

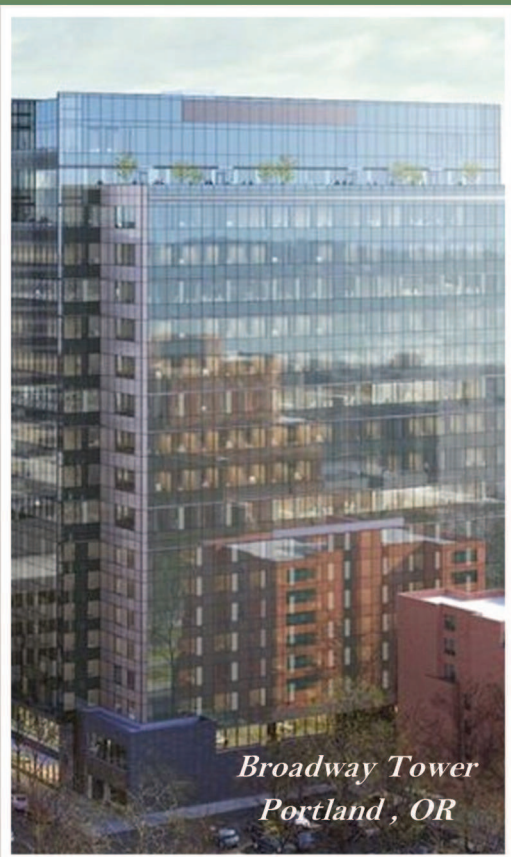


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Randy Goodwin, Vice President
randy.goodwin@wcmadvisors.com

Paul Ravetta, Vice President
paul.ravetta@wcmadvisors.com

Workers say no to union at Mississippi Nissan plant

After a decade-long campaign by United Auto Workers, workers at a Nissan auto plant in Canton, Mississippi rejected unionization in a 2,244 to 1,307 vote Aug. 3-4.

Nissan could have recognized the union, because when UAW requested the election, it had collected signed union authorization cards from a majority of the workers who were eligible to unionize. [Not eligible — under U.S. labor law — were thousands of lower-paid temporary workers employed by Nissan indirectly through Kelly Services.]

Instead, Nissan waged a vigorous anti-union campaign, with television ads, workplace anti-union videos, frequent group one-on-one sessions with managers ... and violations of U.S. labor law. In a July 28 legal complaint, National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) said Nissan managers broke the law multiple times during the campaign when they interrogated workers about their union sympathies, threatened and intimidated pro-union workers, and warned workers that the company would close the plant if the union won.

The anti-union campaign was supported by local businesses and by local Republican politicians, including Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant.

UAW, for its part, also cam-

aigned hard, organizing a coalition of student, clergy, community, groups to support the union effort. The campaign also drew support from actor Dannie Glover, and from U.S.



Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.). And local and national civil rights groups urged the largely African-American workforce to vote "Union yes," as did the district's democratic Congressman and mayor.

The NLRB will continue to pursue legal charges against Nissan for the labor law violations. On the final day of the vote, the union filed additional charges. But even if the government agency finds Nissan broke the law and orders a re-run election, that's unlikely to bring about a different result, given the 63 to 37 percent vote margin.

United Auto Workers has shrunk by nearly 300,000 members since 2001, and today has 415,000 members. Its Canton campaign is part of a sustained effort to unionize foreign-owned automakers in the mid-Atlantic and the South. Nissan's two plants in the U.S. South are its only nonunion plants worldwide. Workers rejected unionization at a Nissan plant in Smyrna, Tennessee, in 1998 and 2001. The \$3.3 billion Canton plant annually produces about 450,000 vehicles, about 8 percent of Nissan's worldwide production.



Solidarity with our union brothers and sisters on Labor Day and every day!