



# FOREMEN'S UNION

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Bulletin

February 2014

## Stop Work Membership Meeting Thursday, February 6, 2014 7 pm at the Cruise Terminal S. P. 93

**Executive Board Meeting:** Our next meeting will be Tuesday, February 19, 2014 at 11:30 am

**February Holidays:** Wednesday, February 12, 2014 Lincoln's Birthday is a Normal work day that will be paid at the overtime rate of pay for anyone who works. Monday, February 17, 2014 Washington's Birthday is a paid holiday and any work that is performed on that day shall be paid at the overtime rate of pay.

**Nominations for office:** Nomination Forms are available in the business office immediately following the January meeting and shall remain available until thirty-six (36) hours following the *March Membership Meeting*. Elections shall be held for all officers and Committees on **Friday, March 14th**. To apply for an elective position, you must have been a member of Local 94 and in good standing for the previous 12 months and any fines and/or assessments owed must be paid prior to close of nominations or you shall be removed from the ballot. Any Candidate who wishes to have an observer on their behalf at the polling location and or for the counting of the ballots may do so by submitting a request in writing. This request listing the name of the observer and for which candidate they will be observing for must be received by the Secretary Treasurer no later than 24 hours prior to the polls opening (**6 am Thursday, March 13, 2014**).

**Voting:** Our General Election will take place **Friday March 14, 2014** at Local 63 between the hours of **6 AM** and **7 PM**. Members that meet the criteria of Article VI of the Foremen's Union Local 94 Constitution and By-Laws Section 1. **Absentee Ballot** "Sick and injured members, and those members away who wish to vote in an election, can do so by applying to the Secretary-Treasurer for an absentee ballot" This must be done by **12 noon** on **Friday, March 7, 2014** and returned by **Friday, March 14, 2014** no later than **3 PM**, (the instructions will be included). If a Run – Off Election is needed your Absentee request must be made by **12 noon** on **Friday, March 14, 2014** and returned by **Friday, March 21, 2014** no later than **3 PM**. The Run – Off Election if needed will take place on **Friday, March 21, 2014** between the hours of **6 AM** and **7 PM** at Local 63. General Rule #1 "All active members are required to vote at all elections, regular or special, or be fined \$50 for failure to do so, except sick or injured members, or members on vacation and vacation is on file with the Secretary-Treasurer".

**Dues for 2013:** The amount paid for Union Dues and Assessments in 2013 was **\$3,850.00**

**Vacation Checks:** Vacation check notices were sent out **January 10<sup>th</sup>**. If you have a claim or shortage, please notify the office immediately so that we may file the proper paperwork. The distribution of the Vacation checks will be **February 7<sup>th</sup>** 2014. Part or all of your vacation check may be contributed to your 401 (k). Call Fidelity at 1-800-761-4598

**PPE's:** Foremen must set an exemplary standard by wearing all of the required PPE's.

**Welfare Claims:** If you're having any problems at all with your medical bills, claims, and EOB's please contact the office immediately so that we may assist you before it becomes too late and your bills are sent to collections.

**News Article regarding Single Payer Healthcare:** There will be more information to follow in future bulletins.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has been the law of the land since 2010. Although its key Medicaid expansion provision has been significantly weakened by the 2012 Supreme Court decision and it remains a target for attack and disruption by the right wing, it is clearly here to stay. The ACA is a very complex piece of legislation with a number of moving parts. While some minor provisions are already in effect, most of the major ones are scheduled to come on line beginning on January 1, 2014. These include:

- The expansion of Medicaid coverage to anyone earning up to 138% of the federal poverty level (fpl) in states that approve it; currently 29 are moving towards Medicaid expansion and 15 have definitely opted out.
- The implementation of the individual mandate to purchase insurance if you are not covered through a public or employer plan. (Because of difficulties with the online enrollment process, the deadline for individual enrollment has been extended to March 31, 2014; the requirement that employers provide affordable health insurance or pay a fine was deferred to 2015.)



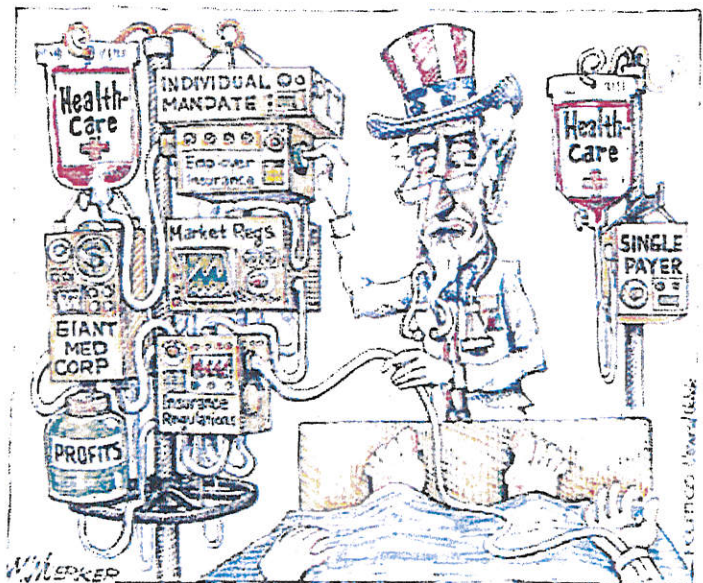


- The establishment of state or federally run healthcare exchanges where individuals and small employers can purchase private insurance.
- The initiation of subsidies for the purchase of private insurance for individuals and families up to 400% fpl who do not have adequate coverage from employer or government sources. (Because of the Supreme Court decision, persons earning less than 138% fpl in states that have opted to deny their residents access to expanded Medicaid coverage are *not* eligible for subsidized benefits.)

For many years now, healthcare benefits have been among the most contentious bargaining issues and the biggest cause of strikes, lockouts and concession bargaining. Because the ACA is so complex and its implementation is spread over years, its impact on collective bargaining is still unclear (the UC Berkeley Labor Center has a good overview [here](#)). The situation is complicated by the fact that employers have used the ACA as pretext for benefit cuts and demands for concessions. As always, it is a good idea to question and verify any claims from employers that proposed changes in negotiated benefits are required by the ACA.

While there is much that is still uncertain, unions have begun to grapple with the complex, and often unanticipated, impact of the ACA on collective bargaining and the hard-won healthcare benefits of union members. At the 2013 AFL-CIO Convention, there was a vigorous debate about the need to change the ACA to protect working families and allow union-sponsored Multi-Employer Plans to survive and continue to offer quality benefits at competitive prices. All agreed that the only effective long-term solution is a single-payer, Medicare for All national healthcare system. Convention Resolution 54 summarizes many of these concerns.

Some unions have called for the repeal of Obamacare and a return to the status quo before its passage. We in the Labor Campaign believe that such a call would be a disaster for the labor movement. It would undermine the unity of the labor movement, divorce us from key allies and demoralize us about the very possibility of healthcare reform. Rather, we believe that this is a moment to move forward to healthcare justice by acknowledging the weaknesses in the ACA while defending its gains and moving to establish a single-payer Medicare for All system that would make healthcare a right for everyone in America.



One thing is certain, however: because the ACA does nothing to take healthcare off the bargaining table, the long-term trends to shift costs, cut benefits and move towards a “defined contribution” healthcare approach will continue. In fact, because it relies on employment-based coverage to provide the lion’s share of healthcare insurance while, perversely, undermining key aspects of that coverage, we have concluded that the ACA will place new stresses and pressures on collective bargaining.

The Labor Campaign for Single Payer believes that contract negotiations are an important teaching and mobilizing moment around the need to move forward to a publicly funded national healthcare system that treats healthcare as a basic human right rather than an incidental benefit of employment. At the same time, we recognize that unions must continue to fight for their members’ immediate concerns and we stand in solidarity with all workers who fight to preserve and expand their hard-won healthcare benefits as a survival strategy under the current dysfunctional for-profit healthcare system.

*"Often people that criticize your life are usually the same people that don't know the price you paid to get to where you are today"*

In Solidarity:

Daniel G. Miranda  
President

Edward Alexander  
Vice President

Mike Trudeau  
Secretary – Treasurer

