



## ...THE DISAPPEARING STRIKE

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lock-outs by employers.

Today's strikes aren't just fewer in number than the strikes of old; they also tend to be

shorter. Strikes in the '50s and '60s lasted two to three weeks on average. Today's strikes seem to come in two varieties: Short symbolic strikes of a day

or two called by unions to protest employer lawbreaking, and drawn-out strikes or lock-outs caused by employers seeking dramatic concessions.

## Port to weigh PDX worker reforms

Port of Portland staff are continuing to work on an "equity" policy that could improve conditions for workers at Portland International Airport (PDX). The Port is a public agency responsible for the airport and marine and industrial facilities, and it's overseen by a commission appointed by the governor.

At the Port Commission's Jan. 14 meeting, Port assistant executive director Curtis Robinhold said the proposed policy would likely be presented at the Commission's March 11 meeting.

He said the Port can't set a minimum wage for airport work-

ers because of a state law preempting local minimum wage ordinances. But the policy would likely include some "worker retention" language providing job security to workers when a contract changes hands. New restaurants or janitorial contractors, for example, might be required to hire from a pool of workers laid off from the previous contractor — if the Port of Portland adopts a retention policy similar to one in place in several other West Coast airports.

UNITE HERE Local 8, which represents some concessions workers at airport restau-

rants, has been calling on the Port to adopt such a policy.

On Jan. 8, UNITE HERE reported the results of a survey of more than 100 concessions workers at PDX. The union survey found that the majority make just above minimum wage. The median wage for

## The nine major work stoppages of 2014

These nine strikes weren't the only ones last year, just the only strikes involving over 1,000 workers.

- **University of Illinois (Chicago)** 1,100 members of UIC United Faculty Local 6456 struck for two days Feb. 18-19.
- **Johns Hopkins Hospital (Baltimore)** 2,000 members of Service Employees International Union Local 1099 struck for three days April 9-11.
- **L-3 Communications Army Fleet Support (Fort Rucker, Alabama)** 3,000 members of Machinists Lodge 2003 struck for five days April 28- May 4.
- **Waukegan School District 60 (Waukegan, Illinois)** 1,200 members of Lake County Federation of Teachers, Local 504 struck for 20 days Oct. 2-30.
- **Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Tracy, Community Health, and Ascencion Health hospitals (Northern and Central California)** 20,000 members of California Nurses Association/ National Nurses United held a one-day strike Nov. 11.
- **SFO Airport Restaurant Employer Council (San Francisco International Airport)** 1,000 members of UNITE HERE Local 2 struck for two days Dec. 11-12.
- **MedStar Washington Hospital Center (Washington, D.C.)** 1,900 members of National Nurses United struck seven days Dec. 22-31.
- **Zodiac Seats US (Gainesville, Texas)** 1,300 members of Teamsters Local 767 struck for 29 days Sept. 23 to Oct. 25.
- **FairPoint Communications (Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont)** 1,700 members of Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers went on strike Oct. 17 and have remained on strike since then.

non-supervisory workers like cooks, cashiers and baristas was \$9.30 an hour. Just 16 percent got health insurance through their employer. Another 15 percent get insurance through Medicaid, the government insurance program for the poor, and 24 percent said they receive food

stamps. And 27 percent said they had chosen not to eat when they were hungry in the past year because of concerns about money. The survey also found high turnover: 40 percent of respondents had been working there six months or less, and the median was just one year.



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