requiring autonomous vehicles to carry human monitors, but it failed to pass.

The resolution adopted in St. Paul, Noecker said, does not presuppose any policy outcome. Instead, the council is setting in motion a process that will seek answers from the community about what guardrails are appropriate. "The outcome of that could look a lot of different ways," Noecker said.

The Planning Commission's work is expected to take six months to a year.

"Our responsibility is to the people of St. Paul, not to these corporations," Noecker added. "Depending on what our community tells us, there may be guardrails we can put in place that allow these vehicles to operate safely, but we need to do the work first. And we want to do that work now rather than wait until they are literally at our door."

Doctors at Mercy, Unity hospitals win first contract after historic four-day strike

On a Thursday, Allina doctors at Unity and Mercy Hospitals walked off the picket line following a four-day strike. By the following Tuesday, they had a tentative agreement.

For doctors at the north suburban hospitals, it may have been the first time something moved quickly in their journey to a first union contract, ratified Sept. 30 with support from 99% of voting members.

Unity and Mercy doctors voted to form a union with Doctors Council-SEIU three years ago, marking the first successful union drive among doctors locally. But Allina Health appealed the election results, dragging out the union-recognition process for months.

The delays would continue in negotiations, prompting union members to hold a four-day strike Sept. 14 to 17. The two sides finally reached a deal in their 66th bargaining session.

Gains in the first contract include a grievance process that protects doctors when they advocate for their patients, language ensuring greater professional autonomy, release from non-compete clauses for doctors who are laid off and greater transparency in Allina's compensation models.

"This hard-won first contract gives us the written protections we needed so we can keep providing the care our patients deserve, instead of watching burnout drive good doctors out," Dr. Saul Singh, a bargaining team member, said.

The bargaining unit brings together over 150 doctors, including hospitalists, OBGYNs, psychiatrists and critical-care physicians.

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Allina pushes hospice nurses to brink of open-ended strike before settling first contract

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

Hospice nurses at Allina Health weighed whether to go on strike for a third time since July – this time an open-ended walkout – before reaching a tentative agreement last month on a first union contract that delivers significant progress on workers' top issues.

The bargaining unit of over 60, represented by SEIU Healthcare Minnesota and Iowa, voted unanimously to ratify the hard-fought contract Oct. 13.

The agreement came after three straight days of negotiations that saw hospice nurses' bargaining team postpone an open-ended strike vote after seeing progress from management on their priority: a fair compensation system that will provide greater work-life balance.

"We've become their staffing solution. When there's a problem, you just make your salaried nurses do more."
– Susie Smerz

Hospice nurses are salaried workers, and bargaining team member Susie Smerz said the workload was manageable in a 40- to 50-hour week when she started at Allina 11 years ago. That's no longer the case, with hospice workers routinely putting in 60 or more hours, often covering for hourly workers.

"We've become their staffing solution," Smerz said. "When there's a problem, you just make your salaried nurses do more."

The new contract will make sure hospice nurses see extra pay when they put in extra work. It provides time-and-a-half pay on days when nurses complete their assigned patient-care work outside their normal scheduled day, including when they need to work long to complete their charting.

"The reason that matters isn't so much that we really wanted the time and a half, it's because we want (management) to be incentivized so they don't do that to us," Smerz said. "We were the least expensive option. Now, if we have to do a lot more, they're going to have to compensate us."

Other highlights of the first contract include a consistent wage scale, with additional raises for workers as they progress through 20 years of nursing experience. During the organizing campaign and bargaining process, Smerz said, hospice nurses realized their pay was inconsistent, with some long-tenured workers earning less than more recent hires.

The contract comes with an immediate wage increase, back dated more than two months, that averaged 10% across the bargaining unit, as well as 3% annual increases in the second and third years. Workers also won improvements to their mileage-reimbursement system.

Hospice nurses voted to form their union in March 2025, and bargaining with Allina played out over about a year and a half.

Frustrated with a lack of progress on their key issues, union members staged a one-day strike in July and a weeklong strike in September, which overlapped with a strike by Allina doctors at Mercy and Unity Hospitals in the north suburbs.

Case manager Abby MacDonald, a member of the bargaining team, said the unit's journey to a first contract showed them "the incredible power of solidarity."

"We are deeply grateful to every member of our bargaining unit, as well as our patients, our community, and our fellow unions who stood with us throughout this fight," she added. "The support helped us push for the changes necessary to recruit and retain the best nurses to do this critical work."

SEIU members also credited Attorney General Keith Ellison's office for pushing the bargaining process over the finish line and staving off a third work stoppage. Ellison is currently reviewing California-based Sutter Health's proposal to purchase Allina to determine if it is in the public interest.

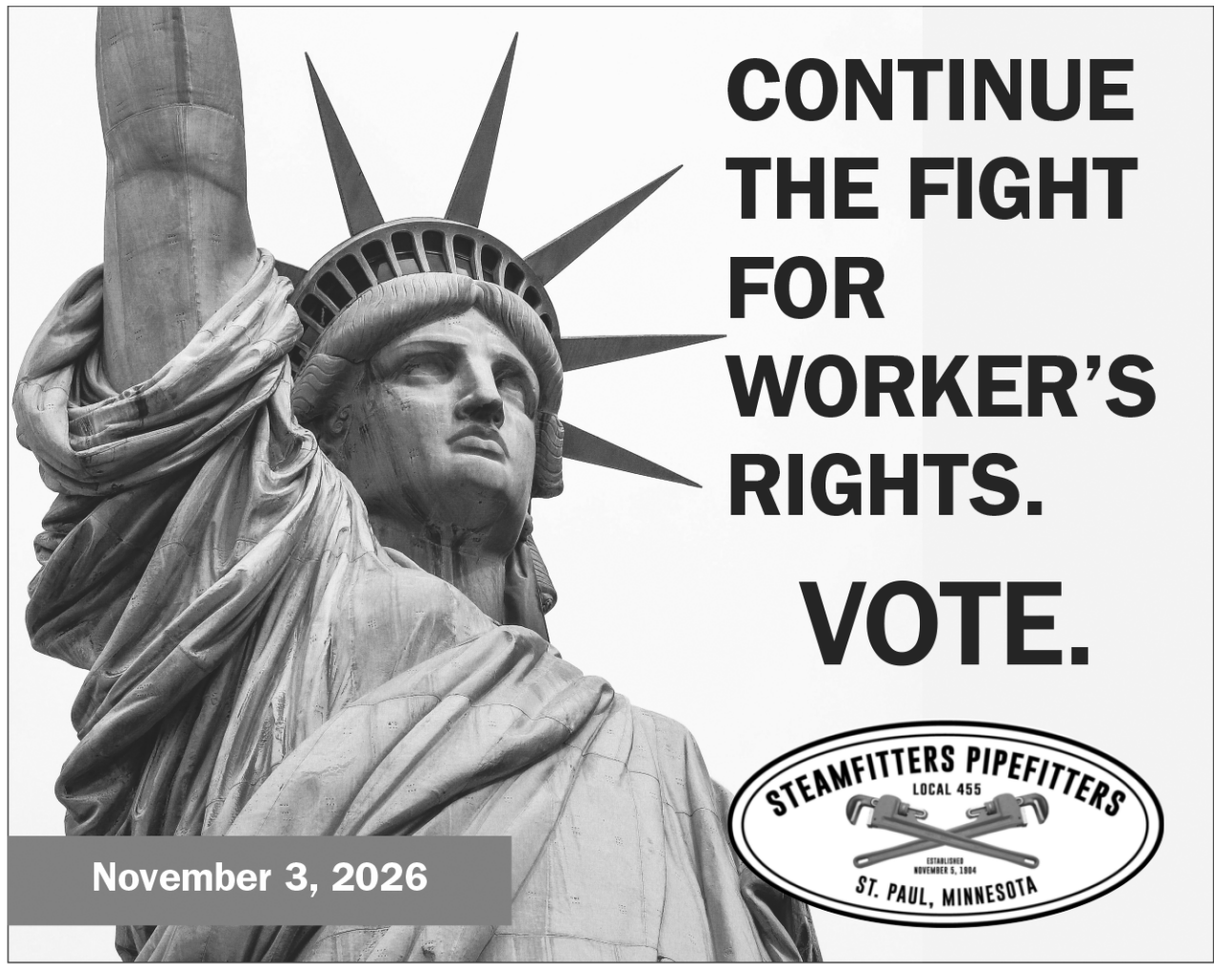
In a statement announcing the tentative agreement, Phillip Cryan, the local's executive vice president, said the union was appreciative of the role played by representatives from the Attorney General's Office in the final weeks of bargaining.

"The hospice nurses have fought so hard for so long to reach this deal, and they experienced great frustration at earlier stages of the process," Cryan said. "Hospice nurses don't go out on strike, twice, without feeling deeply disrespected and unheard.

"But in the last couple weeks, since the second of those strikes, things changed significantly and we have made a ton of progress in this final stage of the negotiations."



Amy Rich, a hospice case manager and member of SEIU Healthcare Minnesota and Iowa, spoke to press during the union's seven-day strike in September. Union Advocate photo



Labor Q&A: Terri Stave

Elevator Constructors Local 9 retiree recognized for a lifetime of leadership at national convention

Terri Stave almost skipped this year's Tradeswomen Build Nations convention. Instead, she came home with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the nation's largest annual gathering of union tradeswomen in Houston last month.

The award, presented Oct. 11 in front of about 5,000 conventiongoers, came as a surprise to Stave. The retired member of Elevator Constructors (IUEC) Local 9 said she was overwhelmed by the moment, given that her mother had died just nine days before.

But it came as no surprise to people who have worked alongside Stave in the field, at the union hall or in her advocacy efforts with Women Build Success, a labor-backed nonprofit organization that promotes Minnesota tradeswomen.

"Terri's contributions go far beyond the work she has done as a business representative," Local 9 Business Manager Ryan Parkos said. "She has helped shape our local union, strengthened our trade and created a legacy that will continue to influence generations of elevator constructors for years to come."

Stave became the first woman sworn in as business agent of an IUEC local – not only Local 9, but anywhere in the U.S. and Canada – after winning an election in 2015. More recently, she became the first female member to retire out of Local 9.

Throughout her career and even into retirement, Parkos said, Stave sought opportunities to help other women thrive in the construction trades, too.

"Terri Stave's legacy is about more than being the first," Parkos said. "It is about what that first represents, the doors it opens, the example it sets and the opportunities it creates for those who follow. History will remember her achievement, but the true measure of its impact will be seen in the women who enter our trade, the members who step into leadership and the generations of elevator constructors who benefit from a union that continues to grow stronger and more inclusive."

Stave, who lives in Baldwin, Wis., reflected on her career, the challenges facing women working in the trades and what the national recognition means to her in this interview, which has been edited for length and clarity.

UA: How did you find out you were going to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award?

TS: I didn't find out until there were 5,000 people sitting there. It was a big plenary in a great big room with over 5,000 women and advocates in attendance, and Sean McGarvey (president of North America's Building Trades Unions) is the guy who gave me the award.

UA: You didn't know you had been nominated?

TS: I did not. I wasn't going to go this year because my mother passed away, but I didn't get around to canceling my flight. I'd talked to my mother two weeks before, and my mother knows I've gone every year since 2014. I told her I was going to cancel my flight, and she told me I should go. I said, "We'll see, mom."

My mother took a turn pretty fast. We called hospice on Wednesday, they brought the bed Thursday and she passed away on Friday. So I talked to my siblings, and they said why don't you just go because

(Continued on Page 9)



Terri Stave accepts the 2026 Tradeswomen Build Nations Lifetime Achievement Award in Houston.

photo courtesy NABTU



(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)
there's nothing you can do here right now. And I thought it would probably be good to get away for a bit.

UA: The emotions must have been overwhelming. Did you have to say something?

TS: It was almost like I couldn't keep it together. They give you the podium, and I'm like, "Oh my God." The conference center is huge – they can't have it at a hotel any more, it's gotten too big. I thanked NABTU, I thanked the IUEC and then I kind of broke down and told them that my mother had passed away. It was pretty emotional, pretty overwhelming, but what an honor. You have so many people who could be chosen, and they chose me.

UA: What kind of an influence was your mother on your career path?

TS: My mother had two girls that were both in the elevator trades. My older sister was also a union mechanic for 15 years. My mother was very supportive, and my father was a union carpenter. She taught me to have a great work ethic, and always wanted us to help others. And that's what you're doing as a business agent.

UA: Looking back, what made you want to serve your local as an agent?

TS: I had started going to meetings seven or eight years earlier, and got my start as the door warden. That's a position nobody wants, right? I ran for door warden and got to meet people, and then it's, "Why don't you run for executive board?" I served two terms there and became the chair, and it was actually the business manager at the time, Dave Osrud, who said, "Why don't you run for business rep?"

I never looked at anything with the elevator trade as being the only female. I just went and did my job. So when I ran for business rep and beat the incumbent by quite a few votes, there were some situations where I didn't look at it that way but other people did. I didn't know I was the first female until after I got the role. Dave Osrud is like, "I think you're the first female. You know you're going to go to meetings and be the only female in the room?" And I told him it's been that way my whole career. That was nothing new to me.

UA: Were there challenges?

TS: I did have a tough time. People came out of the woodwork after I got in that role, and I heard things like, they didn't want a woman running the local and whatever. I couldn't fight that. I couldn't fight being a female. And I figured that I knew how to fix elevators when I went in there, so I just went back and fixed elevators.

At the time I was very angry about it. But you know what? I pulled up my bootstraps, and I went to Tradeswomen Build Nations the year after that just to show the young generation coming in that if you get knocked down, you just pull yourself back up and keep going. I think that was probably the most important conference that I went to.

UA: Spaces like Tradeswomen Build Nations reflect an intentional investment from Building Trades unions like yours in making their organizations more welcoming and diverse. At a time when a lot of organizations are pulling back from those investments, why does this work remain important?

TS: If you can do the job, why wouldn't a woman want to have the great income, the great benefits? The trades give opportunities to women and men to live a great life, a comfortable life with great benefits and great pay. If you work hard and go to work every day, you can succeed. It shouldn't matter if you're male, female, black, white. The trades offer a career.

By having things like Tradeswomen Build Nations, you meet people who are the only woman in their local. It gives the women an avenue to communicate and ask questions and find information they might be too afraid to ask their business manager. It makes them feel like they're not alone.

UA: When did you feel like you knew you belonged?

TS: When I started, I was 19 years old. I think it takes you a good 10 years until you go, "I think I've got this. I can fix an elevator." Yes, I ran across problems being a female in the trades, but I tried to never take it home. I figured I had just as much right to be there and work hard as the next person. I don't even know that I ever wanted to quit when I was young. I did as a business agent, though. You work all day on an elevator, and you can see what you fixed. You work all day as an agent – on the phones, answering emails – and then you go, what'd I do today? There are no thank-you's.

UA: Colleagues say your leadership has made the craft more inclusive. How have you tried to do that, and what work remains to be done?

TS: I think just going to meetings. Just being there, that's half the battle. But I would approach any of the apprentices – I don't care if it's male or females. I think people see you, and communicating with people is the best thing you can do. I want them to see that someone can start and finish and have a career in the elevator trade. I want them to think, "Well, if Terri can do it …"

– Michael Moore, UA editor









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Video game workers in Bloomington warn they're ready to strike for first contract

A week before the much-anticipated "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 4" was set to launch, video game workers bargaining a first union contract with the game's Microsoft-owned publishing company announced that they had voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike.

Activision Quality Assurance United-CWA, a bargaining unit of about 450 quality-assurance workers, including 300 based in Bloomington, has been in negotiations with Microsoft-owned Activision for over two years.

Union members are still waiting for management to get serious about the issues they brought to the table, CWA Local 7250 member Emily Danko said.

"Bargaining has been a long, exhausting process spanning over two years, with our committee making responsible moves while the company continues to stall on critical issues like wages, accommodations, and worker protections," Danko, who works at the Bloomington site, said. "Despite our efforts to bargain in good faith, meaningful progress has been difficult, leaving key issues unresolved."

The authorization vote, also approved by workers at Quality Assurance facilities in Texas and California, empowers Communications Workers of America President Claude Cummings Jr. to call a strike if negotiations continue to stall.

The strike vote comes at a critical time in the production and release cycle of one of Activision's most popular – and profitable – franchises. "Call of Duty" was set to launch worldwide Oct. 23.

"Our members remain united and continue to mobilize, but we are exploring every option available to secure the fair contract we deserve," Danko said.

Quality Assurance workers won recognition of their union in March 2024 and entered bargaining that August seeking wage increases, guardrails on the company's use of contractors and artificial intelligence, and protections around their right to seek accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Microsoft has failed to bargain in good faith on any of those issues, CWA District 7 Vice President Susie McAllister said.

"The results of the strike authorization vote send a clear message to Activision management: it is time to stop playing games because our members are united and prepared to do what it takes to win the strong contract they deserve," McAllister said.

In Bloomington, Local 7250 members have begun ramping up the pressure on Activision to settle a fair deal. Nearly 50 members joined a midday rally in August, joining other Microsoft workers in a nationwide day of action. They rallied again the day before CWA announced results of the strike vote.

"We're all kind of feeling that pinch," union steward Andrew Snell said. "It's taken two years. It's taken a really long time. We're fighting tooth and nail just to get this contract done, but we're getting closer."

Show some solidarity

Activision workers have established a strike fund: www.freefunder.com/campaign/support-aqau.

– Michael Moore, UA editor

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(signed) Michael Moore, editor

Labor movement condemns raid on Omar's Washington home

The Minnesota AFL-CIO joined House Democratic leaders in condemning a pre-dawn Homeland Security Department raid on the Washington home of DFL Rep. Ilhan Omar, who represents Minnesota's 5th Congressional District.

The New York Times has reported the warrant used in the raid alleges irregularities in the Omar family's immigration papers. But Omar called the accusations lies.

"I will not be silenced," Omar tweeted on X. "I'm OK. Make no mistake: This is an attempt to target political enemies and weaponize federal law enforcement."

Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernie Burnham and House Democratic leaders leaped to Omar's defense. Burnham termed the raid an attack on all Minnesotans.

"Minnesota's labor movement stands with Congresswoman Omar," she said. "She is a former union member and we believe an injury to one is an injury to all. If Donald Trump can do this to her, he can do it to any other American citizen.

"Disagreeing with a person's political view is a sign of a healthy democracy, but abusing our federal government's resources to attack a political opponent goes against everything our nation and Constitution stands for."

– Press Associates Union News Service

Opera musicians, MCAD faculty tap solidarity from arts community in contract fights

By Michael Moore
Union Advocate editor

Two unions in the Twin Cities' arts scene, representing musicians in the Minnesota Opera's orchestra and faculty at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, are leveraging solidarity from the communities they serve to put pressure on their bosses at the bargaining table.

The strategy, union members say, reflects the shared interest arts workers and patrons – and arts teachers and students – have in union contracts that respect and retain top talent.

"The patrons and supporters we talk with care about opera, they care about the artists, they care about what happens on that stage and in the orchestra pit, and they want this company to succeed," Rebecca Arons, a cellist and member of the orchestra musicians' bargaining committee, said. "So do we."

Orchestra musicians, who voted unanimously last month to authorize a strike, planned to put their community support on display Nov. 1, staging a public concert with collaborators from across the arts industry.

"It will be a glorious celebration of what we are actually able to provide and what we want to provide," violist Susan Janda said.

MCAD faculty, meanwhile, literally rolled out their community support during a march on the school's president Oct. 6, unfurling a petition with over 800 signatures from teachers, students, alumni and other stakeholders, many of whom joined the march with protest art of their own.

"We are all here because we believe in something bigger than any one of us individually," instructor Piotr Szyhalski told supporters during a rally before the march. "And that's the life-sustaining power of art manifested in all forms, the way that art brings us together, the way it feeds our humanity and the way it helps us make sense of the world."

'I can't live on nothing'

MCAD faculty, members of Service Employees (SEIU) Local 284, have been in bargaining with the school since May, but union negotiators said the two sides were making little progress on faculty members' top priorities – economic stability, institutional collaboration and protections from artificial intelligence.

That changed in the first bargaining session after the Oct. 6 march on President Gwendolyn Freed. The school's representatives "finally started offering us substantive proposals," the union said in a statement, adding that "they moved because we organized and demanded better."

While the school's proposal fell short of what they need, union members said it's a welcome change. At the rally, faculty expressed disappointment that MCAD had outright rejected union proposals to give instructors a greater voice at the school and protect their creative and teaching work from AI exploitation.

"Working together is one of the cornerstones of the proposals that we have been bringing to the CBA," faculty member Sam Gould said. "It's shocking to me, with the rhetoric that is on MCAD's mission statement, that working together has been pushed back on so aggressively."

When talks came to compensation, MCAD's administrators further rankled union members by initially proposing they take a pay freeze.

"I always tell students that we can make art anytime, anywhere, with nothing," Szyhalski said. "But I can't live on nothing."

No orchestra, no opera

Flat wages have, in fact, been the reality for orchestra musicians with the Minnesota Opera, members of the Twin Cities Musicians Union – AFM Local 30-73, since they settled their last union contract nearly four years ago.

Those negotiations stretched deep into the opera company's season and saw union members appeal directly to patrons for solidarity. Musicians handed out leaflets before performances at the Ordway Center and targeted opera board members with an email campaign.

This time around, union members authorized a strike before the season even began, hoping to sound the alarm on proposals from management that, they believe, raise concerns about the company's artistic direction.

The opera's representatives at the bargaining table have said the company has "no appetite for increasing the salary of the orchestra musicians," Janda said, even after the four-year freeze. At the same time, opera staff and leadership have received 2% annual raises in recent years, and the company's net assets have grown by $13.8 million since 2020.

Musicians have proposed a 4% increase, which would amount to about $80,000 in the first year. That's roughly 0.5% of the Minnesota Opera's operating budget – and likely close to what the company is paying the union-busting law firm Littler Mendelson, which also represents Starbucks, to stonewall musicians at the bargaining table.

"Management has told us they can afford our proposal," Arons, the musicians' lead negotiator, said. "They have also told us they simply don't want to."

For Janda and others, it raises the question of whether the Minnesota Opera sees a future without orchestra musicians – a question they believe patrons would like to hear answered, too.

"I don't know about you, but when I think of an opera, you would imagine that there's an orchestra that goes with it," Janda said. "Not people singing over a track or a chamber music group, we're talking a full symphonic orchestra. That's our concern."



MCAD faculty, students and alumni deliver a petition supporting union demands to their school's president.



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Labor backs Flanagan's bid to bring 'fighting mindset of an organizer' to U.S. Senate

(Continued from Page 1)

"Everywhere I go, people tell me that they are working hard, that they are budgeting, that they are sacrificing, but they still can't get ahead," Flanagan said. "It shouldn't be this hard, but it is – and that's not by accident. It's because somebody benefits from it being this way, and it's not workers."

The lieutenant governor added that her commitment to a pro-worker agenda goes beyond just a signature. If elected, Flanagan said, she intends to work directly with Minnesota workers and the labor movement to build a partnership capable of delivering lasting results.

"You get what you organize for," Flanagan said, pointing to legislative victories that she has worked with unions to deliver in Minnesota, from raising the minimum wage to the nation's strongest protections against wage theft. "We know what it's going to take to turn big ideas into real change, and we are going to do that again in Washington."



Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan (R) snaps a photo with Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernie Burnham (L) and SEIU Healthcare member Barbara Andrew. Union Advocate photo

Focus on affordability

Minnesota union leaders and activists know Flanagan as someone who "brings the fighting mindset of an organizer to everything she does," Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bernie Burnham said – and someone who lives up to her commitments.

"In the labor movement, we know that putting pen to paper is just the beginning," Burnham said. "Just like in negotiating a union contract, the real work is holding people accountable for the promises that they make. When this election is over, we are going to make sure these commitments become policy."

More than half of the policy goals included in the "Commitments with Working Minnesotans" seek to address the rising cost of living, from drug prices and healthcare costs to the price of food, gas, housing and child care. To boost workers' purchasing power, the agenda calls for making it easier to form unions and bargain for better wages, increasing Social Security benefits and raising the minimum wage.

The agenda also calls for workers to have a say in how artificial intelligence gets used in their workplaces. And it demands Congress reign in the power of billionaires and corporations, with limits on political spending and influence peddling in Washington and tax laws that make the wealthy pay their fair share.

The lieutenant governor also laid out how senators can deliver those results for working people, and it starts, she said, with standing up to President Trump – on his war in Iran, on his tariffs and on the fallout from his signature tax and spending legislation, the so-called "Big, Beautiful Bill."

Trump campaigned on making life more affordable for Americans, but his first year in office saw the cost of living for a typical Minnesota family increase by 6.1%, according to research from Northstar Policy Action.

Meanwhile, cuts to Medicaid and other public-assistance programs – included in the "Big, Beautiful Bill" to offset tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefited the rich – are increasing Minnesotans' healthcare costs, forcing hospitals to cut services and driving up costs for local governments, as opponents of the bill predicted.

Tafoya no friend of unions

While Flanagan pledged to push back on the Trump agenda, her opponent, former sideline reporter Michele Tafoya, has defended Trump's cuts to health care, supported his war in Iran and urged anyone worried about skyrocketing prices to "keep a stiff upper lip" and "take one less trip to Starbucks."

Recent posts on social media suggest Tafoya is no fan of labor unions.

She amplified the claim that "the biggest myth about labor unions is that unions are for the workers," and she dismissed the PRO Act, which would put teeth into laws that protect workers from retaliation when they try to organize unions, as "weird."

Flanagan, by contrast, seemed right at home in the AFL-CIO headquarters.

The lieutenant governor closed the press conference by reflecting on the time she spent in that same space nearly two decades ago. Flanagan was serving as executive director of the Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota, one of some 70 organizations that met at the AFL-CIO hall for meetings of a labor-led coalition that succeeded in raising the state's minimum wage and indexing it to inflation.

"People thought that these were moonshot ideas when labor first started fighting for them," Flanagan recalled. "But we knew that they were worth fighting for, and we got them done together."

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Union members say Ellison has stuck up for workers as state's Attorney General

(Continued from Page 1)

down one of the nonprofits operating Target Field concession stands, MN Fundraising Initiative (MNFI), after investigating allegations that it was not operated for any charitable purpose. Instead, MNFI was operating as a staffing agency to misclassify hundreds of employees as "volunteers" and deploying them to work in concession stands at venues across the Twin Cities.

Freeberg called it a validating moment for Local 17 members at Target Field.

"This is a thing that workers have been talking about for years," Freeberg said. "It's not right that these sham charities undercut union wages, undercut union labor and take away hours from union workers. It's hard to overstate how important this settlement was."

It's just one of several cases Ellison's office has built that defend workers from wage theft, misclassification or predatory practices. The Attorney General's Office secured $250,000 in back pay for dairy workers, won $800,000 in restitution for delivery drivers with the gig-economy firm Shipt and, earlier this year, won an important decision that keeps alive efforts to recoup wages allegedly stolen from cleaning workers at Madison Equities' former holdings in downtown St. Paul.



Attorney General Keith Ellison speaks before a door-knock with SEIU President April Verrett in Minneapolis.

Fighting back against Trump

Union leaders also point to Ellison's work since January 2025 to defend Minnesota against attacks from the Trump administration, filing or signing onto over 50 cases against the executive branch.

Ellison's office filed one of those cases in July, after Trump's Department of Education abruptly announced it would withhold funding already appropriated to local school districts across the country. Minnesota districts stood to lose a combined $74 billion.

"Two months before fall classes, before school was supposed to start, school leaders all over the state scrambled to see what they would have to cut if no one stepped in for students – and no one stepped up for the Constitution," Brian McCarthy, president of the West St. Paul Federation of Teachers, said. "Fortunately, someone did."

Trump relented, and the federal government released the funding. But McCarthy wondered whether Ellison's opponent, corporate attorney Ron Schutz, would have sued his party's own president.

"Lawsuits like that tell me that Keith will continue to work for our kids and our communities," McCarthy said.

Keeping an eye out for workers

For healthcare workers and advocates, meanwhile, Ellison's leadership in the Attorney General's Office is critical to navigating an unprecedented period of upheaval in the sector, with three pairs of health systems seeking the office's approval for sales or mergers in the last year.

Unions have faith that Ellison will not disregard the importance of maintaining their collective bargaining rights. North Memorial and Sanford made that guarantee as part of a binding community benefits agreement that paved the way for approval of their merger earlier this year.

Unions are still pushing the other systems seeking to consolidate – Allina and California-based Sutter Health, as well as HealthPartners and Essentia – for similar agreements.

Allina hospice nurse Susie Smerz said she's grateful for the work Ellison did to get their newly organized bargaining unit a first contract – without having to go on an open-ended strike. Representatives of the Attorney General's Office, she said, were directly involved with last-ditch talks to avoid a strike, doing "shuttle diplomacy" to get both sides into a tentative agreement.

"The hospice nurses began feeling like an open-ended strike had become the only tool in our tool belt," Smerz said. "I don't know how, but the Attorney General's Office got wind of it and, I think, was like, 'Oh no, Allina.' They really got us to the finish line.

"It really seemed like they cared about us – about the little people. We're a unit of 55 to 60 nurses, and that's a drop in the bucket for Allina. They were willing to wear us down. But the Attorney General's Office wanted to be sure we didn't get left in the dust."

UNITE HERE's Freeberg said he tells people Minnesota has the best Attorney General for workers in the country. But that comes with a target on his race in each election cycle.

"He didn't have to take on cases like ours," Freeberg said. "These sham charities exist in all 50 states. But that's who Keith is. He's someone that workers can always count on, and his opponent is someone that their bosses can always count on. I really don't think the stakes could be higher than that."

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Minutes of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation

SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

The Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation met in regular session on the above date and was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance by President Peterson at 6 p.m. Board members in attendance were Beedle, Beissel, Butts, Engledorf, Fridgen, Guertin, Hill, Hoerth, Madden, Michelson, Mullin, Peterson, Roth, Sansom, Schmidt, Seath, Slattery and Tastad-Damer. Excused were Cook, Gale, Gibbons, Hunt, Luneburg, Markham-Kocurek, Relca and Strom.

President Peterson read the Code of Conduct. The RLF will go over the Code of Conduct at the beginning of each meeting. The Code states: The AFL-CIO is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination and harassment. We ask all meeting participants to embrace our values of equity and equality and conduct themselves in this meeting consistent with those values. The RLF meetings that are held the Second Wednesday of the month will have a designee as the first point of contact for anyone who thinks they have experienced discriminatory, harassing or otherwise unacceptable behavior. President Peterson has assigned two designees as points of contact that will be announced at the start of each meeting. We urge you to contact him/her if you have any concerns. The designees are Bernadine Engeldorf, Secretary-Treasurer, and Perry Schmidt, Vice President.

CREDENTIALS

Credentials were received from IAM Local 737, IATSE Local 13, and SEIU Local 284. President Peterson administered the Oath of Obligation to those new delegates and alternates in attendance.

MINUTES

M/S/C TO APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 10 AND JULY 8, 2026, AS PUBLISHED IN THE UNION ADVOCATE NEWSPAPER AFTER THE SECRETARY-TREASURER NOTES THERE ARE NO ADDITIONS OR CHANGES CALLED FOR.

ST. PAUL LABOR STUDIES AND RESOURCE CENTER MINUTES SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

Business to come before the LSRC Board to be acted upon consisted of LSRC's 2025 Audit.

M/S/C TO ACCEPT THE STATEMENT FROM THE LEGACY AUDITORS HIGHLIGHTING AN AUDIT PERFORMED AND TO ACCEPT THE AUDIT OF THE ST. PAUL LABOR STUDIES AND RESOURCE CENTER 12/31/2025.

COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION (COPE) MINUTES SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

COPE met in regular session on the above date and was called to order by President Peterson at 5 p.m. Board members in attendance were Beedle, Beissel, Butts, Engledorf, Fridgen, Guertin, Hill, Hoerth, Madden, Michelson, Mullin, Peterson, Roth, Sansom, Schmidt, Seath, Slattery and Tastad-Damer. Excused were Cook, Gale, Gibbons, Hunt, Luneburg, Markham-Kocurek, Relca and Strom. Absent: Lohmann and Mayer.

Items to come before this committee included:

• The Chisago County Labor Assembly requests recommendation to grant labor endorsement to:

– Sarah Aadland, Amy Forkner and Jen Penzenstadler for Chisago Lakes School Board

– Cyle Cramer for Chisago County Commissioner

- Jessica Bergan and Dennis Schilling for Wyoming City Council

• The Dakota County Labor Assembly requests recommendation to grant labor endorsement to:

– Jacob Borealis for Dakota County Commissioner District 6

– Chris Pierce and Philip Windschitl for Farmington City Council

– Nicholas Gessell, Farmington Mayor

M/S/C TO RECOMMEND THAT THE DELEGATE BODY GRANT LABOR ENDORSEMENT TO SARAH AADLAND, AMY FORKNER AND JEN PENZENSTADLER, CHISAGO LAKES SCHOOL BOARD; CYLE CRAMER, CHISAGO COUNTY COMMISSIONER; JESSICA BERGAN AND DENNIS SCHILLING, WYOMING CITY COUNCIL; JACOB BOREALIS, DAKOTA COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 6; CHRIS PIERCE AND PHILIP WINDSCHITL, FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL; AND NICHOLAS GESSEL, FARMINGTON MAYOR.

• President Peterson announced the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation will be hosting a number of upcoming door knocks.

• M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO BE A SILVER SPONSOR FOR A TABLE OF EIGHT AT A COST OF $1,000 TO THE CD4 DFL BRUCE VENTO DINNER.

• M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A $5,000 CONTRIBUTION TO THE DFL SENATE CAUCUS.

• M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A $5,000 CONTRIBUTION TO THE DFL HOUSE CAUCUS.

• M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A $2,000 CONTRIBUTION TO MINNESOTANS FOR KLOBUCHAR.

There being no further business to come before this board the meeting is adjourned.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

The Executive Board met with those same members present who are duly elected to this board. Items to come before this board included:

• PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Peterson reported on the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation 2025 Audit, the Minnesota State Fair Labor Day Parade, Jean Jones School Supply Initiative, Labor of Love – Sponsor A Family, and the 2026 Holiday Party, scheduled Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the IBEW Local 110 Union hall after the delegate meeting.

• ORGANIZING UPDATES/CAMPAIGNS: AFSCME Local 844, ATU Local 1005 and the Letter Carriers gave updates on their organizing activities.

• Thank-you notes received from IUPAT PATCH for the RLF's $500 contribution to the Golf Fundraiser.

• M/S/C TO APPROVE THE SAINT PAUL REGIONAL LABOR FEDERATION 2025 AUDIT AS PRESENTED.

• M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A $500 CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIRST ANNUAL GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA "STEVEN M. GALLOWAY MEMORIAL" GOLF TOURNAMENT.

• M/S/C FOR THE RLF TO MAKE A $400 CONTRIBUTION TO USA'S 16TH ANNUAL ROOFERS TWIN CITIES SPORTING CLAYS SHOOT.

There being no further business to come before this board, the meeting adjourned.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Secretary-Treasurer Engeldorf reported on the financial status of the Federation as of August 2026. The report was accepted as read.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Peterson reported on the following:

• If you would like to volunteer to phone bank or door knock with Labor 2026, please see Colleen Nocerini, political organizer.

• Thank you to everyone who participated the RLF's marching unit at the Labor Day Parade at the Minnesota State Fair.

• Collection and delivery to St. Paul's Title 1 program of the Jean Jones Inititive school supply donations.

• SPRLF will be sending a mailing out shortly announcing our annual Labor of Love – Sponsor A Family program.

• The December delegate meeting and SPRLF Holiday Party will be at the IBEW Local 110 Union Hall.

• If you are a delegate to the Minnesota AFL-CIO Convention you should be receiving your information this week.

STAFF REPORTS

Colleen Nocerini, Political Organizer discussed the upcoming phone banks and door knocks.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

• Michael Madden reported on behalf of the Chisago County Labor Assembly. Teamsters Local 320 settled their strike. Next meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday of the month via zoom at 6 p.m.

• Brian Beedle reported on behalf of the Washington County Labor Assembly. The annual picnic was attended by several politicians and friends who stopped by to give thanks for our previous support. Members discussed upcoming door knocks, phone banks and the annual holiday party. Next meeting will be on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

• Martin Hoerth reported on behalf of the Ramsey County Labor Assembly. Members will discuss the North St. Paul and Maplewood School Board endorsements. Next meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

• Connie Beissel reported on behalf of the Dakota County Labor Assembly. Members screened for County Commissioner District 6, Farmington Mayor and Farmington City Council. The assembly purchased and delivered school supplies to the two schools adopted in ISD 196. Thank you to all unions who donated to the annual school supply drive. Next meeting will be on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

President Peterson called for a floor vote on the COPE Committee's recommendations to grant labor endorsement to Sarah Aadland, Amy Forkner, Jen Penzenstadler, Chisago Lakes School Board; Cyle Cramer, Chisago County Commissioner; Jessica Bergan and Dennis Schilling, Wyoming City Council; Jacob Borealis, Dakota County Commissioner District 6; Chris Pierce and Philip Windschitl, Farmington City Council; and Nicholas Gessell, Farmington Mayor.

M/S/C TO GRANT LABOR ENDORSEMENT TO THE ABOVE CANDIDATES LISTED.

GOOD AND WELFARE

• Carpenters Local 322 will be holding its 13th annual car show on September 19, 2026.

• A delegate shared information about the St. Paul Right to Repair Ordinance, Chpt. 34A.

There being no further business to come before this delegation, the meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,
BERNADINE ENGELDORF
Secretary-Treasurer

Labor fed's holiday fundraising drives accepting donations

No family should go without food on the table – especially not during the holidays.

The annual Labor of Love – Sponsor a Family fundraising drive will help get food to families in need throughout the east metro this holiday season. Contributions from unions and their members will be accepted through Nov. 20.

All donations are used to purchase gift cards from union grocery stores. Local agencies distribute the gift cards to area families in December.

Agency partners include Catholic Charities in St. Paul, Jewish Community Center and Neighbors, Inc.

The St. Paul Labor Studies and Resource Center, which provides emergency assistance and referrals to local union members facing financial hardship, will also receive a portion of proceeds.

The LSRC is the nonprofit arm of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation, and contributions are tax-deductible.

To contribute, mail a check payable to Labor Studies and Resource Center to: LSRC, Labor of Love, Attn: Laura, 353 West 7th St., Suite 201, St. Paul, MN 55102.

Labor of Love is co-sponsored by Greater Twin Cities United Way, the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation, the LSRC and the AFL-CIO Community Services program.

Coats for SPPS kids

The LSRC's Jean Jones Initiative, named after a former educator and union activist, is raising funds for its annual winter-clothing drive.

Proceeds are used to purchase coats and other cold-weather gear for students participating in the Saint Paul Public Schools' Project REACH program, which serves families struggling with homelessness.

To contribute, mail a check payable to LSRC, with "Jean Jones Initiative" on the memo line, to the address above.

SPRLF Retirees to meet Nov. 18

The Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation Retirees will meet Nov. 18 at noon at the Saint Paul Labor Center, 353 West 7th St.

Meetings feature a program and light lunch, and are open to retired members of unions affiliated with the SPRLF. Retirees interested in learning more about the group are always welcome to attend.

The Retirees typically meet the third Wednesday of each month.

For more information, call or text Jeanne Surdo, SPRLF Retirees president, at 651-283-8896.



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