



Labour Day 2019: Stand With Steelworkers!

Labour Day is not only a time to enjoy the last long weekend with family and friends, it's also an important opportunity to reflect upon the achievements of union members to build a country where our hard work is respected and valued. From weekends to pensions, health and safety and fair wages, everything we rightfully expect today was once just a dream. We must never forget that these basic rights, including the right to form a union and collectively bargain, weren't just given to us. People fought for them, people bled for them, and sometimes, people even died for them. It's our job to carry forward the vision and legacy of the labour movement for the next generation of workers.

The fight for fairness and respect isn't over. It's not something for the history books. It continues today – and the United Steelworkers are leading that fight.

Right now, on Vancouver Island in British Columbia, over 2600 members of USW Local 1-1937 employed by Western Forest Products(WFP) are on strike to defend their pensions, seniority rights and long-term disability from being cut and rolled back by the company.

According to WFP's 2017 and 2018 financial reports, the company made over \$1 billion in sales and made a net profit of \$74.4 million and \$69.2 million respectively. In addition, the salaries of the CEO and Vice-President have steadily increased from \$1.5 million in 2015 to \$2 million in 2017 for the CEO, and from \$500,000 in 2015 to \$1.2 million in 2017 for the Vice-President.

Despite this reality, WFP has decided to attack its own workers with attempts to introduce a two-tier pay system for new employees, elimination of the current pension plan and demands to roll back a number of other clauses of the collective agreement that were bargained and agreed to over decades.

Since July 1, these Steelworkers have bravely stood up and fought back. They are fighting for a fair collective agreement that ensures workers are treated with respect, share in the success of the company and ensure that benefits that have been successfully achieved in previous bargaining are protected.

When workers stand up and fight, they are fighting for all of us. They're fighting to honour our past, they're fighting to defend our present, and they are fighting to advance our future.

This labour day, we all stand with the members of United Steelworkers Local 1-1937.

**Stephen Hunt, Director
United Steelworkers District 3**

**Brian Butler, President
United Steelworkers Local 1-1937**