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...Labor on Trump's new NAFTA

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ico.” And while the new NAFTA has workers’ rights language written into its text, a key labor demand (and not in an unenforceable side letter), that language won’t stop the outsourcing, Martinez said.

Steelworkers Legislative Director Holly Hart agreed. “NAFTA and implementing legislation must reverse the corporate incentives to outsource production and, instead, promote investments in plants, equipment and people domestically,” she said. She cited GM’s layoffs, closures and outsourcing – just before Christmas – as evidence a tougher new NAFTA is needed to stop “corporations only interested in profits.”

“In certain areas, the text of the new agreement is an improvement. But Mexico must pass legislation to enforce the labor and environmental standards to which it committed. And, mechanisms must be established to ensure provisions are aggressively implemented, monitored and enforced.

“Mexico inaugurates a new president, and new political leaders control their Congress. Mexico has made commitments

to its people. We have every reason to believe the new political leadership will faithfully adopt strong provisions to implement its constitutional commitments.”

Auto Workers President Gary Jones also cited GM’s closures as a reason the new NAFTA falls short, though he said UAW “is committed to working” with Trump and Congress to fix its failings. At the UAW convention in Detroit earlier this year, dissident delegates argued for scrapping the current NAFTA with no replacement at all, citing the present pact’s cost to auto industry jobs.

“When we look at the new NAFTA through the eyes of workers in Lordstown, Detroit-Hamtramck, Warren, Brownstown, and Maryland” – the plants GM is closing – “Do you see a better future? It is hard to see how, as the reality of the new measure failed to stop the flow of work from the U.S. to Mexico in search of cheap labor.”

“Workers in Mexico are paid so little because they lack basic rights. Some 6,000 workers at PKC – a wire harness maker – were brutally attacked for just trying to exercise their rights to join an independent union. This

“The NAFTA 2.0 text ... will not stop NAFTA’s ongoing job outsourcing or downward pressure on wages in Mexico and the United States, said Global Trade Watch and LCLAA. “They called the new NAFTA “no surprise” as a successor to “the corporate-rigged trade-pact model that NAFTA hatched in the early 1990s.”

points out, once again, that Mexico’s labor laws are broken and demonstrates why it is so important to have an agreement that gives Mexican workers a voice on the job and better living standards to stop a wage race to the bottom.”

Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement – the AFL-CIO constituency group for Latino and Latina union members – issued a joint analysis of the current NAFTA’s impact on Latino and Latina workers in the United

States and Mexico. It was devastating, and those workers were disproportionately hurt, the report said.

In two examples, U.S. textile firms exported 123,000 jobs to Mexico, and electronics firms sent 138,000. Mexican real wages declined, the value of its minimum wage crashed, and Mexican auto workers now earn only one-ninth of the basic pay of their U.S. counterparts, the report said. Before NAFTA, the pro-U.S. ratio was 3-to-1.

“The NAFTA 2.0 text... will not stop NAFTA’s ongoing job outsourcing or downward pressure on wages in Mexico and the United States,” said Global Trade Watch and LCLAA. They called the new NAFTA “no surprise” as a successor to “the corporate-rigged trade-pact model that NAFTA hatched in the early 1990s.”

“However, if the pact’s labor standards can be made subject to swift and certain enforcement – and other key improvements are made – then the final package expected to head to Congress in 2019 could stop some of NAFTA’s continuing, serious damage to people across North America,” the two concluded.

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