

# Report that Staples terminated its contract with U.S. Postal Service 'a ruse,' union says

A Staples announcement on July 14 indicating that the company was terminating its no-bid contract with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to provide satellite post office branches in its stores and replacing it with an "approved shipper" program is a ruse, charged American Postal Workers Union (APWU) President Mark Dimondstein.

Dimondstein said Staples and the USPS are changing the name of the program, without addressing the fundamental concerns of postal workers and postal customers.

"The Staples announcement and a letter from the USPS dated July 7 make it clear: They intend to continue to privatize postal retail operations, replace living-wage Postal Service jobs with low-wage Staples jobs, and compromise the safety and security of the mail," Dimondstein said.

"This attempt at trickery shows that the 'Don't Buy Staples' movement is having an effect. We intend to keep up the pressure until Staples gets out of the mail business."

The announcement that Staples

would discontinue its contract with USPS came days after the 1.5 million member American Federation of Teachers (AFT) joined a union-called boycott of the office supply chain. Most of the nation's largest labor organizations, including the AFL-CIO, Service Employees, AFSCME, and Fire Fighters have endorsed the boycott. AFT's action was significant because roughly one-third of Staples' revenue comes from the sale of school supplies.

Delegates attending AFT's national convention in Los Angeles passed the Staples boycott resolution July 12. Afterward, they joined members of several postal workers unions and other supporters at a massive rally outside the Staples Center arena in downtown Los Angeles. Their message: "The U.S. Mail is Not for Sale."

Calling postal workers "the most amazing public servants," AFT President Randi Weingarten asked rallygoers: "Who does Staples really want and need to come into its stores every single day? Teachers. The best way we can help is if we say to Staples: 'You do this to the postal workers, and we aren't buying supplies in your stores.'"

The AFT resolution resolves "that members of the AFT, along with friends, colleagues and family members, are urged to no longer shop at Staples stores until further notice."

Staples — already faced with declining sales and revenue — announced in March plans to close 225 stores in the United States and Canada by 2015 as part of a \$500 million cost-cutting program.

*(Editor's Note: In the Portland metropolitan area, the Staples boycott has support from the Oregon AFL-CIO, the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, the Portland Association of Teachers, Oregon AFSCME Council 75, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, the Oregon State Council of Fire Fighters, and others.)*

## Portland rally July 26 to celebrate 239th birthday of Postal Service

A rally to celebrate the 239th birthday of the U.S. Postal Service will be held Saturday, July 26, from noon to 1 p.m. at Portland's Main Post Office, 715 NW Hoyt (off Broadway).

Participants will cut birthday cake for the Postal Service, and cut Staples reward cards in protest of the privatization scheme between USPS and the office supply chain.

Speakers will include "Ben Franklin," as well as representatives from the Oregon AFL-CIO and the Portland Association of Teachers.

The rally and protest is sponsored by Communities and Postal Workers United, the American Postal Workers Union, the National Association of Letter Carriers, and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union.

For more information, call 503-752-5112 or go online to: [www.StopStaples.com](http://www.StopStaples.com).

# Local Motion

## June 2014

A list of Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces deciding whether to be union-represented – as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

### Voting in union elections

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Yes	No	
6/14	Bodycote IMT (Camas) Machinists District Lodge W24	22	16	👍
6/24	Metro Metals Northwest (Portland) Teamsters Locals 58/162	29	37	👎

### Unionizing by majority sign-up

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
6/3	Mosier Community School licensed teachers (Mosier) Oregon Education Assn.	10

### Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
Odom/Southern Wine and Spirits (Wilsonville) Teamsters Local 162	47
Good Samaritan Society nursing facility (Eugene) SEIU Local 503	43
Fernhill Estates nursing home (Portland) SEIU Local 503	30
Office of Public Defense Services attorneys (Salem) Oregon AFSCME	37

#### LEGEND

👍 : workers will be union-represented    👎 : workers will be on their own

## ...SEIU members picket at Emanuel

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with inflation. Inflation has been about 2 percent a year the last several years. Local 49 is proposing 4.5 percent. The union is also proposing \$1 an hour extra for weekend work, and it wants to add an additional 25 cents to the current \$1.25 and \$2.25 hourly bonuses for working swing and night shifts.

Doherty said a majority of members are at or near the top of a 10-step pay scale, so the union is proposing that an 11th step be added. But Legacy has

said no to that also.

Emergency room technician Julie Williams, a single mother, says she earns \$19.40 an hour after six years at Emanuel, and can't afford the employer-provided health insurance plan. So she and her two children rely on the Medicaid-funded Oregon Health Plan for health insurance. They also receive food stamps.

Doherty said there's no talk of a strike yet. More bargaining is scheduled for July 22 and 29.

## 2-1-1 can be a lifesaver

2-1-1 is an easy to remember telephone number that connects callers to information about critical health and human services available in their communities. In Oregon, it is run by 211info, in partnership with United Way. It can be accessed online at [www.211info.org](http://www.211info.org).

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- Workers' Compensation Injuries
- Social Security Claims



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