

April 2, 2010

UAW Constitutional Convention

There's a gaping hole in the UAW Constitution: Contract Ratification.

The UAW Constitution specifies strict guidelines for elections, but leaves the procedure for ratification wide open to manipulation.

—Who counts the votes? Should the bargaining committee tally the votes for a contract that it negotiated?

—Where should the voting occur? Should members vote in the plant under the watchful eye of supervisors?

—Who monitors the process? Should challengers be permitted to monitor the process as in UAW elections?

—If the Constitution has no guidelines, how can an improper ratification be appealed? Should the Constitution provide clear guidelines to guarantee a credible, verifiable ratification? Or does the membership prefer to wonder how such a lousy contract ever passed?

For years the UAW Concession Caucus which controls the union bureaucracy said that distributing an entire tentative agreement to the affected membership would be too costly and time consuming. SOS has proved them wrong. The internet makes it simple, easy, and inexpensive to make the full contract available to all the members.

Do members prefer to be kept in the dark about actual contract language? Or would they prefer to have a Constitution that stipulated that the full contract must be made available on the internet? Do members want to make a decision based on full knowledge? Or do members prefer to rely on highlights and hearsay from bargainers?

The Concession Caucus typically demands that members ratify a contract immediately following an information meeting during which the highlights of the contract are reviewed. Throughout negotiations members are kept in the dark. After negotiations are completed, members are pressured to vote before they can reasonably absorb and evaluate the ramifications.

Do members prefer to rush the ratification or would they prefer that the Constitution stipulate that members have unrestricted access to the whole contract and ten days to study, debate, and evaluate its merits before voting?

Finally, should information meetings be held in the plant on company time? Or should the union strive to appear independent of the company?

Proposed Amendments to the UAW Constitution must be submitted at the April membership meetings. See attachment for examples of amendments.

1 member 1 vote

Amendments Articles 10 and 14

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-1member1vote.pdf>

Appointees

Amendment Article 38

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-Appointees.pdf>

Full Contract Internet

Resolution for Contract Ratification Process

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-FullContractInternet.pdf>

Local - National

Amendment Article 19 Section 6

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-LocalNational.pdf>

Mid Contract Changes

Resolution on Article 19 Section 4

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-MidContractChanges.pdf>

Ratification Fraud

Amendment to Article 19 Section 3

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-RatificationFraud.pdf>

Single Payer

Resolution on National Health Care

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-SinglePayer.pdf>

Whipsawing

Resolution on Article 19 Section 6

<http://www.xpdnc.com/files/relatednewsandreports09/UAWamendments-Whipsawing.pdf>