

JOBS

Close to 100 layoffs at Owens-Brockway glass

A new factory in Mexico, and a decline in local bottle orders, are factors in idling a furnace.

Ohio-based Owens-Brockway is laying off 93 union members at its Northeast Portland glass plant starting Dec. 30. Six of them are members of United Steelworkers (USW)

Local 330; the other 87 are in Local 112M in the GMP Council of United Steelworkers. [GMP stands for Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers, which merged with USW in 2016.]

Located at 9710 N.E. Glass Plant Road just west of I-205 and North of Killingsworth, the Owens-Brockway plant is

very distinctive looking, with a roof shaped like the head of a wrench. That's common with glass plants, for ventilation.

The plant makes bottles for beer and wine, but with orders down, the company is indefinitely idling one of its furnaces.

Because the company has opened a new facility in Mexico, trade is considered a fac-

tor in the layoff, and an application for benefits under the Trade Act program is pending. The federally funded program helps workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign competition, with extended unemployment benefits, training funds, a wage subsidy for older workers, and other benefits.



Democrats—and Herrera-Beutler—vote to cut drug prices

House Democrats want to lower drug prices. House Republicans do not. That's about the only possible takeaway from a Dec. 12 vote on House Resolution 3, entitled the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, which passed 230-192. To be fair, out of 193 Republicans, two of them did join all 228 House Democrats in voting for the bill, and one of those was Southwest Washington Republican Congresswoman Jamie Herrera-Beutler.

The bill allows Medicare to negotiate with drug companies to get lower prices on insulin and single-source brand-name drugs that don't have generic versions (Incredibly, current law prohibits Medicare from using its bargaining power to get a good deal on the pharmaceuticals it pays for). The bill also caps out-of-pocket drug expenses for Medicare beneficiaries at \$2,000 a year and eliminates beneficiary cost-sharing above that. And it creates an international pricing index and prohibit companies from charging over 20% more for the same drug in the United States than abroad.

The bill now goes to the U.S. Senate, which a Republican majority currently controls. When he was running for president in 2016, Donald Trump said he supported letting Medicare negotiate for lower drug prices. But the White House in a Dec. 10 statement said the bill would reduce drug companies' incentive to bring new drugs to market, and pledged that Trump would veto it if it passes the Senate.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said he will block it.

HOW YOUR REP VOTED

FOR: Earl Blumenauer, Suzanne Bonamici, Peter DeFazio, Kurt Schrader, Jamie Herrera-Beutler
AGAINST: Greg Walden



Seated from left to right: 2nd Vice President Ed Barnes, Executive Secretary-Treasurer Bob Tackett, and President Jeff Anderson; standing from left to right: Will Lukens, Tracey Powers, Darren Hamann, Mike Bridges, Scott Zadow, Jeff Cuellar, 1st Vice President Everice Moro, Willy Myers, Jaimie Rodriguez, Ellen Ino, Lucy Carrier, and Joe Esmond. Not pictured: Dave Tully, Rose Etta Venetucci, and Mike Pucik.

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 HOLIDAYS**
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NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

