



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers  
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Union Herald Article from the desk of:

## **Neil Kamrowski, President IAMAW Local Lodge 1030**

### **Allow me to introduce myself:**

As most of you have read in past couple months' articles I will be taking on the role of Directing Business Representative for District Lodge 66 as of July 1. This is my first time writing for the Union Herald, so let me give you a little background on where I came from.

I have to start by giving due credit to my father, Ronald Kamrowski. My father Ron, as long as I can remember was involved in the political process, and Unionism. As I grew up in this household, I was shown how important collective bargaining was, and is today. I saw the kind of dedication, and hours it took for Ron to be involved and do what it took to make everyone's lives better that he worked with, and our lives as a family. While our methods may differ from each other in how we approach different issues, I am thankful that he has shown me the importance of stepping up, and doing what needs to be done to help.

When I started at Peerless Chain, I took the initiative, and after some time, I got involved myself in the IAMAW. Since that time, I have done what I could to make people's lives better to the best of my ability. There have been some rough times in that time, and there have been some good times. I am grateful for my fellow members and their dedication to collective bargaining. Without them, and the help of IAMAW District Lodge 66, things would have been much more difficult. The fact that they are all there working towards a common goal is what collective bargaining is all about.

Moving forward to my new role as DBR, I look forward to working with our members, and the Companies they work for. I want to thank Marty Gaul for his service to the community, and for his service and dedication to the IAMAW. Because of his actions, and that of our District Lodge Delegates, I am entering this position with a great amount of training, and knowledge to serve our members, and community. The shoes of Marty, and those that came before him, are large ones to fill, but I am confident that with the knowledge and training that have been provided to me, I will be able to effectively continue where those before me have left off.

## **Legislative Conference:**

I had an opportunity to attend the 2015 IAMAW Legislative conference held in Washington DC. Over all, it was a good conference. It was good to be able to talk to a few of our representatives, or their staffers in their DC offices. I would encourage any of you reading this to set up appointments with your Senate, and House representatives here at home when they return to discuss working family issues with them. A couple issues that impact our jobs are Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), and The Excise tax.

## **Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), and TPA (also known as Fast Track):**

As I type this, the senate is already debating what's known as Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), also known as Fast Track. If passed in both the senate, and House, this "Fast Track" would give the President authority to negotiate any trade agreements. In this bill, congress surrenders its constitutional responsibility over trade, and allows the executive branch to unilaterally select trade partners, negotiate terms, and sign deals all before congress votes. Any trade bill brought before congress is up for very limited debate with limited amount of time to even see the terms of the agreement. Congress would not be able to amend any such deals, and would limit their powers only to an up or down vote. Trans Pacific Partnership is the trade "deal" that is currently the topic of debate as to whether or not to allow TPA. Since 2010, negotiations between the United States and a number of Pacific Rim nations, including Vietnam, Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Brunei, Chile, Canada, Mexico and Japan have all been engaged in extensive closed door negotiations to sign a Trans-Pacific Partnership Free Trade Agreement.

This trade agreement has been negotiated mostly in secret. Our own congress can only see parts of it at a time, in a room where they aren't allowed to bring any recording device, no cameras, no pen and paper. They have to rely on their memory alone to try to decipher what the terms of this lengthy agreement are, and are only allowed a limited time to view the agreement. We as a public aren't allowed to see this "deal". If this deal is as great as some in congress, and the executive branch would want us to believe, why so secretive?

Based on press reports, TPP as currently being negotiated could cost US workers millions of jobs. We already saw what other trade agreements have done to this country, and its middle class. NAFTA was a failure. Over the last two decades, the US global trade deficit in goods has skyrocketed from \$70 billion in 1993 to an unacceptable \$737 billion in 2014. Over that period, the US has shed more than 6 million manufacturing jobs. Most of those jobs were lost to offshoring, or competition to manufactures in countries where child labor is acceptable, where there is no OSHA to protect workers in safety, where there is no EPA to protect from factories using chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Some are in countries where the right to organize is against the law. These people can't even stand together and fight for a living wage, or better safety conditions. A completed TPP agreement could allow new countries to join, or "dock on" at any time. This aspect could allow any country in the world to join the agreement at a later date, which could include China, or North Korea. It is not clear yet whether the agreement will ensure that an up or down vote in Congress will take place for a new entrant.

Urge your Congressional Representatives to vote no to TPA, or "Fast Track"

## **40% Excise Tax (H.R. 2050):**

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Obama Care) has been a controversial law for a lot of people. One of the biggest concerns of the IAM is the 40% excise tax that is scheduled to be imposed in 2018 on all employer-provided health care plans that exceed certain coverage costs. Under the current ACA law, health care plans that exceed coverage costs laid out in the bill, they will be assessed a 40% excise tax. If insurance plans stayed the same cost, this might not be as large of an issue as it is, however, as most of us know, the costs of premiums are on a steady rise. According to the law that brings the excise tax into play, there are safeties in place to account for this. However, the rate that the “ceiling” goes up to before a plan is subject to the tax doesn’t go up at the same rate most plans have historically gone up. Therefore, a plan that may not have triggered that tax this year may trigger it next year.

The result of this is employers lowering the value of their health plans to avoid paying the 40% tax. It is a myth to believe that employers will pass that money back to workers. There is currently a bill in the house that addresses this issue, and would **repeal** this unnecessary tax. The bill is H.R. 2050. Urge your representative to endorse this bill.

### **Contact your Congress!!!**

I urge you all to get involved in these processes and contact your congress people. You can call, email, or better yet, set up an appointment to meet with them either in DC, or here at home when they are here. Remember, they work for you. To contact your Senatorial Representatives, go to [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov), and click Senators, then you can narrow it down to your state. Follow the links to contact them, or set up an appointment. To contact your House of Representative legislator, go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). On the top of the web page, there is a box that has a place to enter your Zip code. Enter your zip code, and click on your Representative’s name. This will lead you to their individual page where you can follow links to contact them, or set up an appointment.

### **Another note:**

Also, as we are gearing up for Independence day, remember to buy goods made in the USA wherever possible. While this can be difficult to find at times, remember, you are keeping a job here by doing so. For lists of goods made in the USA, go to [www.madeinusa.org](http://www.madeinusa.org).