



Leo W. Gerard
International President

December 8, 2014

VIA FAX

U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable John Boehner
1011 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

United States Senate
The Honorable Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

United States Senate
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the 1.2 million active and retired members of the United Steelworkers Union (USW), I urge you to oppose last minute legislation added to year-end spending legislation which will dramatically reform the multi-employer pension system and cut benefits to existing retirees. The lack of transparency and the inability to provide significant input into legislation which impacts close to 250,000 USW members and retirees in multi-employer pension plans is the wrong approach to former workers who deferred decades of wages into this retirement option.

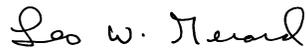
The multi-employer pension system does need assistance to create long term stabilization and we applaud the efforts to craft a solution. However, the issue is a long term one. Many plans which are facing financial burdens have 10 years or more to find methods to fund the liabilities owed to participants. The proposal which from our understanding, dramatically reduces benefits to retirees in pay status is an extraordinary change to long standing ERISA "anti-cutback" rules and deserves intense scrutiny before being considered as a viable solution. Every effort should be made to find solutions that do not force retirees in pay status to bear the brunt of massive cuts when many employers who withdrew from these pension plans paid pennies on the dollar to get out.

Retirement Security for Americans is an issue that is intensifying in importance for our nation. The average working household has virtually no

retirement savings. When all households are included— not just households with retirement accounts —the median retirement account balance is \$3,000 for all working-age households and \$12,000 for near-retirement households. The failure of individual savings accounts to adequately prepare working Americans for retirement highlights the importance of well-run defined benefit plans, including multi-employer pension plans.

Belonging to a union, and participating in a defined benefit pension plan like a multi-employer pension is the best way to reverse the growing retirement security crisis. That is why USW opposes this last-minute, backroom deal that did not have adequate stakeholder engagement, will potentially force massive benefit cuts to retirees, and could undermine the full faith and promise of the entire pension system. If you have concerns, please contact the USW legislative office at (202) 778-4384.

Sincerely,



Leo W. Gerard
International President

cc: U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Senate

LWG/cdk