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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

I am not a union member. I was raised in a union household. My mother worked at Kaiser Main in Willow Run, MI, where she was a UAW member. This was back in the days when it was a purely CIO union, before the merger with AFL and the purge of the CIO progressives.

We knew what it meant when management dug in its heels and a strike went on, and on, and on. Fortunately Kaiser was a company that valued labor peace.

We are in a new regime now, with a federal government once again hostile to organized labor. I think we are going to see an effort to break the organized workers at Portland's Victor Shipyard. Their contract is expiring and management is not negotiating a new one. The workers will strike when the contract expires.

Providing unemployment benefits to striking workers will reduce the ability of management to wait out a strike. Organized workers will get better wages and wages for non-union workers will go up in response to that. That is how the labor market works.

As I am writing this I can hear my mother's voice. She died too young, but she lives in my memory, in my heart. Do the right thing!