

United Auto Workers drops appeal of Tennessee VW plant election loss

The union says it will concentrate on a Congressional probe of political interference

The United Auto Workers (UAW) is dropping its federal appeal of a narrow union election loss at Volkswagen's Chattanooga, Tenn., plant. Instead, President Bob King says the union will concentrate on a probe by Congressional Democrats of political interference that led to the defeat.

The union lost the election 712-628 after threats by Republican Gov. Bill Haslam, Republican U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, and other ruling Tennessee Republicans to yank tax breaks and other state aid from VW in Chattanooga if workers went with the union. The Chattanooga drive was a key part of the UAW's effort to enter nonunion foreign auto firm "transplants" in the anti-union South, as well as part of labor's overall effort to increase union density in that region.

Besides the interference from Corker and Haslam, outside anti-union groups pumped millions of dollars worth of advertising into the Chat-

tanooga area opposing the union and linking UAW to Democratic President Barack Obama and saying the union would take away peoples' guns.

VW had signed a neutrality agreement with the union prior to the election, and did not oppose the organizing campaign. Top VW officials said they favored a "works council" at Chattanooga to handle labor-management relations. VW has works councils at all plants worldwide, except Chattanooga and in China.

King's April 21 announcement that the union was dropping the appeal came a week before a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) administrative law judge was scheduled to hear the case.

The UAW based its decision on the belief that "the NLRB's historically dysfunctional and complex process potentially could drag on for months or even years," the union said in a statement.

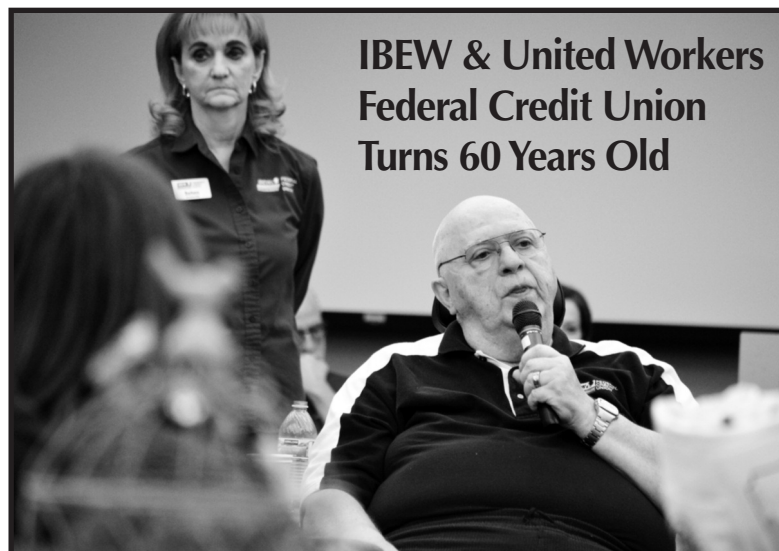
Additionally, the UAW cited refusals by Haslam and Corker to participate in a "transparent legal discovery process, which undermines public trust and confidence." The two pols refused to appear before the NLRB judge.

Instead of pursuing the NLRB's le-

gal process, the union is banking on Congress to continue to shine a spotlight on the political interference with the union vote. That spotlight may come if Haslam replies to an April 16 letter from Reps. George Miller (D-Calif.) and John Tierney (D-Mass.), seeking state documents and e-mails relating to the Chattanooga vote. Miller is the top Democrat on the GOP-run House Education and the Workforce Committee.

Citing their oversight responsibilities, the two lawmakers "respectfully request information about whether any Tennessee state officials directly or indirectly conditioned, or threatened to condition, state aid to Volkswagen on the outcome of the efforts to establish a union and/or works council at the Chattanooga plant," their letter says.

"In circumstances in which state aid has been conditioned or is threatened to be conditioned on the outcome of a question of workers' representation, Congress has a significant interest. Such state-level conditioning may undermine employees' federally-guaranteed freedom to choose whether or not to be represented by a union," Miller and Tierney said.



IBEW & United Workers Federal Credit Union Turns 60 Years Old

IBEW and United Workers Federal Credit Union celebrated its 60th anniversary at its annual meeting April 15 in Northeast Portland. The actual charter date of the credit union is May 7, 1954. Helping celebrate was one of the original members of the credit union — Frank Bates (pictured above). A longtime member of IBEW Local 48, Bates was member number five, said Credit Union President/CEO Barbara Mathey (standing behind Bates). Bates also served on the board of directors for 35 years, leaving in 2009. IBEW and United Workers Federal Credit Union is located at 9955 SE Washington St., Portland.

Motorcycle poker run June 14; tickets to win a new Harley bike still available

The 12th annual Unions for Kids Motorcycle Poker Run & Chili Cook-off will be held Saturday, June 14, starting at 9 a.m.

Unions for Kids is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization established in 2003 by union members and supporters to raise money for Doernbecher Children's Hospital. One hundred percent of the proceeds from its events go to that cause. To date, \$390,000 has been donated.

Most of the money is raised through a raffle to win a Harley Davidson Softail Classic motorcycle valued at \$21,569. Tickets are \$10 each, with only 5,000 tickets sold.

The 75-mile motorcycle poker run starts and finishes at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland. Registration is from 8:30 to 10 a.m. All poker hands must be returned by 2:45 p.m. to be eligible to win cash prizes.

The event also features vendors, raf-

file prizes a silent auction, and chili cook-off competition.

The drawing for the motorcycle will be held at 4 p.m.

For more information about Unions for Kids, the Poker Run, or to purchase a Harley motorcycle raffle ticket, visit www.unionsforkids.org, or call Duncan at 503-260-5905.

Harley Davidson motorcycle raffle tickets can be purchased at the following locations:

IBEW & United Workers Federal Credit Union, 9955 SE Washington St., Portland; **Teamsters Council 37 Federal Credit Union**, 1866 NE 162nd Ave., Portland; **Bounty Hunter Saloon**, 11445 SW Pacific Hwy., Tigard; **Midnight Roundup Saloon**, 345 NW Burnside, Gresham; **Gateway Pub**, 39100 Pioneer, Sandy; **Dita's Chocolates**, 38915 Proctor Blvd., Sandy; and **Wooden Chicken Pub**, 12500 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

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