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### Fighting to maintain good jobs on the waterfront

ILWU International Vice President Ray Familathe (with bullhorn) leads more than 1,200 longshore workers and their union allies in a chant June 3 outside the downtown Portland corporate office of grain company EGT Development. Protesters traveled from as far away as Los Angeles to support Longview-based ILWU Local 21 in its quest for a union contract at a new grain terminal set to open this summer at the Port of Longview. EGT is a joint venture of St. Louis-based Bunge North America, Japan-based Itochu Corp. and Korean shipper STX Pan Ocean. The company leased property from the Port to build a \$200 million state-of-the-art grain elevator on the Columbia River. EGT imported nonunion construction workers from out-of-state to do most of the work. It now wants to operate the facility with nonunion, out-of-state labor. Members of ILWU are employed at port grain export terminals coastwise under the Northwest Grainhandlers Agreement, which is set to expire later this year. The union believes if EGT is operating without a contract it will reverberate in upcoming negotiations. "EGT would like to be the Walmart of the grain business and force everyone else into their agenda," said Scott Mason, president of Tacoma-based ILWU Local 23.

## Unions for Kids motorcycle poker run raises \$50,000 for children's hospital

A record 477 motorcycle riders registered to participate in the ninth annual "Unions for Kids Poker Run and Chili Cook-off" June 11.

All proceeds from the ride and raffle — a total of \$50,000 — went to Doernbecher Children's Hospital. Since its inception nine years ago, the event has raised more than \$271,000.

"Overall, I think it was the best one ever," said Lee Duncan, a member of Portland-based Electrical Workers Local 48, who helped found the event. "I think we're dialed in on all aspects. We have a super bunch of volunteers, great

support from a wide range of unions and businesses. Everybody's gone above and beyond."

A large chunk of the "Unions for Kids" proceeds comes from a drawing for a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, which was won by Portland business owner Brian Raburn (ticket 313 sold by Local 48 vice president Gary Young). Money also is raised through poker run registration fees, sponsor donations, a silent auction, and a chili cook-off. Duncan said items valued at more than \$12,000 were donated for the raffle and silent auction. Among the silent auction

items was a Hamer "Slammer" electric guitar signed by John Kay and Steppenwolf. Band drummer Ron Hurst rode in this year's event. The guitar was purchased by Rob Williamson, who works at the IBEW and United Workers Federal Credit Union. The credit union is a major sponsor of the event. Other businesses that donate tickets, banners, and other items are Hollywood Impress Printing, Markon Signs, and Columbia Motorcycle Harley Davidson.

The poker run itself consists of riders going to check points, where they

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## Political interference at NLRB unprecedented

### In a case filed by Machinists Union against Boeing

By DON McINTOSH  
Associate Editor

Imagine if the Environmental Protection Agency tried to fine British Petroleum \$500 million for the Gulf oil spill ... and the reaction in Congress was a call to repeal the Environmental Protection Act. Or suppose Walmart faced an order of \$100 million in back pay for illegally making employees work off the clock, and in response leading Senate Republicans threatened to block the president's nominee for the Department of Labor. That's a little like what's happening now in the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) case that the International Association of Machinists (IAM) filed against Boeing.

America's basic labor union rights law, the National Labor Relations Act, says workers have the right to form unions, to bargain collectively, and to strike. Under that law, employers may not retaliate against workers for exercising those rights. But that's what Boeing did, the IAM alleges, when the company decided to locate its second 787 Dreamliner assembly line in South

Carolina instead of Washington. Company leaders made repeated statements to journalists and stock market analysts that its decision to locate in South Carolina was motivated by a desire to avoid the disruption of a strike by its unionized workers in Washington.

Boeing's operation in South Carolina is nonunion, and unions have historically been weak in South Carolina, a so-called "right-to-work" state. The NLRB, which enforces the National Labor Relations Act, investigated IAM's charge. It agreed with the union, and issued a formal complaint April 20 against Boeing, an action which was approved by acting general counsel Lafe Solomon, the highest-ranking official in the "prosecution" part of the NLRB. The complaint was scheduled to be heard by a federal administrative law judge June 14 in Seattle, just after this issue went to press.

But the reaction to the NLRB complaint — by business groups, the business media, and Republican members of Congress — was furious. They seemed to be outraged that a little-known federal agency enforcing a 75-year-old law about unionization could question a major company's decision about where to produce its product. Some of the reactions:

- Solomon is President Obama's

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Ashley Schmidt of Doernbecher Children's Hospital accepts a check for \$50,000 from Rob Williamson, treasurer of the Unions for Kids motorcycle poker run. In nine years, the annual event has donated \$271,000 to the hospital.