

NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS

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Big night

In the Northwest and around the country, working people have a lot at stake on Election Night

Raising or lowering taxes on the rich, boosting or busting unions, increasing the minimum wage — it's all on the ballot Nov. 8 in the Northwest and around the country.

In Oregon, the game-changer is Measure 97, a union-sponsored initiative that would raise \$3 billion a year for schools, health care and senior services with a 2.5 percent corporate tax on in-state gross receipts of over \$25 million. The tax would affect only the top quarter percent of corporations, and leave small business and consumers un-



Photo courtesy of Yes on 97 campaign.

BALLOT MEASURE 97: If it passes, \$3 billion a year will go to schools, health care and senior services. If it fails, Oregon will continue to have the lowest corporate tax rates in the nation, and budget cuts will loom in 2017-18.

touched. Big business has now contributed \$25 million to defeat it, while labor has spent \$13 million to pass it, making it the most expensive ballot fight in Oregon

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ELECTION NIGHT COVERAGE

For worker-focused results as they come in, follow us on Election Night at nwlaborpress.org/2016Election or on Twitter or Facebook at @nwlaborpress

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Daimler unions ratify new contract at Portland truck plant

The five-year deal raises wages \$3.25 an hour for 500 workers.

By Don McIntosh

Workers at Daimler's Portland truck plant ratified new five-year union contracts Oct. 29 by overwhelming margins, with some union members calling it the best company contract offer in many years.

"Members were looking for job security, a general wage increase, and containment of health care costs, and we got all those things," said lead negotiator Joe Kear of Machinists District Lodge W24. Machinists Lodge 1005 is the largest of four unions at the plant, and bargains jointly with Teamsters Local 305, Sign Painters & Paint Makers Local 1094, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49.

With all four contracts expiring Oct. 29, the two sides bargained late the night before at the Riverplace Residence Inn in downtown Portland, and reached agreement at 1:30 in the morning. Daimler negotiators initially wanted to increase mandatory overtime and eliminate double time pay for Saturday work. But in the end they backed off those and other concessionary demands, and reached agreement on what Kear described as a very good offer.

The new contracts provide across-the-board hourly wage increases that total \$3.25 an hour, starting with a 90-cent increase on Nov. 20, followed by annual increases taking place each Oct. 29: 50 cents in 2017 and 2018; 65 cents in 2019; and 70 cents in 2020.



Union-made Western Star trucks are made by Daimler Trucks North America in Portland, Oregon, and Cleveland, North Carolina. The Western Star brand includes heavy-duty vehicles like dump trucks, cement mixers and tow trucks; specialized off-road vehicles for mining and other applications; and high-end extra-durable over-the-road trucks.

That means for a production assembly worker with five years of experience — the most common Machinist union classification — wages will rise from \$24.80 an hour currently to \$28.05 by the end of the contract. The new contracts run through Oct. 29, 2021.

The new contracts contain a modest increase to employees' monthly contribution toward health insurance premiums, but then holds the line on that amount for the duration of the contracts, regardless of how much overall premiums rise during that time. Employees will pay \$65 for employee-only coverage (up from \$50 currently), \$130 for employee plus one dependent (up from \$110), and \$195 a month for employee plus two or more dependents (up from \$175.) Employees choose between company-sponsored Kaiser Permanente and Blue Cross plans (except for Teamsters members, who get equivalent health insurance through a

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BATTLE FOR DISTRICT 17



Tim Probst, left, heads out to knock on doors Oct. 29 with union volunteers from Laborers Local 335 in Vancouver — member Wayne Dotson and local President Shannon Stull.

The Tim Probst-Lynda Wilson race for the open Senate District 17 (Vancouver east of I-205) seat is one of the hardest-fought races in Washington this year. Probst is a former two-term state rep who earned an 84 percent rating from

the state AFL-CIO. Wilson is co-owner of a nonunion cabinet factory and a two-term state rep with a 14 percent AFL-CIO rating. She has close ties to the anti-union Freedom Foundation. Labor is all in: Probst lost Senate

District 17 by 78 votes in 2012 to incumbent Don Benton. Benton is not seeking re-election. A win this year could return the state Senate to Democratic control, breaking a four-year-long logjam on pro-worker legislation.

VOTE!



OREGON: Ballots may be returned by mail or at any official drop site, but must be received by 8 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 8. Postmarks do not count.



WASHINGTON: Ballots must be postmarked by Tuesday, Nov. 8, or dropped in a ballot drop box by 8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 8.