

# Boeing wins \$35B tanker contract

The Air Force has given a major boost to U.S. job creation by awarding a \$35 billion contract to build the next generation of air refueling tankers to Boeing Co.

The announcement to build 179 new 767-based tankers — the largest contract in Air Force history — was made at the Pentagon Feb. 24.

Boeing said the contract will supply 50,000 jobs across the country — many of them good-paying union jobs. The airplane itself will be built in Everett, Wash., with the refueling boom and other military modifications made in Wichita, Kansas.

Some 26,000 Boeing workers are

## Obama renominates union attorney Becker to NLRB

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — Showing he won't take Senate Republican "no's" for an answer, President Barack Obama renominated former top union attorney Craig Becker as a member of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Becker serves in that post under a recess appointment, which ends at the close of this congressional session. A GOP filibuster in the last Congress prevented a vote on the former counsel to the AFL-CIO and the Service Employees International Union. Republicans objected to Becker's union ties and some of his academic writings.

No sooner did Obama renominate Becker than Sen. Mike Enzi, (R-Wy), the top Republican on the Senate Labor Committee, said he would oppose Becker again.

Obama also renominated Bill Boarman, former head of Communications Workers of America's Printing, Publications and Media Workers sector, for Public Printer, which oversees the Government Printing Office — the world's largest publisher. Boarman currently is serving in that post under a recess appointment.

## Donations accepted for Workers' Memorial Scholarship fund

Each year, children in Oregon must cope with a parent being taken from their lives through a workplace death. The loss can have a profound effect on a family's ability to finance higher education.

The Workers' Memorial Scholarship fund was established by the 1991 Legislature at the request of the Oregon AFL-CIO to help surviving family members reach their educational goals.

Private donations to the fund can be accepted, but are not solicited by Oregon OSHA. Please make checks payable to "DCBS Workers' Memorial Scholarship Account" and mail your donation to Oregon OSHA, c/o Melanie Mesaros, P.O. Box 14480, Salem, OR 97309.

represented by the International Association of Machinists (IAM). The Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace represents another 24,000 employees at the company.

Boeing said the new tankers will ensure more than 11,000 direct and indirect jobs in the Puget Sound area, with an economic impact of \$693 million every year. Another 7,500 direct and indirect jobs are anticipated in Wichita.

Job gains aren't expected to be as extensive at the Boeing parts manufacturing plant in Gresham, which employs more than 1,500 workers.

"My understanding is we will not see an increase in employment, but we will see a gradual increase in production, which means job retention for us," said Bob Petroff, assistant directing business representative of Machinists District Lodge W24. "After all, the first 18 tankers aren't scheduled for delivery until 2017."

Some media reports quoted a Boeing spokesperson from Auburn, Washington, stating that the tanker contract will include enough work for about 45 employees in Gresham, and that the company expects to add 100 new jobs there this year.

Boeing earlier indicated that the tanker deal would create as many as 300 news jobs in Oregon, with an economic

impact of \$14 million. Many of those jobs, however, will go to area suppliers and vendors.

The Air Force has tried for nearly a decade to replace its aging fleet of Eisenhower-era tankers, the equivalent of a flying gas station. For much of that time Boeing was locked in a competition with European Aeronautic Defence and Space Co. (EADS), which builds the Airbus.

"(Today's) news, that after nearly 10 long years, the Pentagon has finally seen the light and decided to order 179 Boeing tankers, built by our Machinists — (this) is certainly cause for celebration," said Tom Wroblewski, president of Machinists District Lodge 751 in Seattle. "We've worked hard on Boeing's behalf for nearly a decade on this tanker deal. In fact, we could have built and delivered an entire fleet of tankers in the time it's taken to settle this deal. As we've all learned over the past 10 years, with the tanker, it ain't over 'til it's over and even then you can't be sure. But just as we've said all along, the Boeing tanker is the right one for America's military, for our taxpayers and for the U.S. economy. We are the Fighting Machinists, and we're going to keep on fighting for the Boeing tanker, right up 'til our members start building the first one for the Air Force up in Everett."



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# Busted!

A sampler of recent charges of employer labor law violations filed with the local office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

## Hospital tears down letter from Congressman

At Springfield's **McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center**, 340 support workers have battled for over a year to get a decent contract out of the Tennessee-based parent company, Community Health Systems. So union members were heartened when their congressman, Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), wrote to CHS urging the for-profit hospital chain to negotiate a just contract, "because it is the right thing to do." DeFazio warned in the letter that CHS' determination to short-change employees by scrimping on wages and benefits is putting the hospital's reputation at risk. But hospital supervisors have been taking the letter down from union bulletin boards since December. That affront is one of eight violations spelled out in the latest charge filed by **SEIU Local 49**. A Feb. 15 trial on three other charges was postponed.

## Yeah, times are hard, but show us the records

Is **Ross Island Sand & Gravel** going bust, or is the privately held company trying to throw sand in the eyes of its 185 unionized workers so it can pick their pockets? At a Dec. 28 contract bargaining session, the company proposed over \$10 an hour in concessions — lower wages, fewer paid holidays, elimination of paid sick leave, and less overtime. Such takeaways are necessary, company negotiators said, because Ross Island has a serious cash flow problem and hasn't had profits since 2007. **Teamsters Local 162**, understandably, asked for proof: an audit of the company's records. Management said no. That's bad faith bargaining, the union charges, and a violation of federal labor law.

## Workers have the right to discuss wages

**Fred Meyer** has another court date. On March 15, company lawyers will explain to a federal judge why Fred Meyer fired Barbara Sideroff. The NLRB believes that Sideroff — an apparel department worker at Northeast Portland's Hollywood West Fred Meyer — was canned last August for talking to a co-worker about their wages. The agency has been prosecuting a rash of such cases in the last year. A similar charge was filed last month against **Providence St. Vincent Hospital** for banning co-workers from communicating about wages and conditions. That's illegal under federal labor law.

## Throwing worker rights under the bus

**First Student**, the UK-headquartered multinational that specializes in privatizing school bus operations, has racked up 121 charges of U.S. labor law violations since January 2010 — nine in Oregon alone. In Central Point, Oregon, First Student changed all kinds of rules without bargaining with **Teamsters Local 962**, and terminated workers for breaking the new rules. Local 962 also accuses First Student of surveilling union activity, threatening pro-union workers, and unlawfully giving anti-union workers an employee list to help them pursue a decertification drive.



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