

John Young  
Recapper

Oleksandr Zdrylyuk  
Truck Driver

(Oregon fatalities are from information  
supplied by the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services.)

## OREGON COMBAT MILITARY DEATHS IN 2007

Army Sgt. Joshua C. Brennan  
Ontario, Oregon

Army Sgt. Michael Louis Vaughan  
Otis, Oregon

Army Sgt. Eliot W. Scott  
Portland, Oregon

Army Private Brett Andre Walton  
Hillsboro, Oregon

Army Cpl. Graham McMahon  
Corvallis, Oregon

Army Sgt. Jason A. Shaffer  
Hood River, Oregon

Army Capt. Drew Jensen  
Clackamas, Oregon

Army Sgt. 1st Class John J. Stephens  
La Grande, Oregon

Army SFC Adrian Marcos Elizalde  
North Bend, Oregon

Army Sgt. Nicholas J. Lightner  
Newport, Oregon

Army PFC Daniel Allen Leckel  
Glendale, Oregon

Marine Lance Cpl. Nathan Windsor  
Newport, Oregon

Army Cpl. Kory Wiens  
Albany, Oregon

Army Sgt. Long N. Nguyen  
Portland, Oregon

Army Specialist Michelle Ring  
McMinnville, Oregon

Army Private 1st Class  
Brian A. Browning  
Astoria, Oregon

Marine Lance Cpl. Steven Stacy  
Coos Bay, Oregon

Army Private 1st Class Ryan J. Hill  
Keizer, Oregon

Marine Lance Cpl. Juan Manuel  
Garcia-Schill  
Grants Pass, Oregon

Army Sgt. Sean P. Fennerty  
Portland, Oregon

Army Specialist Joseph P. Kenny  
Veneta, Oregon

104 Oregonians have died while serving  
in Afghanistan and Iraq.  
16 from the Oregon National Guard;  
1 from the Washington National Guard;  
1 from the New York National Guard;  
58 from the United States Army;  
3 from the United States Army Reserve;  
19 from the United States Marine Corps;  
1 from the United States Air Force;  
5 from the United States Navy.

Army Specialist Dominic N. Rodriguez  
Klamath Falls, Oregon

Army Sgt. 1st Class  
Christopher Henderson  
Hillsboro, Oregon

Marine Lance Cpl. Dale G. Peterson  
Redmond, Oregon

# U.S. Senate panel pushes OSHA on worker safety

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — U.S. senators may be moving in a bipartisan manner toward pushing the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to come down hard on companies that repeatedly skirt safety rules.

At least it sounded that way April 1 at a hearing of the Senate Workplace Safety Subcommittee.

Chair Patty Murray (D-Wash.), co-sponsored legislation a year ago following the death of Cintas worker Eleazar Torres-Gomez, who was sucked into a 300-degree dryer in Tulsa, Okla. Murray said OSHA has done little to go after repeat violators.

And the subcommittee's top Republican, Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), said one big fine against one key firm in an industry for a pattern of ignoring worker safety would send a signal to all the others, through their trade associations, to obey the law. Isakson's state was the scene of a fatal blast at a sugar refinery, caused by igniting dust.

The senators spoke after Change to Win Health and Safety Coordinator Eric Frumin, former OSHA Administrator Gerald Scannell, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 227 Shop Steward Doris Morrow, and health and safety consultant Carmen Bianco testified about health and safety working conditions — 38 years after the Occupational Safety and Health Act was passed.

A followup hearing will be on April 29, keyed to Workers Memorial Day, which is April 28.

All four agreed that safety and health on the job is not just a matter of numbers of deaths and injuries, which have been declining for years, but of corporate culture. "If bosses make safety and health a priority, injuries, deaths and fear on the job go down," they said.

Otherwise, even at a union shop, "many of the

workers are afraid to complain about the working conditions because they are fearful they will lose their jobs," Morrow said of her 1,000-worker Tyson Poultry plant in Robards, Kentucky.

Those conditions, she added, are far worse than people imagine. A poultry plant, for example, has maximum temperatures of 40 degrees Fahrenheit, with wind whipping through on cold days, icy and dangerous floors, and common respiratory and musculoskeletal problems affecting workers who must lift heavy tubs of chicken on a rapid production line at all times.

Frumin said Cintas was repeatedly warned of the danger of its conveyor belts sucking workers into its dryers long before one sucked in Gomez. OSHA has fined Cintas for the same hazards since Gomez' death, Frumin told lawmakers. The fine, which may be reduced on appeal, is \$3 million.

That's "one day's profits" for Cintas, Frumin said.

Bianco admitted health and safety attitudes must come from — and change at — the top for workers to see any progress.

"This is not a consequence of there being a few bad apples" in the corporate barrel, said Isakson, who ran his own business for 33 years before entering politics. "They're encouraged to be a bad actor," he said of corporate titans' quest for profits.

"If there's a judicial process that made the CEO personally accountable for part of the fine, or that he could be ordered to put in a safety officer" that would wake companies up, he said.

Isakson, Murray and other lawmakers said they will work on legislation that identifies and penalizes "a pattern and practice" of health and safety violations. "Penalties for that," Isakson said, "would ripple through an industry."

## Wages, job safety at top of Steelworkers' bargaining list

McMINNVILLE, OR — Cascade Steel Rolling Mills is doing well. Production at the company's steel mill here set a record in March, and sales for the most recent quarter hit a record 202,000 tons. With steel prices also up, about \$80 a ton, earnings are up by almost half since a year ago.

So what was the company's proposal to its union workers March 31?

A wage freeze. No cost-of-living increase. And that's after workers got just one cost-of-living increase in the last three-year contract — a 1.7 percent raise last April.

For its part, the union wants workers to share in the good times, starting with decent raises. Currently, pay starts about \$11 and goes as high as \$25, for what can be pretty dangerous industrial work. The union also wants rules improving participation on the safety committee. They want a \$25 increase to the \$125 annual boot allowance; boots with the required metatarsal guards cost that much and more, and better-made boots of U.S. manufacture can be over \$200. And they want increased job security through a successorship clause, so that the union contract would remain in

force if parent company Schnitzer Steel Industries decides to sell the mill.

Cascade Steel Rolling Mills produces concrete reinforcing bar ("rebar"), and various grades of wire and bars, using scrap steel purchased from Schnitzer's steel recycling operation. Much of the steel produced at the plant is used in construction, which is experiencing a downturn, but the outlook remains good for the company. Chinese demand is soaking up steel production in other Pacific Rim countries, so Cascade Steel Rolling Mills and one other U.S. competitor have the West Coast U.S. market to themselves.

Granted, the wage freeze was the company's opening gambit, but the bargaining committee at United Steelworkers Local 8378 was not amused. The month before bargaining began Feb. 29, members voted to authorize the bargaining committee to strike if needed. Local 8378 President Joe Munger wonders if the company might be pushing the union to strike.

The previous contract has expired and is being extended on a day-to-day basis. The union could call a strike with 72-hour notice.