

September 27, 2021

Dear Union Leaders,

Thank you for supporting the Northwest Carpenters Union in their ongoing contract negotiations. Carpenters Local 30 is fully affiliated with MLK Labor and the NW Carpenters Union strike has been sanctioned by both MLK Labor and the Seattle Building and Construction Trades Council.

Carpenters have been on strike for a week now with rolling pickets every day on targeted projects. The Associated General Contractors of Western Washington is still not coming to the bargaining table with a fair proposal. Many unions have sent support to picket lines, and it is likely that there will be an all-hands-on-deck call for multi-union support at a rally in the next week. Please stay tuned and consider what your Local can do to turn out members, staff, and community allies when the call comes.

There has also been misinformation circulating about the union, the contract, and the strike. We are asking everyone to be aware of efforts to sow division inside the NW Carpenters Union and not participate in third-party events or actions that seek to undermine the NW Carpenters Union leadership at this critical moment. A small group of Carpenters is engaging in illegal and non-sanctioned "wildcat" strikes and pickets. These are not supported nor endorsed by the Carpenters negotiations team or union leadership. It is very important that members, from any union, do not engage in these illegal activities as they have the potential to hurt the efforts to resolve this strike. We don't want to see developers or project contractors take legal action against unions or individuals who shut down projects with non-sanctioned pickets.

False information is also being circulated about Project Labor Agreements (PLAs). A handful of mostly public construction projects have PLAs right now. These agreements are won by the union movement to ensure benefits on the job are in addition to union contracts. They have been used for generations going back to the construction of the Hoover Dam. In our community agreements such as these have many benefits may include things like free downtown parking as well as a commitment to area standard wages and working conditions. What is even more important to know is that our PLAs also have requirements that workers are hired from targeted zip codes that help ensure there are opportunities for BIPOC and immigrant workers to get employed on projects. Jobs with PLAs are unionized at a significantly higher rate because the policies support unionization. Many PLAs include a no-strike clause because it is critical to the union movement that we get the projects finished as quickly as possible so that they can provide ongoing union employment to the workers who will be employed there upon completion. The Convention Center and Climate Pledge Arena are good examples of this. PLAs do not hamper a union's ability to strike overall, and all strategic job sites are being picketed by the Carpenters now.

Lastly, I would like us all to take a moment to grieve the death of Bryan Phillips this week. A union Cement Mason, Bryan was tragically killed in a construction accident at the Convention Center Expansion Project. He is held in loving memory by his family and union family alike. Please contribute generously to the fund set up to support his family <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-for-bryan-phillips-family>.

Thanks, everyone for your support of the NW Carpenters Union and their Executive Secretary-Treasurer Evelyn Shapiro as they take powerful action on behalf of their members. I look forward to seeing you all on sanctioned picket lines, which are set daily, and you can find out more about from the union, Monty Anderson at the Seattle Building Trades or myself and at an all labor support rally in the near future.

Nicole Grant
Executive Secretary-Treasurer
MLK Labor