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MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS UNION

50TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION

RADISSON HOTEL & THE LANSING CENTER

LANSING, MICHIGAN

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2010, 9:00 a.m.

VOLUME I OF II

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1 Lansing, Michigan

2 Wednesday, May 2, 2012 - 9:10

3 (Opening Ceremonies)

4 MR. WEISENBERG: Good morning. I'm Dave
5 Weisenberg, Western Trustee and also a member of Local 421
6 from our host local right here in Lansing. On behalf of the
7 entire MPFFU executive board I'd like to welcome everybody
8 here to the capital city this morning, Lansing. Great place
9 to be and a great place to hold our 50th Biennial
10 Convention. As a reminder, I'd like to ask everybody to
11 please be mindful of today's events. Please turn your cell
12 phones, pagers off or on quiet. And at this time I'd also
13 ask that everybody please rise so we can have Lansing Fire
14 Department Honor Guard Post the Colors.

15 (Post of the Colors)

16 (The National Anthem)

17 MR. WEISENBERG: Let's please give a round of
18 applause to the Lansing Fire Fighters Honor Guard, Terry
19 Ferrell (phonetic) Fife and Drum. And the Grand Ledge High
20 School choir. Thank you.

21 (Audience applause)

22 MR. WEISENBERG: At this time I'd like to
23 introduce our Chaplain Doug Bradshaw from the Lansing Fire
24 Department. Doug has been an instrumental part in helping
25 all of our members as well as outreaching to others. And

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1 he's just done a wonderful job and we welcome him.

2 REVEREND BRADSHAW: Will you all join me in
3 prayer? This morning God, it is our privilege to meet in a
4 place like this, secure and safe, which is a representation
5 of what all the people here represent as they endeavor in
6 this commitment to serve, protect, and to save, if you will,
7 people. All of the people here represent many, many more
8 people. All of them represent commitment, bravery, courage,
9 the things that we treasure at the deepest level of our
10 souls. I ask that you would put a hedge of protection
11 around all of these men, these women, and the people that
12 they represent in this great state. I ask that you would
13 also protect their souls for many of the times the
14 situations that they are called into are very difficult on
15 the heart. They're matters that cause us to look at life in
16 a different way. And many people suffer because of the help
17 that they offer. And I ask that you would bring your help
18 to all these and to the many they represent.

19 Bless this gathering now, give wisdom to all the
20 decisions that are made. And may we just never lose this
21 idea that the things that we have are so precious. And that
22 many are called, and they're called with a deep calling to
23 protect, to save, and to serve. And we are to value them at
24 the highest place. So I say thank you on behalf, God, of
25 many of us who have felt and know the benefits of people who

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1 care for us in our worst moments. And ask that you would
2 put a special blessing upon them. We pray that this
3 gathering would honor you and that this gathering would go
4 forth in the spirit of joy and happiness in the way that
5 this is such a treasure that we have to be able to do the
6 things we do. We pray all these things in Christ's name.
7 Amen.

8 MR. WEISENBERG: Thank you for the invocation,
9 Chaplain. At this time it gives me great privilege and
10 honor to be able to introduce the folks that lead this
11 organization. As all of you know we've seen some
12 unprecedented attacks by legislators. We've seen
13 unprecedented times throughout this state. Our president
14 when he took over probably had no idea that he was going to
15 running into this storm that he did. The fact that he's
16 running for a second term is still boggling my mind, but I'm
17 damn glad that he is. At this time I'd like to introduce
18 everybody. And I'd ask that you please hold your applause
19 until the end so that we can acknowledge them all at once.
20 To my right Mark Docherty, MPFFU President; Terry Chesney,
21 Secretary/Treasurer; Chris Reynolds, who is now doing both
22 1st and 3rd District VP; Shaun Abbey, 2nd District VP; Steve
23 Heim, 4th District VP; Jim Leve, 5th District VP; Dan Dawe,
24 6th District VP. We have Ed Hosmer down there is the
25 Eastern Trustee; Aileen Pettinger is our Northern Trustee;

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1 we have our General Secretary/Treasurer Tommy Miller from
2 the International; our President Emeritus and 8th District
3 Vice-President from the International Paul Hufnagel. We
4 didn't get this far by just these great people that are
5 here. We had a wonderful foundation that built the way, led
6 the way, created this organization to the point that it is.
7 I'd like to acknowledge some of those people right now.
8 With our President Emeriti Danny Delegato, Gary Thomas and
9 Larry McColl. We also need a lot of help coming through
10 this path and we're not afraid to ask for it. And thank God
11 we've got some of the best people working with us. That's
12 our General Counsel Michael O'Hearon and the most hardest
13 working lobbyist in Michigan, Melissa Yutzey. So if you
14 would, please, acknowledge all of them.

15 (Audience applause)

16 MR. WEISENBERG: Along with that we also have some
17 other distinguished gentlemen that have served this union
18 with great pride and honor over the years. We have 6th
19 District, former 6th District Jack Swiatkowski. We have
20 former 4th District Stephen Parsell, former Eastern Trustee
21 and 6th District Vice-President Ed Rigley, and former
22 Northern Trustee Gary Wiens. If you would please also
23 acknowledge them.

24 (Audience applause)

25 MR. WEISENBERG: I've got to take just a half a

1 moment of personal privilege even though I'll probably get
2 kicked later. But you might notice there's a common theme
3 here. I mean, we've got Paul Hufnagel, Gary Thomas, and we
4 have some other people that have come up through the ranks
5 in Lansing. We do pretty good here in Lansing. That
6 tradition has continued with the gentleman that also has
7 just taken over as president of Lansing Fire Fighters.
8 Again, sometimes you have to wonder why would somebody even
9 think about doing that. As General President Schaitberger
10 says, the hardest working people in the union is the local
11 president. This gentleman has stepped right up to that
12 challenge. We know that he'll do a great job. He's served
13 the union well already as a vice-president and now he's
14 taken over as the president. Great pride to introduce Chris
15 Lake, President of the Lansing Fire Fighters Local 421.

16 MR. LAKE: Thank you Dave. President Docherty,
17 Executive Board Members, Brothers, Sisters, guests, thank
18 you. Good morning. I'm Chris Lake, President Lansing Fire
19 Fighters IAFF Local 421. It is my honor on behalf of the
20 men and women of local 421 to welcome you here to the 50th
21 Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire
22 Fighters Union. First, I want to thank all of Local 421's
23 members that have pitched in to make this convention a
24 success. As well as I want to thank Secretary/Treasurer
25 Chesney for all your guidance and tireless work for this to

1 come together and making my job a lot easier.

2 I'm humbled to be standing here before you today
3 to kick off the 50th convention of our great union here in
4 Lansing. In the last several years our profession has seen
5 an all out attack. Not just here in Michigan but
6 nationwide. And with that, we've been beaten, bruised,
7 kicked around. We're made out to be the evil cause of our
8 state's budgetary difficulties. We're made out to receive
9 generous benefits, generous compensation. But we're still
10 standing strong. The leaders we have, the leaders that have
11 come before us, have guided us through tough times. They've
12 made this union what it is today. We can never forget the
13 sacrifices they have made for us. The sacrifices they've
14 made for our families, the trails that they have made for us
15 to follow.

16 Now it is our turn. Our turn to carry that torch
17 for those who are going to come after us. We must stay
18 strong, we must stand together and remain united. United in
19 the fight to keep our profession an honored profession.
20 United in keeping the solidarity that got us here today.
21 Brothers and Sisters it is our turn to carry this great
22 union into the next 50 conventions. Continue to blaze those
23 trails, protect our members, protect our member's families,
24 keep our rights to bargain a fair contract, keep our rights
25 to maintain our benefits, and not allow the attacks that

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1 have taken place -- and I'm sure will continue -- to erode
2 our solidarity, to come between us proud trade unionists and
3 divide us. We must stay strong, we must stay united.

4 Brothers and Sisters, thank you for your sacrifices, thank
5 you for coming together here in Lansing to guide this union
6 into the next 50 conventions. I hope you have a great stay
7 here in Lansing. If you need anything, feel free to ask any
8 of our Local 421 members, we'd be glad to help out. Again,
9 thank you, have a great convention. Enjoy yourselves here
10 in Lansing, stay safe.

11 (Audience applause)

12 MR. LAKE: With that, I'd like to introduce the
13 Mayor City of Lansing, Mayor Virg Bernero.

14 (Audience applause)

15 MR. BERNERO: Good morning. Welcome to Lansing.
16 This won't be a typical welcome to Lansing speech. There's
17 no media here is there? I like to talk just to my friends.
18 It's good to be here, what I consider to be the safest place
19 in Lansing this morning. Not so much because it's a room
20 full of fire fighters but because there's no police officers
21 here. A little levity. Well, there's no guns that we know
22 now of. You know I come from Pontiac, I was born and raised
23 in Pontiac and Waterford. And that's kind of -- I know that
24 might be a sore subject, but that's how I want to start.
25 That really tells us something about the era that we live

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1 in. And obviously my hat goes off to every one of you.
2 Maybe there's some Waterford Fire Fighters, maybe some
3 former Pontiac Fire Fighters. I feel I'm with every one of
4 you. I appreciate all the things that the Chaplain said,
5 your bravery, your courage, all of that is true. And I'm
6 grateful for what you do day in and day out. And I'm very
7 proud of the Lansing Fire Department. It's easy to be proud,
8 as you can see and as you've come to expect when you come to
9 Lansing. The leadership that we have in the IAFF in
10 Lansing. And I personally had the opportunity -- I've seen
11 it up close and personal from Dave, to Tom, to Brian Epling,
12 to Chris today, and his colleague Mark. I'm blessed as a
13 mayor to be able to work with what I consider to be inspired
14 leadership.

15 And this is a time, my friends, for inspired
16 leadership. In good times, if we're honest, in good times,
17 a lot of people could do our jobs. In good times being
18 mayor isn't that tough. Being a union president is a lot
19 easier in good times. We're not blessed with good times, we
20 are blessed, we're privileged to serve in historically
21 difficult times. We are privileged to serve, my friends, in
22 historically difficult times. So we have a choice. We can,
23 and I'm talking about mayors and the union, we can fight
24 each other and beat each other up and blame each other for
25 the situation we're in. Or we can join arms, we can come

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1 together and face the challenges. And I look at it truly in
2 a sense, you know, you heard the saying we're in the same
3 boat. We are in a boat in a storm, and imagine being in a
4 boat in a storm and fighting over what direction you're
5 going to go and who is going to row in what direction.
6 You're doomed. So your only chance for survival in a storm
7 is to lock arms. Is to come to an agreement on what
8 direction and what the plan is to save yourself.

9 We are in that boat in a storm, I believe. We
10 mayors and the union. And Pontiac, I look at Pontiac as an
11 example. And maybe it's a sore subject again. I apologize,
12 I don't mean to offend anybody. But coming from there, my
13 heart is with Pontiac. I've talked to some of those guys,
14 certainly talked to the Waterford people. We are in a
15 position of change or die. And there's a lot of things I'd
16 like to change at the federal level and at the state level,
17 but as a mayor I can't do that. I was a legislator but I'm
18 a mayor now. And there's a lot of things swirling above our
19 heads that I'd like to fix. But I can't. Now it doesn't
20 mean I've giving up on those things, but those things are
21 going to take longer. Right now I have to lead today, I
22 have a budget deficit today.

23 And by the way, just so you're the first to know,
24 Chris, I have won this year. I haven't told the clowncil
25 yet. Oh, did I slip, I meant the council. I haven't told

1 them yet -- there's no media right? So we have a deficit
2 this year, we just found out, a little over a million
3 dollars in this year's budget that will have to be closed.
4 The fourth quarter projections weren't -- the income tax is
5 down, way down. We have a recession, maybe a depression.
6 They say it's a recession when your neighbor is unemployed,
7 it's a depression when you're unemployed. For a lot of
8 people, it's a depression. And it's not necessarily getting
9 better quick. So we'll have to close that deficit this
10 year. I can't have an unbalanced budget, it's illegal. So
11 we're in it together. And so that's why I'm telling Chris
12 first and we'll tell the council eventually.

13 But we have to solve this, we have to settle this
14 together. The urgent problems we have have to be done now.
15 And I encourage us to work together. We have a joint chief,
16 maybe you know. My chief is here Randy Talifarro and Trent
17 Atkins my deputy chief. He's chief of Lansing and East
18 Lansing. He's confused. He can't figure out which. He's
19 got one patch over here and one patch over there. No.
20 We're fortunate to have a visionary here. But that's a sign
21 of the times; right? Things are changing. And I've been
22 very fortunate to work with a union and union leaders who
23 are willing to do things differently. We want to keep boots
24 on the ground. We may have to do things differently. We
25 have to consider things we never would consider before. We

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1 never would have considered -- you know, we were Lansing
2 Fire Department and Lansing Police Department, now we have
3 to look at can we merge. I'd rather merge if we're going to
4 merge -- I'll use the M word -- when we have the resources
5 and the capability to be creative and to not have to throw
6 people out, while we still have some strength.

7 Let's say, what should the structure look like.
8 So we're studying regional fire, not because we want to lose
9 fire fighters but because we want to save fire fighters. We
10 have to do that. Now Chris mentioned battles and fights and
11 I agree, at the state level we're getting screwed. We're
12 not being helped. We're not helped. They've already taken
13 revenue sharing almost every year until last year, every
14 year cut, cut, cut. And now it's the PPT. And I'll leave
15 that to Melissa and others to talk about. But all of that
16 rolls down hill on us and we have to balance the budget
17 today.

18 So I can't be completely upbeat. With want to be
19 honest about the challenges we face. But I think we have
20 inspired leadership. And I think if we work together we
21 will save what needs to be saved. We have to be willing to
22 change, we have to be willing -- I know it's sacrifice and
23 it's joint sacrifice. We passed a millage in Lansing. We
24 worked hard once, we failed. And then the second time we
25 succeeded. Unfortunately we had to lose, we laid off 11

1 fire fighters, 36 police officers, the toughest thing I ever
2 had to do. There's a reason that 36 police officers got
3 laid off and only 11 fire fighters and that's because the
4 fire union wanted to work with us. They understood we had
5 no money, the millage had failed. And they worked with us
6 to save their Brothers and Sisters. And we're still working
7 to bring them back. And hopefully we get that SAFER Grant.

8 But the fire union led the millage. The members
9 of the fire union led in our millage drive that succeeded as
10 well and so we got four mils passed. That's a temporary
11 fix. Of course if the state keeps cutting, undercutting --
12 you know, we're getting more money in at the top. But if
13 they're taking out of the bottom with the PPT then we're
14 going to be in the same boat. So we do have to continue to
15 fight at the state level.

16 But my argument is, fight at the state level,
17 fight at the federal level. At the local level, work with
18 your leadership, work with them. You're in the same boat,
19 we're in the same boat together. We may have to change some
20 arrangements, we may have to consider cooperative
21 arrangements that we never had before. I'm sure you're
22 doing that. So I just do want to put in a word when I talk
23 about leadership, I think about Brian Epling who was
24 president with Chris, Chris was his vice-president. And now
25 Chris. We can fight each other or we can work with each

1 other.

2 And they were relentless, Brian and Chris were
3 relentless. I gave them my cell phone number, I said I had
4 an open door, and did they ever use it. And that's what
5 it's about. There were times when I was busy I had other
6 things. They were there. They were there. There were
7 times when they were mad at me but they were there. They
8 kept talking to me. They weren't made at me so they said
9 screw him. They kept on it. They just stayed with it. And
10 there were times when I was mad at them. But we kept
11 talking. And you know what? We built a bond of trust and
12 even friendship. And what's wrong with that? Can the mayor
13 be friends with the union president? Why not. And so we
14 kept talking through that. And I encourage you to do that
15 if you haven't. I'm sure many of you have.

16 But build that relationship with your local
17 leadership. Because you can fight each other over reduced
18 budgets, you can argue over what you have, or work together.
19 And I think you're going to get more by working together.
20 So the words I use are collaboration, cooperation, even
21 consolidation, and then yes the M word, merge. These are
22 things that I think we're forced to look at. We may not
23 want to, but because of what's happening, we're going to
24 continue to fight those battles at the federal and state to
25 get more dollars. But at the same time, the immediacy, the

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1 urgency of it, requires us to be creative at the local level
2 to save our members and to protect public safety. You all
3 are on the front lines of doing that.

4 So again, I appreciate what you have done. I
5 appreciate what the IAFF means to me and my community here.
6 You've been at the front lines. And you haven't been at the
7 front lines saying no, no, no. We have that in some union
8 leadership. I have a number of unions to deal with. The
9 fire union leadership in Lansing is the most progressive
10 union leadership there is. And I think you should be proud
11 of it, I'm proud of it. It doesn't mean it's easy, it
12 doesn't mean we're out of the woods. Mark, and I'm looking
13 forward to building that relationship with you. We have
14 tough times. And again, it's all the more reason we have to
15 dig in and work together. And if we're together, we can't
16 be defeated. These are tough times, we're up to the
17 challenge. Thank you for what you do day in and day out. I
18 appreciate very much that you run into burning buildings
19 while most of us run the other direction. Thank you for
20 what you do, God speed to you, and keep up the great work.
21 God bless you.

22 (Audience applause)

23 MR. LAKE: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Next I want to
24 introduce our fire chief. As the Mayor explained, it's a
25 joint fire chief with the City of Lansing and the City of

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1 East Lansing. And the assistant chief of Lansing Trent
2 Atkins, also. But Chief Talifarro.

3 (Audience applause)

4 MR. TALIFARRO: Good morning. I had really just
5 two purposes and then the mayor's comments made me actually
6 add a little bit to what I'd like to say. Because I think
7 there's some things in there that I'd like to comment on.
8 But before I get started, I want to say that Gary Wiens is
9 responsible for everything that I know. I worked a lot of
10 years, we called him Wieno, so if there's anything wrong
11 with what I say it's all Wiens' fault. There's some great
12 nicknames in the fire department. Wieno, I worked with a
13 fluffy, a love muscle, a Yodda, a Moose, some great
14 nicknames. But really in all seriousness, Gary was -- we
15 worked a lot of years at station three in Flint. And solved
16 a lot of problems at the dining room table and created a lot
17 of problems at the dining room table. He was a great
18 resource and a great person. So I really just wanted start
19 by saying thank you. And I think -- I said I had two
20 primary purposes. But first was to truly say thank you to
21 the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union. And I mean
22 that in all sincerity.

23 I know that you are, in large part, responsible
24 for the life that I've had, the life that my family has been
25 able to enjoy. The health improvements that I've seen over

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1 the years with regard to bunker pants, and addressing diesel
2 fuel, scab, and all these things that have come along that
3 have been led and pushed forward because of your efforts and
4 all of the things that you've done.

5 And there are times that I've disagreed with the
6 union, there's times I still disagree with the union with
7 regard to how we solve a problem. But there's never any
8 disagreement about the fact that we all want what's best for
9 the fire department and the fire service. I love the fire
10 service, I've been an advocate for the fire service,
11 especially professional fire fighters. And I just am so
12 appreciative of what you do on a daily basis. I started
13 with Wieno because nearly 28 years ago, at least 28 years
14 ago Wieno was working in the union when I started. So I
15 know he's been at it that long and longer. He was already
16 in the role when I became a rookie fire fighter. So I
17 appreciate the work and I just ask you to keep pushing
18 forward in that regard.

19 My second primary purpose was to welcome you to
20 Lansing and the greater Lansing region. We want you to
21 enjoy yourself. And the one comment I'm going to make now I
22 perhaps may be a day late, what happens in Lansing may not
23 stay in Lansing. So we ask you to enjoy yourself, but be
24 careful, be safe. And I understand if you seek out any of
25 the Lansing fire, they're pretty much all choir boys and

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1 choir girls so they'll keep you safe and out of trouble.

2 I would really like to acknowledge the unions
3 staff that I have worked with throughout the years and that
4 I'm currently working with. And I don't know if Trent
5 Farnsworth is here from Flint. I know that when he was
6 elected, we had a long conversation about some of the issues
7 and challenges there. And we continue to have a mutual
8 respect for one another and continue to work with one
9 another. I'd also just like to say thank you to Chris here
10 with the Lansing fire fighters, Moose. And can I have all
11 the -- and before I do that, and also acknowledge Jerry
12 Rodabaugh who is the East Lansing union president. But I
13 guess if I could, could I have all the executive board
14 members from both Lansing and East Lansing stand at this
15 time and perhaps, acknowledge them. I just want to say
16 thank you.

17 (Audience applause)

18 MR. TALIFARRO: Okay. I'm going to be very short.
19 Those were the two things that I originally intended to
20 address. But you know what? The Mayor's comments, and I'm
21 sure that's probably an emerging issue, a lingering issue,
22 not only with the unions, but in the Fire Chief's
23 Association about the mergers, and the push to merge, and
24 consolidate, and all of those things. And you know, I think
25 it's a challenge. I'm just going to say that up front. And

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1 I think that one of the things we tried to do in the Lansing
2 area was get six groups that look a little bit alike
3 together to have a conversation and lead the conversation.
4 We are being pressed to just push and mesh groups together
5 whether they fit or not. And I often say before business
6 leaders that about 70 percent of business mergers fail.

7 You know, you think about Daimler Chrysler, Home
8 Depot and Kmart -- or Builders Square and Kmart, I'm sorry.
9 You have GM EDS, GM Used. Some of these have been
10 monumental failures. And if we had failed like that, our
11 heads would have been on somebody's platter. And what do
12 you do when government fails like business fails, they go
13 bankrupt or go out of business. But what happens to
14 government if it should fail. So we sat down and we said
15 let's get the groups that look the most alike and let's
16 involve our labor groups. Let's get the union leaders to be
17 a part of the conversation. Because if we're going to be
18 under this continued pressure to merge and mesh things
19 together, then maybe we should try to lead the way and talk
20 about when it makes sense and when perhaps it does not make
21 sense.

22 So if there's anything that I would really
23 encourage you as a group to do, along with the Fire Chief's
24 Association who I remain very active with, is to help design
25 a road map and really take on that question. Because I'll

1 tell you, it's not always the best thing to do. I'm not
2 certain yet that it's the best thing to do here, we're still
3 working through and trying to arrive at solutions. But we
4 have labor at the table to have the conversation. And I
5 think that as a fire chief that's been thrust in this
6 position, I can tell you, it would have been a great benefit
7 to have some document, some study, some resource to help
8 navigate this because it's loaded with landmines, it's
9 loaded with difficulties. And I would really encourage the
10 Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union the IAFC, the Fire
11 Chief's Association, MAFC, to really look at that question
12 and try to be active participants in designing some
13 solutions to this problem.

14 Because it's going to be -- it's constantly sought
15 as a solution. And every time I hear a discussion about
16 mergers or consolidations, there's some notion that there
17 are millions of dollars of savings in these solutions. When
18 the reality is that they help to, perhaps, slow the cost
19 increase. And I think that we would all acknowledge that
20 were we designing the fire service of today we would do it
21 differently. If we knew what our communities would grow to
22 look like or contract to look like, we would have done it
23 differently. But now that we're here, we're just trying to
24 manage these problems, forge a new way. And we are working
25 together.

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1 So I would encourage this group to look at this as
2 one of your priorities in the future. It would be very
3 helpful to give us some direction, create a road map, have
4 something that we could turn to and say, here is a good
5 document, here is a good model, here are good solutions.
6 Here are things to look out for, here are things that will
7 benefit us. And so I really -- I'm not here to be a
8 speaker, not to talk on that issue. But I think the Mayor's
9 comments warranted some type of follow-up. And so, I just
10 want to encourage you to go about your work during this
11 week. Remember what I said, what happens in Lansing may not
12 stay in Lansing. We don't want it to beat you back home,
13 but we do want you to have a good time and enjoy yourself.
14 And I want to say thank you and welcome to our community
15 again.

16 (Audience applause)

17 MR. WEISENBERG: Thank you for those comments,
18 Chief. At this time we're going to take a short recess.
19 We'd like everybody back in here right at 10:00 o'clock if
20 we could, and we'll get started with the business of this
21 convention. Thank you very much.

22 (Off the record)

23 MR. WEISENBERG: Brothers and Sisters we're going
24 to get started back into today's business. It gives me
25 great pleasure, I'm very proud to introduce our next

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1 speaker, president of the state organization. As I said
2 before, I was a little bit surprised when he decided to
3 rerun again knowing all the stuff that he's been through in
4 the past two years in his first term. I've heard Mark
5 mention before that when he was talking with past president
6 Paul Hufnagel, Paul assured him, oh, it's just a couple days
7 a week in Lansing, not a big deal. I think he's found that
8 it's turned into quite a bit more than that. Nobody could
9 foresee what was coming. It's one thing to be in a position
10 and have all that stuff hit you and just have to deal with
11 it. But it shows a lot about Mark's character, his
12 integrity, and his dedication to this union knowing what
13 he's been through in the last two years, and that he's
14 willing to run up and run for it again. As a fire fighter
15 we're all trained to run in and take care of hazardous
16 situations, but how do you train for something like this.
17 Again, great pleasure to introduce our State President, Mr.
18 Mark Docherty.

19 (Audience applause)

20 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you. Well, I'd like to
21 welcome all of you to our 50th Biennial Convention. It's
22 certainly going to prove to be a very important convention
23 in the history of our union, and I appreciate everybody for
24 coming. First of all I want to start out by thanking
25 Lansing Fire Fighters for putting together this convention

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1 and helping host it. It does take a lot of work from a
2 local standpoint, and I appreciate the effort you guys took
3 to get this going. I also, as Dave said, this has been a
4 huge commitment for everybody, including myself, and I want
5 to thank my own local, or my members. One of the number one
6 questions I get asked frequently is, "Do you still work?" I
7 say yes, you ask those guys they'd say no because I'm not
8 there that often. And they've had to pick up slack on that.
9 And I appreciate the effort that they all have given me in
10 helping me be available to go to Lansing. A lot of buddy
11 time. A lot of effort on guys at the last minute. Hearings
12 are posted seven hours before the actual hearing and I've
13 got to bust out, guys have stepped up and really helped me
14 out. So I really appreciate you guys and the support I've
15 gotten.

16 I also want to thank some distinguished guests we
17 have here. General Secretary/Treasurer Tom Miller from the
18 IAFF; 8th District Vice-President Paul Hufnagel for coming,
19 taking time out of schedule and being here to support us.
20 They've always been very good supporters of the state
21 association and continue to be. We get a lot of resources
22 which help us out from the IAFF. And thank you for that.
23 Also General President Schaitberger was supposed to be here
24 this morning, he had a conflict, he had to switch to
25 tomorrow. So you will be hearing and seeing so I appreciate

1 them coming.

2 We're also going to have a couple other
3 distinguished guests that come and talk. One is Karla Swift
4 the new President of the Michigan AFL-CIO. These are trying
5 times faced by all of us but definitely but the AFL. She's
6 come on board, she's very good, she's very organized. And
7 it looks like she's going to do an excellent job. So she
8 will be talking tomorrow and will be concentrating on our
9 campaign for Protect Our Jobs. So she'll be here with that.
10 We also have today a speaker at lunch, Senate Majority
11 Leader Randy Richardville will be speaking. We also have
12 Senate Minority Leader Gretchen Whitmer will be coming as
13 some point to address the convention.

14 I'd like to start by recapping the last two years.
15 As you know, they have been difficult. It's kind of been
16 like a military attack. We got blind-sided, we got hit
17 hard, we fought back, we have been fighting back. We have
18 faced attacks last year legislatively, no doubt from all
19 different fronts. Whether it's legislatively against our
20 collective bargaining rights, or the revenues that our
21 communities receive. All of which had devastating effects
22 on us and we're still working through those. We have also
23 seen attacks from somewhere we shouldn't have, we're seeing
24 it from the police officers and PSO attacks. Major, major
25 attacks on our profession, our trade. And the common theme

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1 is all we do is sleep and barbecue, and it's coming from
2 first responders like police officers that we should be
3 standing side by side with. It's appalling to say the
4 least.

5 Because of these revenue sharing cuts we've seen
6 devastating staffing cuts. Some locals have seen cuts that
7 we would never have imagined possible. But they are and
8 they're happening. Public apathy is rampant, trying to get
9 the community to stand up and say this is unacceptable has
10 been a very daunting job. It's something we constantly try
11 to do until things go bad. We've seen attacks on our
12 pensions, we continue to see that. We see massive
13 concessions being asked for just to keep guys on the job.
14 And our guys have stepped up in the majority of the cases to
15 keep our members on the job when possible. I'm proud of
16 that. Millage fights, we see millage fights all across the
17 state and they're almost always successful. We have some
18 that have failed and we've got them later passed. That's
19 due to our dedication. How many cops do you see out there
20 on a police and fire millage helping us? None. We do it.
21 That's something to be proud of. There's a lot of things
22 I'm going to talk about that we need to be proud of.

23 Let's start on the legislative side. Took a lot
24 of attacks, but we won a lot of things also. We fought
25 back, we became a force to be reckoned with last year. Even

1 when we were dealing as a police and fire cooperation, a
2 cooperative effort to go in and talk with the legislators,
3 we did the talking, we controlled the meetings, we
4 controlled the information. The bad thing about cops is
5 they like to sit back on the sidelines and walk that fence
6 and when things go bad, they can bail off and say we're not
7 involved. And when things go good, they can jump on board
8 and claim victory. We don't operate that way. We stand by
9 what we believe in and we fight for it. And that's what we
10 did.

11 As you guys know, we've talked about many times
12 with our Fighting Back campaign, what we used it for, what
13 we did, how we lobbied. And that took this entire room, it
14 took this entire organization to do that. Not one person
15 did it, we all fought back. It took lobbying at the
16 capitol, it took lobbying from our lobbyists, to myself, to
17 you guys, three tiers all have to come together to get
18 attention from these legislators. And it worked. You guys
19 have relationships built with some of these horrible
20 legislators that you would never have thought to even talk
21 to before. But it has worked. Even though they haven't
22 been 100 percent, there's things that you guys aren't even
23 aware of that never came up because of the work you did.
24 It's one of those thresholds that it's hard to gage. Could
25 it have been worse? Hell yeah, it could have been worse.

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1 We see that. We know that legislators now don't want
2 anything to do with us as far as trying to give us another
3 upsetting till at this point. They're trying to get our
4 support back.

5 So some of the fights we've fought, number one
6 fight Public Act 312. To this date in this legislative
7 session, there's been one pro-labor bill, that's this one.
8 We got it passed. Labor, AFL-CIO, they understand that,
9 they give us credit for that. They understand that that was
10 the only bill so far to get through that was actually a pro
11 bill. A bill that achieved something we've been trying for
12 years to get and Paul has fought hard for. Is to get 312
13 protection for fire authorities. We used to always
14 discourage consolidation because we never could guarantee
15 you had the same rights in an authority. How could we go
16 forward and recommend locals to go into an authority knowing
17 they don't have binding arbitration rights. You do now. It
18 was won because of our efforts.

19 We also decreased the time lines to make it less
20 costly for us. A lot more efficient so we can get a ruling
21 and get the issue resolved, the dispute resolved. Right now
22 cities like to drag it out. So that's a good thing for us
23 and we're going to see some changes. There were some tweaks
24 in that that were -- is acceptable to -- the biggest one
25 that was difficult to swallow was the last best offer before

1 hearings. You can thank your brothers in POAM for that,
2 that was their amendment.

3 The 80/20 health care. When that originally came
4 out, it was 80/20. They wanted you to pay 20 percent no
5 matter what healthcare you had. A lot of fight went into
6 that, you guys made a lot of calls, a lot of effort. And it
7 ended up coming out with a hard cap and an opt out, that's
8 huge. Quite a few locals here when I went around to
9 district meetings, their communities did opt out. Hard cap
10 is better than 80/20. So we've got choices now and that was
11 because of the efforts we did.

12 Consolidations. The belief up there from the anti
13 labor folks was to consolidate we have to gut the unions
14 because the unions are the problem. Unions are the reasons
15 why we can't consolidate. They won't agree. So their
16 answer to that was, immediately terminate contracts, impose
17 contracts, talks of losing collective bargaining rights, no
18 bargaining impact. We did a lot of effort on these three
19 bills. On this partnership end, and local government, and
20 cooperation end. We got those bills passed with impact
21 bargaining back in there. And a right to bargain your
22 contract. They wanted you to start over as brand new
23 employees, hire even as brand new employees in the
24 authority. We didn't accept that. And we fought hard and
25 we achieved victory there in stopping that. Is it the best

1 bill ever, no. We have our basic right to bargain back in
2 there, which I think is important and something to be
3 extremely proud of.

4 Workers' Comp, we saw all last fall a fight on
5 this. We have five issues I talked about at the district
6 meetings that affected us. We got four of them back. We
7 were successful in getting four back in, and the fifth one
8 which was how long you get before you can see your own
9 doctor we cut in half, greatly minimized. We will continue
10 to work on that one later reforms.

11 We also -- something you've got to be very proud
12 of is Right to Work. With help of labor, with our efforts,
13 we stopped Right to Work. It was really pushed hard after
14 Christmas and the 1st of the year because they knew that was
15 our last chance. If that side couldn't get it passed, then
16 it wasn't happening. We also stopped a bill, we're still
17 currently working on it but it appears at this point to be
18 stopped is the banning of union release time. We've put a
19 lot of effort into this bill. They want you to never get
20 paid by a city to do any union work. Even if you're
21 representing an employee, or Weingarden, or arbitrations, or
22 grievances, anything, they want you to do it on your own
23 dime. They want the unions to pick it up. That bill at
24 this point although it still may have another hearing, seems
25 to be quite slowed down and probably will not go through.

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1 We also stopped bills that would ban payroll
2 deduction. Now sadly it did get through for the teachers,
3 but we hope to get that back in later sessions. But for us,
4 for all other public employees, it was stopped. That took a
5 lot of effort, so that's another success. Something else we
6 did was we were able to get the fireworks bill passed. So
7 now what used to be illegal fireworks, now can be sold.
8 It's a bill that really didn't have the issue of the
9 fireworks. But what it did is established a revenue stream,
10 a much needed revenue stream for our Bureau of Fire
11 Services. We've always been fighting to get that Bureau
12 funded. And we're proud of the day we got the Bureau
13 because it took and gave credibility to our organization, to
14 the fire service. Now we weren't under the cops and have
15 them running the show. We had our own group with our own
16 professionals running it that represented the fire services
17 at the state level. So that was important that we try to
18 always fight for money. This is a non appropriated revenue
19 stream that we get every year. It's good.

20 But with that comes another battle. Everything
21 always has domino effects. Once we established a revenue
22 stream, guess who wanted it back again? The State Police.
23 A lot of bad timing occurred this last year when we talk
24 about perfect storm. Right at the time we were winning this
25 bill and got this revenue stream established, the current

1 fire marshall decided he found a better opportunity and went
2 on to a better job. That left a vacancy right at the time
3 when we are fighting to keep this Bureau. Well, we had a
4 good couple months that we fought hard to make sure that we
5 retained this. The State Police wanted the fire marshall
6 position back again. We not only did fight it off, we
7 maintained it, and we got in there a fire marshall, Dearborn
8 Fire Chief Rich Miller, who is a professional full-time fire
9 fighter not from the volunteer ranks, on a very good
10 department, full transport, everything. He understands the
11 issues, he will represent us well. And we recommended him
12 for that position. He will also be coming and speaking
13 tomorrow. And we're very proud of the fact he's in that
14 position. We look forward to his representation.

15 Another thing we fought, when we first started
16 last year, we couldn't even get in the Governor's office.
17 It took us three months before we could get an appointment,
18 he did not want to meet with us. But during that time, he
19 was meeting with police, and he had a law enforcement
20 advisory panel. We wanted the same. We kept fighting for
21 that. And we finally got them to agree to create a fire
22 fighter panel to advise the Governor. It's a big move, it's
23 being put in place right now. It's going to be chaired by
24 Fire Marshall Rich Miller. That's our avenue to get in
25 there and explain what we do.

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1 When I have stupid questions asked like why do you
2 go on HAZMAT's? Isn't fire based EMS antiquated? Why do
3 you work 24 hour shifts? These are things that they run off
4 the top of their head. But they know, they come up with all
5 the arguments that we've ever heard. Why can't we use paid
6 on-call? They don't get it. Someone needs to be in there
7 educating them. This is the tool we're putting in place and
8 we fought hard to get. And I hope will educate the
9 Governor. He's got two more years. This is something that
10 even if we get the House back in November, we've got to stay
11 vigilant with. So that was also a success. I credit this
12 to everything we fought back last year.

13 It's hard to sometimes put in focus the fact we do
14 have so many negative things, that positives are coming from
15 it. That these are the positives that we have to be proud
16 of as an organization. We fought back and we were able to
17 achieve that. We have -- every day I have the AFL-CIO and
18 other lobbyists from other unions giving us credit. We
19 carried the weight on many of these bills that affect
20 everybody not just fire fighters. Consolidation bills, UAW,
21 AFSCME, they're all very concerned with these bills because
22 it affects them too. But they let us carry the water on
23 that because they knew that we could get in offices and do
24 things that they couldn't do. Just by virtue of them
25 walking in the door and getting a legislator to shut it

1 down. So we worked with them closely. We had a united
2 effort. And we actually with their help behind the scenes
3 got these things done. And I appreciate their help. But
4 they understand the fact that we were able to do things they
5 couldn't, and we continue to work that route.

6 Because last year was on the defensive, we felt
7 like we were attacked and we were trying to recover from
8 this massive blow. And all these bills coming forward. But
9 now we're going on the aggressive, things are changing.
10 We're not seeing as many bills move against us. That's
11 because they are concerned about their re-election. It's
12 concern because of how strong we've grown in our lobbying
13 efforts. We set the tone right from day one. We had 980
14 fire fighters out of 1,000 police and fire show up here and
15 walk. That was impressive, that still gets talked about to
16 this day. You were professional, you represented well, and
17 that left a lasting impression. That set the tone. Now, we
18 can't do that every month, obviously. But it set the tone
19 right off the bat and they don't forget it, it still sticks
20 in their mind. Not that there were cops here, that there
21 was almost 1,000 fire fighters. It was impressive.

22 Moving to this more aggressive campaign
23 legislatively, you're going to see things like right now
24 we're actually working on a bill that's good for us, Cancer
25 Presumption. We have a chance of getting Cancer Presumption

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1 through. We have a lot of bipartisan support. They
2 probably want to make up for some of the things they did
3 last year or tried to. But I'm going to take advantage of
4 that. We have too many of our members that need this bill.
5 It's a long fought after bill and we're going to do whatever
6 we can at this point to get it back. We're going to go on
7 the offensive and we're going to get it done.

8 We also, as you guys saw with this petition drive,
9 labor has decided we've had enough and this is our time to
10 fight back. We're fighting for a constitutional amendment
11 to secure collective bargaining in our constitution. This
12 will not only secure for future but it goes backwards. It
13 goes backwards and undoes a lot of things that was done last
14 year. So you can imagine the fight we're going to get.
15 We're going to have money coming in from all across the
16 state trying to stop this. Because if we do it here you
17 know all the other states are going to do it too.

18 This is our aggressive way to come back and put
19 them on their heels. Another reason you're not seeing
20 legislation right now, I believe, is because if they come
21 and attack us any further, any further anti-labor bills,
22 it's going to give fuel to the fire for our campaign. It
23 will help us get this constitutional amendment through. So
24 they're going to try to sit back a little bit and try to get
25 people to forget what's happened over the last year. We

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1 won't let them. We're going to continue to fight back. And
2 we're going to get the House back. We cant forget with this
3 constitutional amendment that we also have a very important
4 task that we have to win the House back. It's important to
5 get Democrats back in control.

6 A lot of stuff to do this next year, it's an
7 important year. It's a pivotal convention in our history to
8 determine a path of how we're going to do that. It's going
9 to take a lot of work. The last thing I want you guys to do
10 is to start to back off because you see legislatively they
11 are backing off. We are on the aggressive now, we have to
12 go forward, we have to fight even harder to seal this and
13 win it.

14 The other major attack we talked about was PSO.
15 PSO came up in the 80's and we saw a lot of departments, we
16 lost a lot of locals, a lot of transitions back then to PSO
17 because they were tough times. Back in the 80's there were
18 layoffs like now. I was in grade school so I don't know
19 what that was like. But I did talk to a lot of people who
20 have. And there were a lot of tough times there financially
21 in communities just like now. They went to this model,
22 these models have never proved to save money. We know that.
23 But we see this in Michigan and we only see it in Michigan.
24 Very little is ever seen outside of Michigan throughout the
25 rest of the United States. Very little attacks. And I

1 wonder, because Ohio is right there, Indiana, Illinois, and
2 they just don't see it like we do.

3 The number one reason people cite as PSO works is
4 because it's here. Not because they burn a house to the
5 basement, not because they don't have personal to respond,
6 not because they don't know what they're doing, not because
7 to save money. It's because it's here it must work.
8 Because Kalamazzo, Oak Park, Fraser, because they exist it
9 works. So we had to fight that. We had to come back with
10 facts, we have to show. So we reformed our PSO committee as
11 an ad hoc committee to work on this. They've met monthly
12 over the last year. They worked their butts off to deliver
13 all kinds of resources in this battle.

14 Some of which are we developed press packets.
15 Press packets to be able to send out at a moment's notice to
16 any type of media source with all the facts. I don't know
17 how many times I got called by reporters early on saying
18 Kalamazoo says they save \$3 million why are you opposed to
19 this? We've got to save money, we've got to think out of
20 the box. Bull shit. They don't save \$3 million. In fact,
21 we've got a document thanks to the committee and Chris Love
22 that shows that they actually spent 8 million more than they
23 need to had they had a traditional police and fire
24 department. We didn't have those facts at that time. We
25 have them now. So every time we do a meeting now, I hand

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1 them the facts, I send the whole packet, I email it to them.
2 Here is all the facts. And in some cases it still doesn't
3 matter, but the media is predetermined. But the fact is we
4 can stand there and we can show that we have the facts to
5 prove they're wrong.

6 One such example was right after the Governor
7 delivered his public safety address in February, he was
8 heading out the next day to Kalamazoo to a PSO station to
9 compliment them on their revolutionary thinking of going PSO
10 and how they saved money. We found out about it thanks to
11 Jim Leve and we were able to get it stopped. And the threat
12 was, is I'm going to show up there in front of the media and
13 I'm going to have all my facts. Because the Governor, he
14 cites himself proudly as a numbers man. But yet he's
15 willing to promote PSO when it doesn't prove that the
16 numbers are there. He's got no proof whatsoever. We had
17 the proof, we got it stopped. And we continue to work with
18 his office. We will continue with this Fire Advisory Board
19 to get in there and work with them and promote -- or show
20 the facts and prove why this doesn't work and why it's not
21 the way to go.

22 We did several cost analyses, and we will for your
23 community. We have 30 locals out of approximately 130
24 locals that are facing a PSO battle now of some sort. We've
25 always told you, if you have any talks of it let us know.

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1 It's something you get in early on and get on the ball. You
2 have to have talking points, you have to get them to your
3 legislators or to your city council members. We drafted
4 these talking points, we have manuals, we have all kinds of
5 resources. And we tend to be the leading resource in this
6 area because we've dealt with it in Michigan so much. So
7 even other states look to us for resources for this issue.

8 We've done media roundtables to try to educate
9 editors as to all the facts. We've used our PR firm
10 extensively for the PSO fight. We've recruited anti-PSO
11 supporters trying to find people that work with PSO
12 departments that know it doesn't work and they're willing to
13 stand up and talk about it. We've recruited some good
14 people and we continue to try to find more. Continue to
15 work with the Governor's office, it's a never ending battle
16 to try to educate them as to why this doesn't work. You
17 guys are aware of that MSU is doing a study on PSO, it's a
18 three year study. It's a \$380,000 grant from the Department
19 of Justice to the Criminal Justice Department of MSU to do a
20 study on PSO. Working very hard to make sure that that's
21 not a biased study.

22 The IAFF has helped us greatly on this. They've
23 gone in at the federal level to the Department of Justice
24 and sat down in partnership with the FOP nationally. Sat
25 down to ensure that the Department of Justice knows how

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1 important this study is and that it's to be unbiased.

2 We're still a part of this and we're still working
3 on it. I had people ask me about it, it's a three year
4 study. The participants that are going to be interviewed
5 for this study aren't going to be interviewed until the
6 later end of the study, he's gathering his information right
7 now. But we're going to do whatever we can to make sure
8 that that study has all the facts.

9 We've worked hard on this concept, and Big Rapids
10 guys know very well about this. It's a class being put on
11 by a deputy public safety director in Big Rapids. And it's
12 a class on how to pass the challenge test. It's a half-ass
13 class on fire fighting that they come in and teach these
14 cops just enough to pass the challenge test. And they call
15 that adequate. It's appalling. These police officers skirt
16 the system by getting signed on to a volunteer department as
17 an employee or their city department for a brief period of
18 time just to go through and challenge the test. But you
19 have to be sponsored by a fire department to challenge a
20 test. We're trying to adjust the rules. We've been working
21 with the rules on a training counsel, we're working with the
22 fire marshall's office to try to get this stopped. It's not
23 what it was meant to be, and they're skirting the system.
24 So we've worked really hard to try to stop that class. And
25 last I've been told was the new director of public safety in

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1 Big Rapids says there will be no more classes going forward
2 such as this. Now, they'll pop up somewhere else but we
3 will keep fighting it and we'll keep putting pressure on it.

4 We've also started FOIA-ing a lot of different
5 departments, PSO departments that have had calls that have
6 gone bad. And sadly, it's hard to watch some of these
7 things. The last one was Oak Park had three children die.
8 And it's emotional to watch the video because we have all
9 the dash cam. These guys are arriving on scene within a
10 minute or two, police officers, they're engine wasn't there
11 until I think about seven minutes. Someone had to go get
12 it. But these guys, I've never seen anything like it. They
13 don't even care. And I hate to say that, but that's what
14 was exhibited in the video. If we knew we had three kids
15 trapped, we'd be in that structure within minutes. Took
16 them over nine and a half minutes, it was about four minutes
17 before they finally said, I think we better get dressed.
18 It's appalling to see the difference and have someone say it
19 works is insulting to our trade and profession.

20 We've gone on the aggressive with this also.
21 We've built this stuff up, we're succeeding in a lot of
22 communities, if we get in early, in stopping this PSO.
23 We've had a lot of successes there. Tut we're going on the
24 offensive. I'm going after PSO departments that exist right
25 now and I'm going to try to get them back to a traditional

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1 model. When I can show Kalamazoo can't balance their budget
2 and they're laying off PSO officers, but I can show them
3 they'll save \$8 million to switch back to the traditional
4 model. They currently have fire fighters in their stations
5 every day. They chose once a year to either be on the road
6 as a police officer or in that fire station. They man it
7 just like we do, they work 24 hour shifts for that year.
8 They maintain equipment, they go on runs. They do our job
9 but they're paid 30% more and they're paid as PSOs. Now
10 they're equipped for both jobs and they've got to do
11 continuing education for both jobs. How is this fiscally
12 responsible? We have to show it. And that's what we're
13 trying to get into these communities.

14 I want our communities to bid on taking these
15 services over. I've talked to many of you about this. If
16 you border a PSO town and they're struggling financially,
17 let's put a bid in. Let's go in there and offer to do the
18 service for them. Let's provide ALS transport and full
19 staff fire department and show them the difference of what
20 we can provide. This is how we get on the aggressive and
21 get them off our ass. We're on the right here because we
22 have the facts, we've just got to prove it. We will
23 continue to fight this. One of the issues we had years ago
24 through the 80's, I think once the issues seemed to die
25 away, we kind of disbanded our PSO committees, we kind of

1 moved away from it a little bit. I think this is something
2 that's going to always remain a threat to us and something
3 we always have to stay active on and stay on top of.

4 Something I also tried to do over the last year
5 was we're facing so many battles and we had such an uphill
6 battle with the legislature, we tried to get friends
7 wherever we could. That's why we asked you guys to meet
8 legislators you had never met with. But I also started
9 going to things and speaking at functions that you would
10 never have thought of going to. Some of them like SEMCOG,
11 Citizens Research Counsel, MML stuff. And one of them I was
12 at the Detroit Athletic Club in a room of about 300
13 participants, and they were all businesses, manufacturers.
14 It went very well. I still get letters from some of those
15 people on how they didn't understand. You see the US
16 Chamber of Commerce and the Michigan Manufacturers
17 Association out championing efforts to screw us. A lot of
18 their members don't understand really what they're doing.
19 We have to make it clear. There's a lot of business owners
20 that do support us and believe that adequate police and fire
21 protection is vital to their business, to their survival, to
22 residents coming in, to them having employees feel safe to
23 work there. We have to reach out to people we don't
24 normally feel comfortable with and talk to them about this
25 stuff. That's what we did.

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1 We even went as far as to set up a booth at the
2 MML conference held right in this building. We set a booth
3 up and we championed fire based EMS, we promoted our fire
4 ops program. Which we just had one last week, was again
5 very successful. And I thank the Lansing Local Chris Lake
6 for that and Dave Weisenberg worked on it. They both did
7 the booth here too. And it was a success. We didn't have
8 to pay for it even, they gave it to us for free. Which what
9 I found kind of ironic is they didn't even ask what we were
10 going to talk about. So I don't know if we'll be invited
11 back next year, but it did seem pretty positive an event.
12 We'll continue to do things like that.

13 In closing, I'd like to thank many people that had
14 something to do with this. And I've talked at all the
15 district meetings, but I just can't emphasize how grateful
16 and how important this is by all the extra effort put in by
17 our members and by our elected officials. First of all, as
18 I call people up I'd like you to stand up. I'd like you
19 guys to see our team, I call it our MPFFU team. These are
20 the guys that are in place fighting every day. They've got
21 assignments that they're completing. They're taking time
22 away from their own local, their families to fight for you.
23 And I want to first of all acknowledge all of the VPs,
24 please rise. A million times they go above and beyond. I
25 have to delegate things in this job because I cannot keep up

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1 with it. I personally am not a delegator, I don't like to
2 delegate but when I do -- I've had to, there's just no way
3 around it. These guys take on a huge workload. But they've
4 always met their demands back in your district too. And
5 we've assured that.

6 The trustees, Dave, Aileen and Ed. These guys
7 have certainly taken on more than they ever have. Ever
8 have. And they're required to do audits quarterly. Now
9 they help us out in all different aspects. Dave sits on the
10 Fire Coalition representing us. Aileen sits on the training
11 counsel. These are all jobs that we used to handle
12 ourselves but we can't anymore, it's just too busy, and
13 they've all stepped up. Terry Chesney continues to take a
14 much greater load in the office in all the other functions
15 that I normally could have done also. I'd like to
16 acknowledge Michelle and the other office staff, Mike
17 Marinelli and Laura. I mean, they work very hard behind the
18 scenes to get all this stuff done. I mean, you see what
19 goes on to do this stuff, it's impressive. And Terry also
20 is up in Lansing all the time helping out.

21 Mike O'Hearon. Mike has been a great asset for us
22 as our general counsel. All hours of the night he's helped
23 us out, he's worked with us. He's put a ton of effort in,
24 especially in the consolidation bills. It was so legally
25 demanding that Mike took on almost that entire role in

1 working on that issue to get it back. So appreciate
2 everything he does. Melissa Yutzey, and she's going to talk
3 in a minute. You'll see the amount of work she does and
4 it's impressive. Our PR firm is not here today but they
5 have certainly worked hard for us also over the last year,
6 TJ and Devon, a lot of you guys have met them.

7 Next I'd like to have our committees stand up.
8 I'm going to start with our PSO committee. Everybody on the
9 PSO committee please rise. These guys have worked very
10 hard, they've met monthly, they've done a lot of projects
11 over and above and beyond. They've worked a tremendous
12 amount to get this to where we're at in this battle. And I
13 thank you for that. The PAC committee please rise.
14 Everybody stay up, PSO committee stay up. PAC committee
15 has taken on tremendous role also. And some of these
16 committees in the past when things were good it was kind of
17 stagnant and not go anywhere. There's nothing stagnant
18 about these committees anymore. They work their butt off
19 and they work hard.

20 Health and Safety Committee. Now, realize a lot
21 of these people aren't here today or they're working in
22 other area. But this Health Safety Committee works hard and
23 they've taken on a task now, a difficult task. Something
24 we're seeing with this downturn this economy, and I think
25 we're just becoming more aware of is the threat of PTSD,

1 posttraumatic stress disorder and how it affects us. The
2 committee is taking on the difficult issues of PTSD, of
3 alcoholism, addiction, suicide. And we've had our share of
4 suicides in the last couple years. And it's something that
5 needs to be dealt with. And I think this is an important
6 committee, it's going to play an important role. Our
7 members as they are facing these difficult challenges in
8 staffing and working a ton of overtime are going to be
9 facing a lot of issues that we have to try to provide
10 resources for. So they're going to be playing a pivotal
11 role.

12 Our Consolidation Committee, very important issue.
13 We work hard for consolidation. When we talk about
14 consolidation in Lansing, we are the leaders in this
15 discussion right now. We are working our butt off to
16 actually encourage consolidation because we believe in many
17 ways -- not all consolidation is appropriate, but when it is
18 appropriate, it can save jobs. And if done right, it can
19 work and it can be very important for our survival. These
20 guys work on this issue. And they've had a lot of learning
21 to do with the new legislation that has come out. We've
22 seen a lot of changes so I appreciate the effort they do.
23 Education and Training Committee, had a lot of turn over of
24 executive board members. As you guys all know, this is
25 difficult. That has to be -- we have to get the training

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1 out to our members, a very important role. EMS Committee,
2 not only represent us at the state level and all the
3 different state committees, they also are our resource to
4 locals that are fighting to keep fire based EMS or trying to
5 get fire based EMS. We have some very good experts on this
6 committee that are an excellent resource.

7 This is our team of people that work for you, work
8 hard. I just want you guys to realize that. That everybody
9 is working, and working well together and I'm very proud of
10 this group we have together. So I want everybody to give
11 them a round of applause for all the hard work they've done.

12 (Audience applause)

13 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you for standing. Lastly,
14 like we've said, local leaders it's the hardest job in the
15 world. I see it with my local, I see it with other locals,
16 things you guys have to deal with is unprecedented. Nothing
17 is more painful than seeing your members laid off. It's
18 very hard to see and tell them there's nothing you can do
19 about it. We fight to do whatever we can. Unlike other
20 unions unlike other police unions, we do try to protect our
21 members and keep them on the job, we do what we can. And
22 it's a constant struggle right now when you have deficits
23 that you've got to try to overcome to keep people on the job
24 and they're too overwhelming. So I give you guys credit.

25 This whole union is about all of us standing

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1 together. And we're all in this together. So no matter how
2 alone you feel in your local we're all just a phone call
3 away. Any local here will support you. We all need to
4 stand together to get through ths. The thing you have to
5 remember is through unity, this has come up sadly in
6 discussion quite frequently lately. The basic premise of
7 unions is standing united together, stronger. We have to do
8 that. This is a pivotal time for us. We have to stand
9 together, we have to go forward, and we have to aggressively
10 take on this fight now. I mean, we defensively stood our
11 ground and tried to fight. But we're going to take this to
12 them now, we're going to aggressively win this. And it's
13 going to take a fight of everybody and everybody's effort.
14 I'm optimistic this year is going to be better. We're going
15 to work on it and we're going to get through this. There
16 will be better days to come. Certainly. And we just have
17 to stand united.

18 Thank you for the time. We have a great
19 convention. I encourage debate. We've had some conventions
20 in the past where there wasn't much debate. Debate is
21 healthy. If you have questions, comments, stand up and say
22 them please. Let's have a good convention.

23 (Audience applause)

24 MR. DOCHERTY: The next person I'd like to
25 introduce is our lobbyist Melissa Yutzey. As you know,

1 she's been working with us for years, we've got a great
2 relationship with her. Over the last year I was able to get
3 to know her even better and work side by side with her as
4 president. There is no more hard working, dedicated person
5 to this organization than her. She works constantly for us.
6 The amazing this is she's also very respected throughout the
7 legislators and throughout Lansing. And that's something
8 we're proud of, something we're glad to have with her. I
9 would put her up in your knowledge of fire fighting to just
10 about any one of you guys. She's definitely passionate on
11 our issues, and we appreciate it, that's why we keep her
12 around. So please welcome Melissa, and she'll go over all
13 your legislative stuff.

14 (Audience applause)

15 MS. YUTZEY: Thank you for having me here today.
16 It is an honor to be here with you for your 50th Biennial
17 Convention. I'm not going to repeat everything that Mark
18 said because there has been a lot that's gone over the last
19 two years. And as you know, it's probably been one of the
20 greatest attacks on the labor movement really since it
21 began. I had an opportunity to talk to some of your
22 founding member -- not founding members, but Dan Delegato
23 last night. He probably wouldn't want me to say he's
24 founding, but longtime. And understanding the history and
25 what was fought for so long ago, and what's being taken away

1 right now. We are every day fighting at the capitol. Over
2 the last 15 months it has been a challenge, after a
3 challenge, after a challenge. Even though we have been
4 scarred by what's happened, we're not broken. Your union is
5 probably one of the strongest voices that is at the capitol
6 at the moment for the labor movement. You may not be the
7 largest labor union, but you have probably the strongest
8 voice right now. And I give so much credit to all of you,
9 to your president, to the executive board for making that
10 happen. It's taken all of you, but you've done such an
11 amazing job, we're getting seats at the table, they're
12 listening to our arguments.

13 And so we measure success very differently these
14 days. And as President Docherty mentioned, success isn't
15 because we had some great piece of legislation passed yet or
16 that we're able even to actually kill too many pieces of
17 legislation. But success is measured in the fact that there
18 have been at a minimum 100 bills that have been introduced
19 that would erode some of your healthcare benefits, your
20 pension benefits, your collective bargaining rights. And
21 each one of those we've fought and we've fought hard. And
22 some of the bigger issues such as PA312 when we saw
23 Representative Haveman try to repeal that legislation. In
24 the years that working with, an important person in my life,
25 Paul Hufnagel to try and reform that legislation, and yet

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1 having this year seeing it nearly stripped away from you.

2 But all of you showed up. And I have to say -- get back to
3 my speech here, I kind of went off the speech a little bit.

4 But when 312 was going through and they were
5 trying to take away those rights, you showed up. You showed
6 up in the 100's. And that was a turning point in Lansing
7 for our issue. They saw that you weren't going to stand
8 around and let this happen, you were going to come to
9 Lansing, you were going to have your voices heard, and then
10 they started listening to us. And I can't thank you enough.
11 Because yes, I'm you're lobbyist, and yes I'm here every
12 day, and yes I'm talking to these folks. But you're the
13 ones who really make the impact. You're a voting member of
14 those districts and they want to hear from you. And we
15 protected and we got more than what we had before, and the
16 MML went home with their tail between their legs on that
17 one. And that's a huge victory because we came at it with
18 facts and not rhetoric that the opponents used every day.
19 And that's something I have to give your organization great
20 credit for and it's something every day we're improving
21 upon. But we're building our resources even greater.

22 President Docherty talked about it in the various
23 areas that you're doing this. But every issue that we are
24 lobbying on we have fact, we have data, we have numbers, we
25 have research. And it makes a huge difference. We're not

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1 just coming at it with the way that the MML or other
2 organizations who like to attack us every day, we're coming
3 at it with real information that's making a huge difference.
4 And I have to thank you and I'll continue to thank you for
5 being there, for making the phone calls, and sending the
6 emails, and showing up to the rallies. They all make an
7 amazing amount of difference. And we've had some really
8 terrible pieces of legislation come before us.

9 We found out how they were going to play the game
10 in Lansing early on when they passed the emergency manager
11 law. It was pretty thought out on their part, they didn't
12 allow anyone to break through. They had their legislature
13 stand firmly behind leadership. But we understood what they
14 were going to do from that point and we were able to modify
15 our strategies to, I think what I would say, is again become
16 more successful. You see it in Senate Bill 7 which as
17 President Docherty mentioned, the 80/20 bill. Without our
18 lobbying efforts it would have been a strict 80/20. Now you
19 have options, now your communities have those options for an
20 opt out which is critical, or the hard cap.

21 Consolidation, another thing. Such a buzz word
22 around town these days. You heard it from the Mayor, you
23 heard it from Chief Talifarro. Everybody wants to talk
24 about consolidation. But when they talk about
25 consolidation, they talk about why you guys are the problem.

1 Yet we were able through the awesome work of your legal
2 counsel Michael O'Hearon and everybody here, but Mike really
3 was our rock in this issue, made sure that they understood
4 that this isn't your problem in consolidation. When they
5 were trying to take away your rights and trying to break
6 contracts so they could form new authorities or consolidated
7 units. And we fought back and we were successful when we
8 worked on the Urban Cooperation Act and the Michigan
9 Municipal Partnership Act. We saw many successes in them.
10 But again, that's because we had a seat at the table, we had
11 our facts, and you guys showed up.

12 Workers' Compensation. You know, the successes
13 are long as you heard, four out of five priorities were ones
14 that we were able to achieve. Again, because you showed up
15 and we were able to have a seat at the table. The other
16 labor organizations, and no disrespect to anyone, but they
17 didn't have their voices heard like we did. And I think you
18 heard earlier that we're there protecting everybody else.
19 We're trying to help the labor movement in general because
20 there is a respect, even though it probably doesn't feel
21 that way, there is a respect for the fire fighters in the
22 state on some levels. We're trying to, obviously always
23 improve that every day. But I think that we've achieved our
24 successes in some of this legislation as a result of that
25 respect.

1 I think it's also important to know a lot of
2 what's going on in Lansing with respect to the fire services
3 is a direct result of the work that you have done. It's not
4 the chief's organization, it's not the inspectors, or the
5 inspectors, or the Michigan State Fireman's Association,
6 it's because of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters
7 Union and your leadership.

8 I've sat in more meetings now in the Governor's
9 office talking about and trying to educate on the role that
10 you all play in this state and the importance of it. And
11 unfortunately in an era of term limits we have to do that
12 all the time. We're constantly educating. You may think
13 it's really simple, and you know, everybody knows what a
14 fire fighter does and why they're important. We find that
15 not everybody does and it's a really hard job to keep them
16 understanding of that role you play. We're in the
17 treasurer's office very frequently trying to help out with
18 the issues caused by the Emergency Manager. But your
19 leadership is there and they're the ones pushing your issues
20 and not these other organizations, so you can take a lot of
21 pride and a lot of credit for what gets done around here.
22 And you're going to see more.

23 When the task force is formed by the Governor,
24 that is the direct result of President Docherty sitting down
25 with the Governor's office and talking about the need for

1 something like this. So when you hear your chief say, we're
2 part of this, or somebody else, it was because your union
3 stood up and said we need to have a louder voice in Lansing.
4 Be proud of that.

5 These are just a few of the things obviously that
6 we count as successes. Yes, not the ones that we always
7 wanted to have but they are successes. But we're working on
8 a number of pieces of legislation now that we will see and
9 want to see as important wins to all of you. The
10 legislation that I've become personally invested in is
11 Senate Bill 94. Which would provide a Cancer Presumption in
12 the Workers' Compensation Act for professional fire
13 fighters. It had a hearing last week in the Senate Economic
14 Development Committee. And some of you even here today came
15 and testified on behalf of yourself and fire fighters across
16 the state. This bill would provide a presumption for fire
17 fighters who have been on the job for 60 months, been non
18 smokers for the last ten years, and are diagnosed with one
19 of the following types of cancers: respiratory tract,
20 bladder, skin, brain, kidney, blood, and lymphatic cancers.
21 Obviously we'd love to see more included. We're starting
22 with that and we're working on ensuring that everybody has
23 the protection.

24 We have a great opportunity right now to see this
25 legislation signed by the Governor this session. I truly

1 believe it. They are looking for ways to improve upon their
2 relationships with all of you. It is an election year.
3 We're going to leverage everything we have to ensure that
4 this legislation gets done this session. I've been here,
5 Paul has seen it, too many sessions where they've passed it
6 in a widely bipartisan support in one chamber and the other
7 chamber won't take it up. Well, right now with the votes
8 that we have and the people that have supported it in the
9 past, we see an opportunity. But we need all of you.

10 The legislature has been invited to attend
11 tonight's reception for all of you. I ask that you take the
12 time to speak with the legislators who show up this evening.
13 I know many of you may not want to say a word to any of
14 them, and I don't quite frankly blame you for that. But I
15 beg, beg you to take the time to talk to them. And talk to
16 them about Senate Bill 94. And talk about the importance of
17 this issue to all of you. We can't control necessarily what
18 happened in the past with the legislation, but we do have an
19 opportunity to have an impact on Senate Bill 94 and seeing
20 it pass. You should have now talking points on the issue
21 that you can use for your discussions this evening. Please
22 take the time to do so. Take the time to call or email your
23 legislators as well. You've been given also a handy little
24 guide that gives you their phone numbers so you have a
25 direct connect to all of them. It's so important, that

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1 connection is really more important than ever before.

2 We're also working very hard right now on the
3 personal property tax elimination. Again, you heard that
4 from the Mayor, you heard some of it from President
5 Docherty. Right now they are moving swiftly through the
6 legislature to package a bill that would eliminate the
7 personal property tax, which would impact many of your
8 communities. And right now after nearly over \$5 billion in
9 revenue sharing cuts over the last ten years, I don't think
10 the communities can take another hit to their budgets. And
11 we all know when communities have a budget deficit who they
12 come to first, all of you to try and resolve those deficits.

13 We have joined a coalition of people in Lansing
14 the Replace Not Erase Coalition. Which if you want more
15 information on that you can go to the
16 www.replacenoterase.org and there is a lot of talking points
17 and a lot of information on the PPT discussion. But we are
18 working very hard to try and see a constitutional amendment
19 pass which would guarantee replacement of all the dollars
20 lost as a result of the elimination. Again, this goes to
21 the bottom line of the communities. And without these
22 dollars and without a replacement revenue, my fear is you
23 guys are going to see the impact of that. So we are working
24 very hard to improve upon that.

25 Just one last bill I want to mention because it

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1 does impact some of you in the room, Senate Bill 409. Last
2 year when they passed the business tax cuts and improved the
3 wealth of the businesses in the state and decided to place a
4 new tax on pensions in this state, there are many of you in
5 the room who have opted out as communities opted out of the
6 Social Security system. But as a direct result of that, now
7 because of the pension tax, your income is being taxed at a
8 greater level than those who are paying into the Social
9 Security system. So we're working on Senate Bill 409 which
10 would exempt individuals from having their income taxed
11 under the new pension law for police and fire. Currently
12 sitting on the House floor, it's something we've been
13 working on since they passed the bill last April. We'll
14 continue to work on it and we feel fairly confident that
15 we'll see something passed before the end of the year.

16 And finally I'm sure you've had enough listening
17 to me. But I just want to touch briefly on the upcoming
18 election. You are going to hear over the next couple days
19 from whether it's Senator Whitmer or Representative Segal,
20 some of the other invited guests, how important this
21 election is going to be. I can't emphasize enough the
22 importance of the November election. If we don't show up to
23 the voting booths and force a change in Lansing, we will
24 have given the legislature the mandate they need to finish
25 the job on the labor movement. If in November the

1 Republicans are successful in keeping the House, we can
2 expect to see Right to Work on their agenda next year. And
3 if the collective bargaining ballot initiative fails, you
4 can maybe even see it in the Lame Duck Session before the
5 year is out.

6 The House Democrats need to retake nine seats to
7 regain the majority. 56 votes is the number that it will
8 take to stop the attacks on labor. Although it sounds like
9 an uphill battle, I think we're going to see a lot of good
10 things happen in November. People are angry, people don't
11 like what's been going on. But you guys actually have to
12 get out and vote and your friends and family have to get out
13 and vote. We can't sit at home and we can't let this
14 election pass us by. Although I will say it's really
15 exciting this year because we actually have two fire
16 fighters who are running for the State House, Henry Yanez
17 from Sterling Heights, and Tom Cochran the former fire chief
18 from Lansing. This is something that we long for is to have
19 legislators in Lansing who understand what you do every day.
20 So the more people that we can get in the legislature that
21 have a background in the fire service, the better off we
22 are. I think that's a really -- it is exciting to know that
23 next year we could have two people serving that will have a
24 voice inside the chamber when issues like this come up. And
25 I hope you take the time to either write a personal check or

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1 campaign or whatever you have the ability to do for either
2 of these individuals so we can get them here to Lansing.

3 Just in closing, again, it is an honor to be here.
4 I represent a lot of people in Lansing, but I will tell you
5 that there is no other organization more important to me
6 than you. I believe in what you do and I am going to work
7 every day as long as I have the pleasure of representing you
8 to make sure that the people in Lansing and the people
9 across the street at the capitol believe in what you do and
10 have respect for what you do. And that's it. Thank you.

11 (Audience applause)

12 MR. WEISENBERG: Thank you Melissa. Thanks for
13 all the work you do for us throughout the year. At this
14 time I'd like to introduce our General Secretary/Treasurer
15 Tom Miller. Some of you guys have been around a little bit
16 and know Tom. He's long been a friend of the Michigan
17 Professional Fire Fighters. Tom was Paul's predecessor as
18 the 8th District VP and has now taken over as the
19 Secretary/Treasurer and done a great job not only of taking
20 care of making sure that our per capita is used in the most
21 wise way, but also providing his leadership to General
22 President Schaitberger and the rest of the executive board.
23 So again, Tommy Miller.

24 (Audience applause)

25 MR. MILLER: Good morning. Certainly a pleasure

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1 to be here in Lansing at the MPFFU convention once again.
2 I've made a lot of appearances here and it's always great
3 to see a lot of old friends and make some new ones. You
4 have an extraordinary state association. And I think it
5 goes without saying, the leadership that's been provided
6 here for many, many years and evidenced by the fact of the
7 Emeriti officers Danny Delegato, Gary Thomas, and Larry
8 McColl, Jack Gary, I mean there's a tremendous -- Paul --
9 tremendous legacy for all of you and for the state
10 association.

11 So speaking of Paul, I know you'll hear from the
12 General President tomorrow, that there are 16 chairs around
13 the table, and nobody can fill this guy's shoes at the IAFF
14 Executive Board. Paul does a tremendous job of representing
15 all of you and everybody in the 8th District. And so you'll
16 know, the 8th District is, I still think it's the largest
17 district although California has a few more people that
18 they've sneaked into the back door. But with 750-some
19 locals now in the 8th District and 42,000 fire fighters, he
20 told me after he took that job he said, I didn't realize how
21 busy you were. Because he's busy all day every day
22 assisting the great locals of the 8th District. So do me a
23 favor and give Paul Hufnagel a round of applause.

24 (Audience applause)

25 MR. MILLER: You know and I would certainly be

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1 remiss if I didn't speak for a minute about my boss, my
2 partner, the General President Harold Schaitberger who I
3 said you'll hear from tomorrow. The value that I have of
4 working very closely with him, and traveling with, and
5 partnering with, he's just an incredible leader. He's, in
6 my estimation, the preeminent labor leader in North America.
7 He's the face of this union and he's the voice of this union
8 to make sure that our entire operation in Washington DC is
9 focused on making the job easier for all of you, all of our
10 leadership in the United States and Canada. And what a
11 tremendous fellow. And I can tell you clearly that if the
12 other labor organizations wanted to be successful, they'd
13 take several pages out of his playbook. Because he does it
14 right, the staff that he has around him is tremendous. And
15 that's why the IAFF is recognized as the leaders that we
16 are, like I say, in North America.

17 I was honored to be elected by the executive board
18 in January of 2010 to fill the General Secretary/Treasurer's
19 office after a legend retired in Vinnie Bollon. In this
20 position I'm proud to partner with all of you because I know
21 how tough your jobs are. I've been in your shoes as a local
22 and a state officer and as an international officer. And as
23 David said, was the DVP for about ten years. I was also a
24 local officer in my home local in Indianapolis for about 25
25 years. And I was the state president in Indiana for 24

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1 years.

2 I brought that perspective and my personal
3 background to this job looking to make changes to our
4 union's fiscal house that had pretty much operated the same
5 way for over the last 30 or 40 years. One of the first
6 things I did when I took office was, took a look at our
7 auditing practices. And not being a CPA or anything, but I
8 could tell that some of the checks that we were writing to
9 the gentlemen and his firm that we doing our audits seemed a
10 little excessive. So I asked the trustees to take a look at
11 that. And it's their responsibility by the constitution to
12 hire the auditor. And they put an RFP out. And I think it
13 was about six or seven firms that actually responded, and
14 they ended up choosing a new auditing firm. A lady by the
15 name of Joan Renner who is out of Alexandria, Virginia. And
16 very, very nice. Very, very competent lady and her firm.
17 And I can tell you that in the first year we had a savings
18 of over \$200,000 from what we were paying to what we're
19 paying the new one. And the results, like I say, are
20 outstanding. And we have a strong working relationship with
21 her and our team and my office really, really like her and
22 her bunch. And there have been positive comments on both
23 sides.

24 We last year implemented in the fourth quarter ADP
25 which is a new payroll system. This system provides

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1 efficient and accurate monitoring of attendance and leave in
2 the whole office of the IAFF. And it integrates with Great
3 Plains our financial system so we have a timely posting of
4 information on the financials. The IAFF we began to
5 implement CONCUR it's called, and electronic reporting
6 system in the fall of 2011. We did extensive training to
7 provide it to instructors and other consultants in IDC in
8 December. And to DFSRs and service reps at the affiliate
9 leadership training seminar, or ALTS, giving the folks, our
10 folks, the knowledge to submit their expense reports
11 electronically. This new process is achieving high levels
12 of efficiency and streamlining the reimbursement process
13 while allowing timely posting of information to our
14 financial system.

15 We're providing the affiliates with the option of
16 receiving per capita statements electronically now. This
17 gives them the option to manage their per cap online. And
18 it also can get a list of past per cap statements so they
19 have an electronic historical record. We're monitoring EDF
20 loans monthly now. We're doing regular reviews to ensure
21 our locals are up to date on their payment schedules. We
22 changed our insurance brokers. Something that probably
23 needed to have been done a long time ago. Providing a
24 better and more comprehensive service to our members. And
25 we're working with the same firm that the IAFF financial

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1 corporation does building on our existing relationship. And
2 as we've realized, significant cost savings. Our broker has
3 drafted some background information on insurance that we can
4 share with you on the best practices like bonding coverage.
5 We have a strong working relationship with the broker and
6 are finding them to be responsive to your specific
7 questions.

8 We hired a national firm, Ice Miller, to monitor
9 our pensions. We have two pension systems for the staff and
10 employee pensions. And when we got there they were
11 scattered about in about five or six different places. So
12 we didn't think that was a good idea. So we brought this
13 new legal team in and they're doing a tremendous job.
14 They're doing a full audit, they did a full audit of the
15 staff and employee pension plan documents and submitted
16 those to the IRS. And I can tell you that nothing going to
17 the IRS is fast moving unless it's the other way, unless
18 they're after you and they want money. They will beat down
19 your door. But the terms have been clarified and the
20 practice is consistent, and they're easier to maintain and
21 keep current now. The IRS issued a favorable determination
22 on both of our plans.

23 These are some of the projects we've undertaken in
24 the last year to become more efficient and protect our
25 resources. We're also working to provide you with

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1 information in a timely manner. You'll also see that we're
2 putting more information on my web page and the website. We
3 have a good list of resources for you in the GST library.
4 This is your source for information. The past board minutes
5 are now online, that was a savings of about \$30,000 a year.
6 This is where we posted information on IRS rules and rulings
7 and your tax exempt status. We've done some updating in the
8 area of document management and we're cutting down on the
9 amount of paper that's stored at the International and
10 moving to scan files. We have a test case going on right
11 now to assist the scanning capabilities for the IAFF.

12 You'll note a theme through much of our work in
13 the past two years has been to modernize, become more
14 current, and make use of technology. We've also focused on
15 the organization in the GST's office and ensuring that we
16 have the right talent in place to meet your needs.
17 Restructure of the budget and finance department, made some
18 staffing changes to better align our organization to better
19 serve all of you.

20 We hired a new controller. Don Copley is the guy
21 that had been the controller for 26 and a half years. He
22 took a well deserved retirement and we hired a guy named
23 Warren May who had experience as a contract employee for the
24 IAFF. And so he was very familiar our system and Warren is
25 a CPA. And we hired another CPA with strong auditing

1 experience and actually we stole him from the auditing firm
2 that was ripping us off. And he's a young guy, tremendous
3 guy. His name is Ryan Webber. And we're well staffed. And a
4 lady by the name of Lisa Waters, these three people are all
5 CPAs, we've never had three CPAs on staff at the
6 International before ever. And they're stronger than a
7 garlic malt I can tell you. And they're doing great work.

8 We also brought in a new director of human
9 resources, some of you may have encountered him in the IAFF
10 legal department, Jim Larkin who is out of Woodley
11 McGillivray. Jim was looking for a little change in career
12 as an attorney and had a human resources background, HR
13 background. And he's just doing a tremendous job. I don't
14 know if you know or not, but our employees at the IAFF are
15 unionized, they belong to OPEIU Local 2. And we
16 successfully negotiated a four year contract with them that
17 runs through 2014.

18 And I've given you some highlights of our
19 accomplishments. And I also want to tell you some of the
20 projects that we have that are under way. Here's what we're
21 working on. This first one here is one that I can get some
22 help out of you guys, I hope, that haven't submitted. Two
23 years ago at the convention at the IAFF convention, the
24 resolution was passed requiring all local affiliates to send
25 electronically to the IAFF a copy of their constitution and

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1 bylaws. And I know Paul can back me up on this, it's
2 amazing when I was a DVP somebody would call and ask a
3 question and I would say what's your constitution and bylaws
4 say. And they would say, I don't know, we don't have one.
5 What do you mean you don't have one? Well, I can't find it.
6 Or they had one and it hadn't been changed since 1961, and
7 so they need to be updated. But they need to be submitted,
8 we've got over 3,000 locals, about 3200 locals, we've got
9 about 1500 of them in. So if you haven't sent your
10 constitution and bylaws in electronically, please do so and
11 help us out and help us get caught up on that.

12 You know, the real estate in DC is pretty
13 expensive. So we're looking on relocating some of our staff
14 internally. We're on the third floor and we have about four
15 people that are on the second floor. So we're looking to
16 bring them up and kind rearrange the office space and try to
17 get a little more modern and creating some better efficiency
18 for our office. We're continuing to use technology to save
19 time and year per capita. A convention call went out in an
20 email blast recently. The documents are now on the
21 convention website. They're taking and making the name
22 badges and bar code scanning at all the conferences. Our
23 materials are now handed out on CD's, and the executive
24 board minutes are online. The info on upcoming events sent
25 via email. And you'll see a continued focus on bringing

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1 information to you electronically so you'll have the
2 timeliest information to manage your operations.

3 We're providing leadership and management training
4 to our senior management staff and they're learning current
5 trends and practices and leadership conflict resolution and
6 employee relations. We have a tremendous staff in place and
7 are working to bring them the current training to build on
8 other skills. We also have a great labor management
9 relationship with OPEIU Local 2. We've built on this
10 relationship over the last two years and are working
11 cooperatively on a number of projects. A couple of them,
12 updating the employee job descriptions and developing
13 performance evaluations procedures.

14 One of the things that is very important is having
15 current address information. So please advise us of any
16 roster changes that you have. And this is especially
17 critical now with the important information going out on the
18 convention and is included in the fire fighter magazine.
19 Also we're working with software programs to keep current
20 home address information for you ensuring that all of you
21 get your fire fighter magazine. We used to get 3,000
22 returns every time we sent a mailing out. And this new
23 program we've had a significant decrease in returns which
24 relates to a substantial cost savings obviously for the
25 IAFF. Our information is only as good as the information we

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1 get from you.

2 What I want to leave you with is that I am
3 completely committed to making the IAFF better for you and
4 for all of our affiliates. And damn sure for all of our
5 members. I'm proud of the work we've done in this short
6 period. And in the coming convention is an election year
7 and I certainly will be a candidate for re-election and I
8 would be more than honored to have the Michigan Fire
9 Fighters support once again. I've been blessed to serve as
10 your GST for the past two years as part of a team with the
11 GP and I'm honored to serve and to be able to continue
12 moving this great union forward for the next four years.
13 I've got a question, how many are going to the convention in
14 Philadelphia?

15 (Show of hands)

16 MR. MILLER: It will be fun, Philadelphia is an
17 interesting city. And the convention center there I can
18 tell you is new and a very good facility, so we'll have a
19 good time. But remember, I'm only a phone call or an email
20 away still. I mean, that's been my deal forever and
21 anything that I can do or my office can do to assist any of
22 you in any endeavor, call me, I've still got the same phone
23 number. Call me, email me, and we'll come running. Thank
24 you for having me here Mark. God bless all of you and God
25 bless America. Thank you.

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1 (Audience applause)

2 MR. DOCHERTY: We're going to break for lunch in a
3 few minutes. One thing I want to talk about is we are
4 having Senate Majority Leader Richardville coming and
5 speaking at our luncheon. We understand that this year has
6 been tough. Randy has always been a friend of ours. He was
7 once awarded legislator of the year by this delegate body.
8 He's helped us out tremendously in Lansing. Even though
9 some things obviously have gone through, he's been a great
10 advocate for us. He's faced recalled efforts from his own
11 party, he's got Tea Party groups trying to get him removed
12 as majority leader. Randy wants to come talk to us and
13 please be professional and remember all the things he's done
14 for us and will continue to do. He's a staunch advocate of
15 our Cancer Presumption Bill and would like to see it passed.
16 I guess we're going to get started. I'll call the 50th
17 Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire
18 Fighters Union to order. I would ask Secretary/Treasurer to
19 do the roll call.

20 MR. CHESNEY: President Docherty?

21 MR. DOCHERTY: Here. Say "Here."

22 MR. CHESNEY: I'm here. First and Third District
23 VP Reynolds?

24 MR. REYNOLDS: Here.

25 MR. CHESNEY: Second District VP Abbey?

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1 MR. ABBEY: Here.

2 MR. CHESNEY: Fourth District VP Heim?

3 MR. HEIM: Here.

4 MR. CHESNEY: Fifth District VP Leve?

5 MR. LEVE: Here.

6 MR. CHESNEY: Six District VP Dawe?

7 MR. DAWE: Here.

8 MR. CHESNEY: Eastern District Trustee Hosmer?

9 MR. HOSMER: Here.

10 MR. CHESNEY: Western District Trustee Weisenberg?

11 MR. WEISENBERG: Here.

12 MR. CHESNEY: Northern District Trustee Aileen

13 Pettinger?

14 MS. PETTINGER: Here.

15 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you, Terry. I'm going to

16 call the Chairman of the Credentials Committee for a partial

17 report.

18 MS. PETTINGER: Good morning. As everyone has in

19 their packets, you can see that we have 196 delegates, we

20 have 54 alternates. And we will give a final report

21 tomorrow at noon when registration closes. We do ask that

22 everyone if you have your petitions for the constitutional

23 amendment to please turn them in at the registration table.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you. I'll next call on

1 Secretary/Treasurer to present the Rules.

2 MR. CHESNEY: Thank you Mr. Chairman. If the
3 delegates would look in their packets for the Rules of
4 Order. These Rules are the same as they have been for many
5 conventions. There are a couple minor changes. They have
6 been distributed via email to all locals a week or so in
7 advance to give you a chance to look at them. If you'd like
8 I can start reading right from line one and read the whole
9 thing to you or I can point out some important things that I
10 think you'd like to know about. I don't see anybody asking
11 me to read them. So I'm going to ask you to go to number
12 two, line 11. This is important. Registration does close
13 tomorrow at noon. And each individual that has registered
14 still has to personally check in by noon. After that it
15 takes a two-thirds vote of the delegates to allow seating
16 after as a late arrival after noon. So if some of your
17 delegation isn't here, you need to get them here by noon
18 tomorrow.

19 If you turn to the next page, item number seven is
20 an area that we have changed in the past. Only delegates
21 were allowed to sit in the front portion of the room. This
22 year we've made a change and we've allowed our Emeriti
23 officers and our lifetime members to also sit up here. The
24 Sargent-at-Arms know who these individuals are and will make
25 sure that they don't vote on anything. But other than that,

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1 they are allowed to sit up here and that's a change that I
2 think we all like to see. So if we catch them voting,
3 they're going to get sent to the back of the room.

4 Number eight, alternates can switch with
5 delegates. You need to take both badges back to the office
6 and have a delegate badge to sit up here. Number eight,
7 that will explain the rest of how that works. And we do
8 have this -- this convention is being recorded by audio
9 reporters. We have Network Reporting sitting over here in
10 the corner, I'd like to recognize them. You can make their
11 job a lot easier and stop them from yelling at me if every
12 time you go to the mike, please identify yourself by first
13 name, last name, and your local name. You can say your
14 local number as well, but please say the name of the local
15 and your name slowly and clearly. That helps them do a good
16 job in recording our convention action. And that's also
17 covered in number 15.

18 And just please read number 18, it does talk
19 about how many times you're allowed to talk on a subject and
20 how long you can talk for. And all the rest of these are
21 important, hopefully you've read them. But it does lay out
22 how our convention operates and how you're supposed to
23 address and debate the resolutions. So Mr. Chairman, if I
24 could, I'd like to move for adoption of the Rules of Order
25 as printed.

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1 MR. DOCHERTY: There's a motion to adopt the Rules
2 as printed. Do we have support?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

4 MR. DOCHERTY: Seeing support, any discussion?
5 All in favor signify by raising your hands?

6 (Show of hands)

7 MR. DOCHERTY: Opposed? Motion carries. Next I'd
8 like to invite the Chairman of the Resolutions Committee for
9 a partial report.

10 MR. REYNOLDS: Good morning. Brothers and Sisters
11 turn your attention to Resolution Number 1.

12 "Whereas during the period since the last Michigan
13 Professional Fire Fighters Union Convention, far too
14 many of our IAFF Brothers and Sisters have died in the
15 line of duty. And whereas during this same period a
16 large number of other members and retirees have also
17 passed away due to natural causes. Therefore, be it
18 resolved that those of us that remain shall never
19 forget the contributions and sacrifices made by those
20 before us to improve our profession. And be it further
21 resolved that the members assembled at this 50th
22 Biennial Convention of the Michigan Professional Fire
23 Fighters Union do hereby honor our deceased Brothers
24 and Sister fire fighters with a moment of silence."

25 Mr. President, on behalf of the committee, I move

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1 for adoption of Resolution 1.

2 MR. DOCHERTY: The committee is recommending move
3 for adoption of Resolution 1. Any speakers that would like
4 to address this issue come to the mike. Seeing none, all in
5 favor, raise your hand.

6 (Show of hands)

7 MR. DOCHERTY: All opposed? Motion carries. Next
8 I'd like to call the Constitution Bylaws Committee up for a
9 partial report. We're going to start out right now with a
10 moment of silence to remember fire fighters who have passed,
11 especially former Vice-President Tom Oosting who passed this
12 last year.

13 (Moment of silence)

14 MR. DOCHERTY: Now move to the partial report from
15 the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

16 MR. HEIM: On behalf of the Constitution and
17 Bylaws Committee I would ask the members to turn to
18 Resolution Number 4. Resolution Number 4. I'll read it in
19 its entirety. Resolution Number 4, lifetime membership for
20 James Amar.

21 "Whereas James Amar served as a member of the IAFF
22 Local 355 Highlnd Park. And whereas Jim Amar was
23 forced to leave the Highland Park Fire Department early
24 in his career for medical reasons. And whereas soon
25 after leaving the Highland Park Fire Department, Jim

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1 Amar became a mediator for the State of Michigan. And
2 whereas in this position of mediator Jim Amar assisted
3 countless fire fighter locals in the collective
4 bargaining process. And whereas serving as a mediator
5 Jim Amar also shared his wisdom, knowledge, and counsel
6 with local union members as well as members of the
7 MPFFU executive board. And whereas earlier this year
8 Jim Amar retired from his mediator position after many
9 years of distinguished and honorable service. And
10 whereas Jim Amar's support of and dedication to fire
11 fighters will have a lasting effect on many members of
12 the MPFFU for many years into the future. Therefore be
13 it resolved that Brother Jim Amar is hereby awarded the
14 honor and privilege of lifetime membership in the
15 Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union."

16 Mr. Chairman, for his lifelong dedication to the
17 fire service and his contributions to the Michigan
18 Professional Fire Fighters Union, and on behalf of the
19 committee with their unanimous support, I move for the
20 adoption of Resolution Number 4.

21 MR. DOCHERTY: The committee is recommending
22 adoption of Resolution Number 4. Any discussion? Seeing
23 nobody at the mikes, all in favor raise your hands.

24 (Show of hands)

25 MR. DOCHERTY: All opposed? Motion carries.

1 Welcome Jim Amar up to the mike.

2 (Audience applause)

3 MR. AMAR: I know we're running a program and we
4 don't like to hear long speeches. But I can't tell you, it
5 means a great deal to me and I deeply and certainly
6 appreciate this resolution. It was a long journey, and I
7 got to where I was in large part because of the fact that I
8 was able to get involved with the fire fighters union, be an
9 officer, get involved in conventions like this. And I was
10 also fortunate to have mentors and support after that.
11 Chiefly with Danny Delegato and then when he left and Gary
12 Thomas became president they did a great deal of work with
13 me. I learned a lot from both of those fellows. And of
14 course Larry McColl who was active in the fire fighters when
15 I first met him at my first convention. We struck a very
16 good relationship over the years. And I learned a great
17 deal and I was able to go to school and get a bachelor's at
18 Eastern Michigan. Then go on to get my master's degree in
19 labor relations from Michigan State. And it was there that
20 I met Danny Delegato and Gary and they were both icons at
21 the time. And it was that experience that I acquired being
22 involved in this union and being a member of a labor union
23 prior to that that gave me a great understanding of a lot of
24 things that helped me evolve. And certainly by being active
25 I can tell you that once I got to the state in the capacity

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1 that I served just before I retired, that being involved
2 with the state fire fighters union and the Michigan State
3 AFL-CIO certainly opened a lot of doors and was a worthwhile
4 educational opportunity. And I am deeply, deeply honored
5 and sincerely appreciative of this acknowledgment that
6 you've given to me today. And I want to thank all of you
7 very, very much. President Docherty, Terry Chesney, you've
8 all been supportive of me when I was a labor mediator, you
9 understood the job that I had, the general counsel. Thank
10 you very, very much for everything.

11 (Audience applause)

12 MR. DOCHERTY: Before we go to lunch we're going
13 to have a few housekeeping issue that Secretary/Treasurer
14 Chesney would like to address.

15 MR. CHESNEY: Thank you, Mark. Two things, one
16 everybody that has helped support PAC by buying shirts and
17 50/50 raffle tickets, we really, really appreciate that.
18 I've been asked to announce that they're going to continue
19 to sell the 50/50 raffle tickets for today until 12:30. You
20 can get those in the office on the way to lunch. We're
21 going to do the drawing during lunch, you must be present to
22 win. Lunch is at the Radisson back in the ballroom at the
23 Radisson. So you've got a little bit of time but don't
24 delay too long because we do have a guest speaker to speak
25 during lunch. And also this afternoon the beverage service

1 for breaks and stuff is in the vendors room which is right
2 behind us. So please make sure you go in there and look
3 around and thank them for being sponsors. They've all
4 contributed to help offset some of the cost of our
5 hospitality events. And lastly, today at the end of session
6 there's a hospitality function here right outside the door
7 in that area or outside depending on how the weather is. It
8 was scheduled to be outside but it will be inside if the
9 weather doesn't permit. But that will be right here at the
10 end of the session today from 5:00 to 7:00. So with that I
11 guess we can break for lunch. Please don't take too long to
12 get over there. Obviously we need to be seated so the
13 speaker can speak. But be back at 1:30, we're going to
14 start at 1:30 sharp and there's important business that
15 starts at 1:30.

16 (Off the record)

17 MR. DOCHERTY: May I have your attention, please?
18 We've got a guest speaker we'd like to get started with
19 before we start the rest of our business. I'm proud to
20 introduce our new AFL President, Michigan AFL/CIO Karla
21 Swift. She took office in October and like I did last year
22 or the year before, kind of jumped into the fire. A lot of
23 stuff and we've been real proud with her success so far and
24 organizational skills and we look forward to continuing
25 working with her. So please welcome President Karla Swift.

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1 (Audience applause)

2 MS. SWIFT: Thank you. Good to be here. Good
3 afternoon. And especially thank you President Docherty and
4 Executive Board and Officers. It is a pleasure to have the
5 opportunity to come in and talk with this group. A group
6 that is particularly important to regular folks like me. Not
7 only for the work that you do day in and day out in the
8 communities to keep us safe. But the work that you're doing
9 as trade unionists to step up and stand up for the best
10 interests of all working people. And use your platform as
11 public safety officers to help share the message and take
12 part in the fight that we're involved in right now.

13 So I'd like to talk a little bit about the fight
14 that we're in right now, the challenges that we face in the
15 labor movement with the attacks, the threats. But also
16 there is a path forward and I want to get to that as well.
17 And as we do that, we need to find ways to really engage the
18 entire community in our struggles. Whether it is union
19 Brothers and Sisters or non union family friends, neighbors,
20 every Michigander has a vested interest in having a strong
21 middle class and robust public services. And nobody knows
22 better than you that if we don't the revenue and the funding
23 for robust public services we don't have a strong working
24 class and middle class in our state. So all of our success
25 is linked in finding ways to collaborate better for the best

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1 interest of everyone.

2 So I mentioned the threats that we've been facing
3 for the last 15, 16 months from the legislature in Lansing.
4 And you probably have already heard a little bit about those
5 today from folks who might have spoken earlier. I just want
6 to kind of run down that, a list if you will, that is
7 particularly important for the health of collective
8 bargaining and the health of working people in this state.
9 First of all, the Emergency Manager which not only suspends
10 collective bargaining but suspends democracy in the
11 communities. And you guys probably work in some of those
12 communities where you're faced with that. And of course the
13 injustice that took place last week when the State Board of
14 Canvassers did not vote that move the Emergency Manager
15 repeal of Public Act 4 to the ballot and that battle will
16 continue in the courts.

17 Laws that prohibit bargaining over seniority,
18 disciplines, evaluation, subcontracting for public school
19 employees. Laws that prohibit project labor agreements for
20 public sector construction projects. That law, by the way,
21 was also recently overturned by a federal court and the bad
22 guys are appealing that. So that will continue through the
23 legal process. Laws that mandate healthcare costs for
24 public employees capping your employer's contribution to
25 healthcare at 80 percent. And taking out of the hands of US

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1 bargainers the ability to strike a deal that is in the best
2 interest of your members and telling you the payment has to
3 be 20 percent. Changing the standards for arbitration for
4 public safety employees. Creating a prohibition on payroll
5 deduction for public employees to make PAC contributions.

6 Another one, stripping graduate research
7 assistance of the right to form a union. This one is
8 particularly -- it's all bad, but this one is particularly
9 bad. And you may be aware of it, but on the eve of when the
10 State Labor Relations Board, the Michigan Employment
11 Relations Commission was set to have a hearing and hear the
12 arguments on why these workers should have collective
13 bargaining rights, the legislature stepped in and passed a
14 law and then the Governor signed it to prohibit them from
15 having collective bargaining. So the neutral party that
16 want supposed to make that decision that's in place to
17 decide on things like that was just pushed aside and so were
18 the workers in the process.

19 The prohibition of public school unions by
20 collecting dues via payroll deduction. So it's just one
21 attack after another. And that's what's already done and
22 some other things that I haven't listed. But now there are
23 about 80 additional bills that are pending that are going
24 to, if passed, make other attacks on collective bargaining.
25 Things like making all or part of Michigan a Right To Work

1 state. Or requiring the annual authorization for dues
2 collection. Or making one group of school employees, those
3 that are represented by MEA fall under a Right to Work law.
4 Or creating new restrictions on workers ability to peaceably
5 demonstrate during a labor dispute. Repealing the
6 prevailing wage, allowing the privatization of prisons.

7 And most recently, today the Senate passed the
8 Cyber Schools Bill that will now be on its way to the
9 Governor. That will allow a private online education
10 company to cyphen off the per pupil allowance from all of
11 our communities. And pocket a significant amount of it in
12 their profits because they don't have to provide
13 transportation, they don't have to provide other services
14 that go along with the public school system in terms of the
15 counseling and the social work and the art and music and
16 athletics. All of those kinds of things are going to --
17 they're just going to take that money and they're just going
18 to put it in their pocket. And those are not proven models.
19 The most harmful thing about it probably is that they aren't
20 proven models. So we're just going to experiment a little
21 bit more with our scarce dollars and our precious children
22 while companies get to make a significant profit at our
23 expense.

24 So the way that we have to go forward then, I
25 talked about the path forward, to both blunt the attacks,

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1 render those things that have already been done to attack
2 collective bargaining unenforceable, and then to make any
3 future attacks on collective bargaining unconstitutional.
4 The way to do that is to pass a constitutional amendment to
5 protect collective bargaining this November in the 2012
6 election. So that's where we're about. Now, I don't know
7 if you've already talked about that here today. A little
8 bit. And you'll probably be hearing more about that. But
9 it's to protect our jobs, a constitutional amendment. And
10 the petition drive is going on now, it's going incredibly
11 well. And I know that you guys are going to be getting into
12 the mix very quickly. Overall the goal is to collect about
13 half a million signatures statewide. That will give us
14 plenty of cushion to submit our signatures and have the
15 322,000 that are required to get on the ballot in November.
16 And again, that will enshrine collective bargaining rights
17 in the state constitution. So the legislature no matter who
18 is sitting there good guys or bad guys, no matter how much
19 the turn over is because of term limits they will not be
20 able to infringe or impair on the right to form and join a
21 union and come together and act in our own best interests in
22 the workplace.

23 So I wanted to talk a little bit about how we're
24 discussing this when we're out in the workplace or out in
25 the community and talking with people about signing

1 petitions. It is important that we have an accurate and a
2 powerful message on which to frame the discussion about
3 this. And so I want to share a little bit about that with
4 you. We know that there are some messages that have been
5 proved to resonate more with both our members and the
6 general public than others. And so here's what they are.
7 The most powerful frame for discussing collective bargaining
8 is protection. And so here are some of the ways that that
9 gets packaged up. That Michigan workers helped create the
10 middle class and now we need to protect our collective
11 bargaining rights to help rebuild our economy. There is a
12 direct relationship between lots of people having collective
13 bargaining rights and also having a strong and vibrant
14 middle class in our communities. And so we need to tie
15 those two things together.

16 Another way to talk about it is we all need to
17 work together to protect Michigan workers because a strong
18 middle class helps support small businesses and create jobs.
19 And we all live in a community someplace, we all know what
20 small business relies on. It relies on people making enough
21 money to support their living requirements. And then to go
22 out and spend some on top of that. And small businesses
23 rely on that and so having a strong enough living standard
24 and a middle class to support small business so that they
25 can create jobs is incredibly important. We should tell

1 them that over the past year Lansing politicians have moved
2 one anti-worker measure after another doing little or
3 nothing to help put Michigan back to work. And because
4 they've been doing that, now more than ever we need the
5 right to speak up and protect our wages and benefits. And
6 we need to protect those rights.

7 And then turning it back around and it's
8 collective bargaining that gives workers the voice and the
9 ability to come together and to negotiate a fair contract so
10 that they can protect or so that we can protect, or so that
11 you can protect your job, your wages, your benefits, and
12 your safety on the job. And then the final point is,
13 without these protections, CEOs can arbitrarily fire
14 workers, cut wages, pensions, and healthcare benefits and
15 out source jobs to countries like China and Mexico.

16 So that sort of is the package of messages, if you
17 will, that again have been proven to resonate with the
18 public. And I know that you'll be having conversations with
19 your own members and you will tune this message to work in
20 your workplaces, and in your circles, and into your
21 networks. But when you get out into the public, it's
22 extremely important to be working with the message that we
23 know is solid and put it in your own voice.

24 So it's also important to remember that this
25 collective bargaining constitutional amendment is not just

1 about any one bill. And it's not just about union workers.
2 That when there are unfettered collective bargaining rights
3 for all workers then everybody does better both union
4 workers and non union workers alike. So it's another thing
5 that's important to remember. And then the last part about
6 Protect Our Jobs is, who are the messengers? So you may have
7 noticed in your local newspapers or in a TV spot somewhere
8 along the way or on a radio spot somebody talking about
9 Protect Our Jobs. And we made some missteps at the very
10 beginning but we got ourselves corrected quite quickly. And
11 the best spokes people for this effort is plain old ordinary
12 every day workers. So just as collective bargaining is the
13 voice of workers, the voice of this effort, the voice of the
14 Protect Our Jobs constitutional amendment has to be the
15 voice of workers. And of course fire fighters are some of
16 the best voices around.

17 You were following, I'm sure, Ohio and you know
18 the story that continues in Wisconsin. And the role that
19 fire fighters have played in both of those. In fact, I was
20 in Toledo the weekend before the election to Get Out the
21 Vote. And were you there? Was anybody there? Did anybody
22 go down? Oh, my gosh. It was quite a deal. But fire
23 fighters everywhere in their hats and coats, and it was
24 pretty clear that when they went and knocked on a door they
25 were probably going to get a response and were going to have

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1 a good conversation. But they played a critical role. And
2 why not, because no profession is considered nobler or more
3 trusted.

4 In fact, you may know this, but the fire fighters
5 just because of the way some circumstances developed in Ohio
6 were really central to that campaign because of a rescue
7 that had occurred. Where a great granddaughter and a son, I
8 believe it was, of an elderly woman were rescued and revived
9 by a fire fighter. Gosh I think her name was Marilyn, the
10 grandmother, great grandmother. She really became the voice
11 of the campaign talking about my loved ones wouldn't be here
12 right now were it not for highly trained and properly
13 staffed fire fighters that helped us when we needed help.
14 And were they not there, my family wouldn't be here right
15 now. So it was a very powerful, powerful part of the
16 campaign.

17 So we're going to win this thing by focusing on
18 the economic debate that collective bargaining was key to
19 the middle class. And it's key to keeping the middle class
20 from disappearing. That our opponents are the CEOs and the
21 politicians that they fund. It's not businesses or small
22 businesses that are opponents here. They are the folks who
23 benefit when there's a strong middle class. But there are
24 some powerful and well funded CEOs and bad guys out there
25 that are behind dismantling collective bargaining. And then

1 again, we need a strong middle class to help small business
2 succeed.

3 So once you guys have gotten your petitions and
4 you've started signing them inside your workplaces and with
5 your families and your co-workers, then it's time to go out
6 into the larger community and get the support of others.
7 Because that is how we will win. So we're looking forward
8 to you guys getting involved and playing a role here.
9 Because we know that when you circulate petitions, and
10 beyond getting on the ballot when we work toward passing the
11 initiative in November, that your friends and neighbors will
12 listen to you. Okay. So that's Protect our Jobs.

13 And if that wasn't enough to do in 2012, there's
14 more. It's a busy election cycle. We need to take back the
15 State House, we need to net nine seats in order to take back
16 the State House. Nothing could be -- other than collective
17 bargaining, nothing could be quite as important as that.
18 That is how we put up a firewall against any bad legislation
19 starting in 2013. But if we do win the House, which we have
20 to, but after we do that there's a Lame Duck Session which
21 allows this current legislature to still run the table
22 they'll just have less time to do it. So we have to pass
23 the collective bargaining initiative and we have to win back
24 the House so that starting in 2013 at least we have a
25 firewall. Because they're still going to do bad things

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1 after November 6th, and we need to protect ourselves into
2 the next session. And we need to protect ourselves from
3 whatever they've already done.

4 And then of course there are the federal races.
5 We have to re-elect President Obama, we have to re-elect
6 Debbie Stabenow. But one of the most important battles that
7 we face this fall often gets overlooked, and I mentioned
8 that we are finding ourselves in court a lot. And so we
9 need to have a State Supreme Court that will rule in favor
10 of working people when the time comes. We don't have that
11 State Supreme Court right now. And this year we have an
12 opportunity to elect three Michigan State Supreme Court
13 Justices. And that really does go hand-in-hand with the
14 collective bargaining initiative. Because once we win it in
15 November, they are sure to appeal it. And we do need some
16 friends on the Supreme Court to help us out there.

17 Last January the other piece of sort of going on
18 offense, last January we rolled out, the State AFL-CIO
19 rolled out, along with some partners in coalition, a 2012
20 jobs plan. And it calls for -- it's on your table, we
21 passed it out. It calls for the kind of legislation and
22 policies that we need to move Michigan ahead. It centers
23 around investing in people, and places, and the public
24 infrastructure that Michigan a great place to live, to work,
25 and to raise a family. So it's kind of our road map for how

1 do we move ahead to build an economy that works for everyone
2 where there are good jobs that pay a fair wage and people
3 can participate fully.

4 There's just a couple of highlights that I want to
5 mention about that plan. But you can take a look at it at
6 your leisure. And you can find it on the Michigan AFL-CIO
7 website at MIAFLCIO.org. So the highlights, ending tax
8 supported outsourcing of Michigan jobs. One of the worse
9 things we could be doing in an economy today -- and again as
10 public servants you guys know this better than anybody -- is
11 collecting taxes and then sending them to other states to
12 pay workers to do work that we could be doing here in
13 Michigan. That happens way too much. Last time I looked
14 there was about \$28 billion of contracting on a list of
15 potential contracts, about 1100 contracts there. A
16 significant number of them and significant dollars were
17 slated to be done outside of Michigan when they could be
18 done here. We need to stop that.

19 Second priority, we need to grow 21st century
20 Michigan clean tech jobs. So we're calling for something
21 called Green to Gold legislation which will provide capital
22 to help retool idle manufacturing facilities for clean tech
23 start-ups. The economists say that there will be about
24 500,000 jobs created in the clean tech sector in the next
25 several years. And that Michigan stands to compete for

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1 about half of those or a little over half of those. We need
2 to do something to make that happen here. We cannot leave
3 250,000 or more jobs on the table for some other state to
4 get when we have the capacity for it and we need to help
5 some folks get started in business so that they can take
6 advantage of the skilled work force and the manufacturing
7 capacity.

8 So next week actually Representative Charles
9 Brunner and some other co-sponsors are going to be rolling
10 out the Green to Gold legislation. And we're going to have
11 press events in three locations in the state, I think it's
12 Lansing, Bay City, and so this is where -- I'm having a Rick
13 Perry moment, but much lower stakes than not remembering
14 what your third priority is in a Presidential Debate --
15 Muskegon. Lansing, Bay City, and Muskegon will be having
16 local press events where the legislators will be announcing
17 the rollout of this, they'll be standing with workers and
18 some folks in the business sector that are involved in these
19 kinds of -- in this kind of manufacturing and calling on the
20 legislature to pass this kind of legislation.

21 And we don't really think that it's going to get
22 passed because we don't control getting good stuff passed.
23 Right? And they're too busy -- the other guys are too busy
24 passing bad stuff. But what we can do is say, this is what
25 Lansing should be doing to create jobs, and this is what the

1 responsible legislators are doing to create jobs. And then
2 also calling out the legislators that have been on the wrong
3 side and haven't been doing anything to create jobs.

4 Because we need to draw a contrast between what they should
5 be doing and what they aren't doing, because that all plays
6 in to winning back the House in November. So it's extremely
7 important that we push on both sides of this thing.

8 Next priority, investing in schools and our kid's
9 future. If we're going to have a talented workforce we have
10 to invest in it. It's just common sense. So schools,
11 teachers, children, that's where our investment needs to be
12 to help sustain Michigan's economic recovery. We need to
13 rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. We have wonderful
14 assets in Michigan, we need to take care of them. We need
15 to make sure that our cities are safe and attractive and
16 healthy places for people to live and work. We need to take
17 care of our roads and our bridges, our water, our sewer, our
18 bus, our rail. There's no end to the work that could be
19 done that is good for both business and communities if
20 people would step up and start doing the right thing instead
21 of attacking workers.

22 We call for protecting workers and middle class
23 families. One of the examples is this, you shouldn't have
24 to have a job to get a job. Jobless workers should have the
25 same chance at employment as those who are already employed.

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1 And employer shouldn't be allowed to discriminate against
2 them which is going on every day in this state and lots of
3 places in this country. So we're calling on legislation to
4 stop that. We're calling on other kinds of legislation to
5 hold employers responsible for classifying employees right.
6 And then for the legislature to go back and repair the
7 shredded safety net that they've been destroying over the
8 last 15 months.

9 So these are steps that need to be taken now. And
10 these are the kinds of things that we think will get
11 Michigan back on track. And we need to stop the divisive
12 policies and move forward with things that are really going
13 to create jobs. And what we have said at the state AFL, is
14 we're ready to work with anyone and everyone to help make
15 this jobs plan a reality for Michigan. So we're not about
16 just working with the affiliates in the AFL or even just
17 working with all of the members of the labor movement. We
18 have to be much, much broader than that if we're going to
19 have a successful agenda for working people in this state
20 and bring back our state's economy. So that's what we have
21 to do. Protect Our Jobs constitutional amendment, the
22 entire election cycle, the vision for the good jobs plan in
23 Michigan. We've got a lot of work cut out for us, but it's
24 also a tremendous opportunity to broaden the labor movement
25 and that is important to do.

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1 So we're on the edge of this fight, right? And
2 you guys have fight's all the time. I mean you fight fires,
3 you fight other kinds of tragedies and disasters. And you
4 can't go into a fight back on your heels, you've got to lean
5 into it, you've got to get ready for it. And I think that's
6 what we really have to get our minds around and our attitude
7 around in this state right now. Is we need to get off of
8 our heels, we need to get on our toes, we need to lean into
9 this fight and we need to do the hard work of organizing.
10 Of moving our co-workers, our families, our friends to do
11 things that they wouldn't otherwise do. But if they do
12 them, it will be in their own best interest. And we have to
13 do it with a sense of urgency and get them to commit to the
14 fight so that they will help move others.

15 So we've got to do that now, right? We've got to
16 start now and we've got to continue through the organizing
17 cycle. We can't wait until the fall, Labor Day, a lot of
18 people say Labor Day is the kickoff. We can't wait until
19 Labor Day to kick off. We have to work now. And part of
20 what we're doing and have been doing for the last year is
21 really building year round infrastructure so that we don't
22 have to start something new up in the election cycle, but
23 we've already got infrastructure going year in and year out.
24 The other side is counting on us not to be ready. And up
25 until recently I think they maybe thought we had lost our

1 fight and thought we had lost our power. But I think the
2 way we need to look at this is that they should not mistake
3 what we did to prepare and plan and make strategic decisions
4 about how to go forward as having lost our fight or lost our
5 power. We have plenty of power. In fact, we have a super
6 power in the labor movement that no one else has.

7 And our super power lies in two key assets. We
8 have a ready infrastructure of activists and leaders, people
9 just like you, and we have them all over the labor movement
10 and all of the unions around this state. You are the ones
11 and others like you all over the state, you have to be the
12 lead organizers. You have to carry the fight. And the
13 other asset that we have is we have access to people,
14 co-workers mostly, day in and day out. 600,000 union
15 workers that get up every day and go to work. And there is
16 that group of leaders and activists then who have access to
17 those 600,000 people day and day out.

18 If you've ever done any union organizing, I spent
19 ten years organizing new members for the UAW, that's an
20 organizers dream. Having a group of organizers ready to
21 organize, that's leaders and activists, and having acces to
22 the people that you want to organize. So that is our super
23 power, that is what we do, that is what makes us different
24 from everybody else out there. And that, I think is what
25 makes us such a threat to the other side.

1 So let me just leave you with these thoughts.
2 This is our time. We all stepped up to lead. Mark stepped
3 up a couple years ago, I stepped up last fall in this role.
4 You all stepped up whenever you became activists, you got
5 elected, you got appointed, whatever. Whatever role you are
6 in, you stood up and said, I'm going to do it right now. At
7 this time I'm going to stand watch. I'm going to stand
8 watch for my own members and I'm going to stand watch for
9 everybody in the state. And so together we're the ones that
10 have to do it. With our community allies, we need to work
11 together to move our state in a better direction on behalf
12 of all working families. So thank you very much.

13 (Audience applause)

14 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you very much Karla. Thanks
15 for coming out and talking, I appreciate it. Now according
16 to our Rules our next order of business is going to be the
17 adoption of the Election Rules. So I would request the
18 Election Committee rise for a partial report.

19 MR. LEVE: Thank you, Mr. President. Brothers and
20 Sisters would you please take out your Election Rules. If
21 there are no objections, I'm not going to read all the rules
22 but I would like to read some specifics on there. Item
23 number two,

24 "For nominations for the office of president,
25 vice-president, secretary/treasurer, and trustee, there

1 will be one nominating speech per candidate of no more
2 than three minutes, no second is needed. If there is
3 only one candidate for an office, that candidate will
4 be declared elected and his/her name will not appear on
5 the ballot. Candidates for the office of president and
6 secretary/treasurer will be allowed five minutes for an
7 acceptance speech immediately after the nominations are
8 concluded. Candidates must notify the
9 secretary/treasurer in writing by 7:00 p.m. on
10 Wednesday, May 2nd, 2012 if they wish to withdraw from
11 the election process."

12 Number four,

13 "The official voting place will be in an area
14 designated by the Elections Committee. There shall be
15 no campaigning within 50 feet of the election area."

16 The elections will be held in room 101 it's just to the
17 right of the main entrance here. As far as the campaigning,
18 please, if any of the candidates have buttons, t-shirts,
19 anything like that, please do not wear them within 50 feet
20 of the election area or you will not be able to vote.

21 Number eight,

22 "Only valid ballots shall be counted as ballots cast.
23 A majority of all ballots cast shall be necessary for
24 election to office. Write-in candidates will not be
25 permitted and will void ballot."

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1 Number 11,

2 "Candidates for a contested office shall be permitted
3 to appoint an observer to witness the balloting and
4 also an observer to witness the tabulation of ballots.
5 The names of the observers shall be submitted in
6 writing to the chairman of the Election Committee by
7 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 3rd in the convention
8 office."

9 Number 12, voting dates and times,

10 "Election of all officers shall be conducted on
11 Thursday, May 3rd, 2012, commencing at approximately
12 3:30 p.m. and continue to 4:00 p.m. Those standing in
13 line at 4:00 p.m. or the announced closing time will be
14 permitted to vote. Any time after that they will be
15 excluded."

16 Number 13,

17 "Each delegate must identify him/herself with his or
18 her convention badge to receive a ballot from a member
19 of the election committee. As each delegate is given
20 their ballot, his or her name shall be checked on the
21 list of authorized delegates maintained by Election
22 Committee. Voting by proxy will only be permitted in
23 accordance with Article 5, Section 5 of the MPFFU Union
24 Constitution and By-Laws and if they were delivered to
25 the MpFFU office or postmarked by April 25th, 2012."

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1 Number 14,

2 "After each delegate has been handed his or her ballot,
3 they shall mark it in private by placing a mark in the
4 box next to the name of the candidate of his or her
5 choice for that office. A delegate may vote for not
6 more than one nominee for each office. Only duly
7 authorize" -- excuse me -- "Only duly nominated
8 candidates printed on the ballot may be voted for. Any
9 write-in candidate will invalidate the vote for such
10 delegate for the office under which the write-in
11 candidate's name appears"

12 Number 18,

13 "The Election Committee shall have exclusive control
14 over tabulation of ballots and only the Election
15 Committee and appointed observers shall be permitted to
16 be present while the tabulation is taking place. All
17 Election Committee members and observers shall remain in
18 the room until the time of the announcement of the
19 results of election to the delegates."

20 Number 12,

21 "Any objection or claim of irregularity following
22 tabulation of ballots shall be made to the chairman of
23 the Election Committee and ruled upon prior to the
24 announcement of the results of the election."

25 Mr. President, as chairman of the Elections

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1 Committee, I move for adoption of these rules with no
2 changes.

3 MR. DOCHERTY: Okay. Committee moves for adoption
4 of the Election Rules. Anybody wish to speak? Seeing
5 nobody rise to the mikes, all in favor raise your hand.

6 (Show of hands)

7 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed? Motion
8 carries. Rules adopted.

9 MR. LEVE: Thank you, Mr. President.

10 MR. DOCHERTY: The next order of business is
11 nominations for officers. I'd ask the Elections Committee
12 to come back up to the podium.

13 MR. LEVE: I'd like to open up nominations for the
14 office of President of the Michigan Professional Fire
15 Fighters Union. Are there any nominations for the office of
16 President? Yes, Brother?

17 MR. BADE: Tim Bade, Secretary Sterling Heights.
18 I'd like to take this opportunity to nominate current
19 President Mark Docherty. I've had the opportunity to work
20 with Mark since the day we got hired, it's over 17 years
21 now. You will not find a more dedicated individual to both
22 the fire service, union leadership, or dedicated person in
23 time and talent. So I would like to take this opportunity
24 to nominate my Brother Mark Docherty.

25 MR. LEVE: Thank you. No seconds needed. Are

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1 there any other nominations for the office of President of
2 the MPFFU? Are there any other nominations for the office
3 of MPFFU President? Are there any other nominations?
4 Seeing none, call the nominations closed. Mr. Docherty, do
5 you accept the nomination?

6 MR. DOCHERTY: Yes, I do.

7 MR. LEVE: Seeing no other candidates, I declare
8 you elected by acclimation. Thank you.

9 (Audience applause)

10 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you. I am honored to have
11 your support again for another two years. It certainly --
12 been through a lot these last couple years, but I see the
13 path ahead of us and the fact we need to retain our
14 leadership and continue the fight. I'm happy to do that,
15 I'm honored to do that on your behalf. Thank you.

16 (Audience applause)

17 MR. LEVE: Nominations for the office of
18 Secretary/Treasurer of the MPFFU are now open. Are there
19 any nominations for the office of Secretary/Treasurer?

20 MR. BENEDETTI: Rick Benedetti, Trenton Fire
21 Fighters. I stand before you to nominate Terry Chesney for
22 Secretary/Treasurer. I've known Terry for 20 years of my
23 career, he was the founding president of our local. And he
24 has done great things for our union throughout the whole
25 time he's been here the 22 years he's served the state union

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1 and our local. So I nominate Terry Chesney.

2 MR. LEVE: Thank you. Are there any other
3 nominations for the office of Secretary/Treasurer of the
4 MPFFU? Are there any other nominations? Are there any
5 other nominations? Seeing none nominations are closed. Mr.
6 Chesney, do you accept the nomination for
7 Secretary/Treasurer?

8 MR. CHESNEY: Yes.

9 MR. LEVE: Thank you. Seeing no other candidates,
10 I declare you elected by acclamation. Congratulations.

11 (Audience applause)

12 MR. CHESNEY: This is a very humbling. It never
13 gets any easier coming up here. I've been honored and
14 privileged to represent you for a good number of years and
15 every time I do it, it's harder and harder to say I'm
16 honored. But I really am humbled, I appreciate your
17 support. And let's get to work. Thanks.

18 MR. LEVE: Thank you, Terry. My co-chair Glen
19 Scafidi will now do the nominations for vice-presidents.

20 MR. SCAFIDI: Nominations for Vice-President of
21 the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union for the 1st
22 and 3rd District are now open. Are there any nominations
23 for the office of Vice-President for the 1st and 3rd
24 District?

25 MR. WAGNER: Good afternoon, Kurt Wagner,

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1 President Bay City Fire Fighters Local 116, 3rd District. On
2 behalf of the members of the 3rd District I think Chris has
3 represented us very, very well over the last few years.
4 He's been doing such a great job. I've talked to some
5 members from the 1st District, they're very pleased with his
6 efforts and what he's done for them also. So it would be my
7 honor to nominate Chris Reynolds again for 1st/3rd District
8 Vice-President.

9 MR. SCAFIDI: Are there any other nominations for
10 1st/3rd District Vice-President? Are there any other
11 nominations? Are there any other nominations? Seeing none
12 I declare nominations closed. Brother Reynolds, do you
13 accept the nomination?

14 MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

15 MR. SCAFIDI: Based on that I declare you elected
16 by acclamation, congratulations.

17 (Audience applause)

18 MR. SCAFIDI: Nominations for the office of
19 Vice-President for the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters
20 Union for the office of 2nd District Vice-President are now
21 open. Are there any nominations for the office of
22 Vice-President for the 2nd District?

23 MR. HOLLINRAKE: Matt Hollinrake, Kentwood. I'd
24 like to nominate Shaun Abbey for the office of 2nd District
25 Vice-President. Shaun has been doing it for six years now,

1 he's never backed down from a fight. I've personally known
2 him for 12 years and everything he's done he's done with the
3 union's good intentions in mind. I'd like to nominate him
4 again.

5 MR. SCAFIDI: Are there any other nominations for
6 2nd District Vice-President? Are there any other
7 nominations? Are there any other nominations? Seeing no
8 other nominations, I declare nominations closed. Brother
9 Abbey, do you accept the nomination?

10 MR. ABBEY: Yes, I do.

11 MR. SCAFIDI: Based on that I declare you elected
12 by acclamation. Congratulations.

13 (Audience applause)

14 MR. SCAFIDI: The nominations for the office of
15 Vice-President of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters
16 Union for the 4th District are now open. Are there any
17 nominations for the office of Vice-President for the 4th
18 District?

19 MR. SILVANI: Mike Silvani, Lincoln Park Fire
20 Local 1292. I nominate Steve Heim, he's our local
21 president. I've known Steve for 17 years, he's very
22 dedicated. I nominate Steve Heim for 4th District
23 Vice-President.

24 MR. SCAFIDI: Are there any other nominations for
25 4th District Vice-President? Are there any other

1 nominations? Are there any other nominations? I declare
2 nominations closed. Brother Heim, do you accept the
3 nomination?

4 MR. HEIM: I do.

5 MR. SCAFIDI: Based on that I declare you elected
6 by acclamation. Congratulations.

7 (Audience applause)

8 MR. SCAFIDI: Okay. Nominations for the office of
9 Vice-President of Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union
10 for the 5th District are now open. Are there any
11 nominations for the office of Vice-President for the 5th
12 District?

13 MR. SPRINGER: Mike Springer, Adrian 1511. I'd
14 like to nominate Jim Leve. In the four or so years that
15 I've been a local president, Jim has been a great asset to
16 not only myself in Adrian, but also to the 5th District. I
17 believe his knowledge and his experience is a true asset to
18 this union. I nominate Jim Leve, 5th District VP.

19 MR. SCAFIDI: Are there any other nominations for
20 5th District Vice-President? Are there any other
21 nominations? Are there any other nominations? I declare
22 nominations closed. Brother Leve, do you accept the
23 nomination?

24 MR. LEVE: Yes, I do.

25 MR. SCAFIDI: Based on that, I declare you elected

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1 by acclamation. Congratulations.

2 (Audience applause)

3 MR. SCAFIDI: Nominations for the office of
4 Vice-President of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters
5 Union for the 6th District are now open. Are there any
6 nominations for the office of Vice-President for the 6th
7 District?

8 MR. HOUDE: Andy Houde, Harrison Township. I'd
9 like to nominate Dan Dawe, 6th District Vice-President. Dan
10 has had a lot of difficult things to deal with in the 6th,
11 Pontiac one, Waterford the most pressing one. And dealing
12 with mergers in the district between our local and Mt.
13 Clemens as we're working through the process. Dan has
14 always been there for us, he's been there in Lansing doing
15 the job. I nominate Dan Dawe 6th District.

16 MR. SCAFIDI: Are there any other nominations for
17 the 6th District Vice-President? Are there any other
18 nominations? Are there any other nominations? I declare
19 nominations closed. Brother Dawe, do you accept the
20 nomination?

21 MR. DAWE: Yes.

22 MR. SCAFIDI: Based on that I declare you elected
23 by acclamation. Congratulations.

24 (Audience applause)

25 MR. LEVE: Thank you. And for your wonderful

1 comments about me not being able to walk down to the end to
2 congratulate people because of my age. The nominations for
3 office of Northern Trustee are now open. Are there any
4 nominations for the office of Northern Trustee?

5 MR. HAUSBECK: Brandon Hausbeck, Saginaw Local
6 102. I'd like to nominate Aileen Pettinger. Most of you
7 know Aileen, she's been with Saginaw for 15 years.
8 Currently as a lieutenant. She's been our secretary of our
9 local for eight years, she is currently the Northern Trustee
10 and she's been in that position for four years. Aileen
11 attends countless labor rallies, always fighting for
12 organized labor. As you all know, she is a dedicated union
13 member. She does a lot of things for charities including
14 MDA, soup kitchens, and providing Christmases for some of
15 our lower privileged families. She's a great ambassador for
16 the MPFFU. And if re-elected to the position of Northern
17 Trustee, I know she'll give the position her all. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. LEVE: Are there any other nominations for the
20 office of Northern Trustee? Are there any other
21 nominations? Are there any other nominations? Nominations
22 are not closed. Sister, do you accept the nomination?

23 MS. PETTINGER: Yes, I do.

24 MR. LEVE: Seeing no other candidates, I declare
25 you elected by acclamation. Congratulations.

1 (Audience applause)

2 MR. LEVE: Nominations for Eastern Trustee are now
3 open. Are there any nominations for Eastern Trustee?

4 MR. HATFIELD: Marc Hatfield, Southgate Fire
5 Fighters. I nominate my Brother TJ Manning for the Eastern
6 District Trustee position. You're not going to see not too
7 many more guys with more compassion and dedication than what
8 TJ shows. He's been on my executive board for the last
9 eight years as treasurer/secretary. I think he'll be
10 perfect in doing the job as Trustee.

11 MR. LEVE: Thank you. Are there any other
12 nominations?

13 MR. KENNY: Chris Kenny, Hazel Park, Local 1414.
14 I'd like to nominate Ed Hosmer for Eastern Trustee. Ed has
15 been our financial watchdog for the past 12 years. He's
16 personally helped so many locals with first time contracts
17 and improving their constitution and by-laws. The man is a
18 genius. Now is not the time to lose his experience. I feel
19 Ed could live in China and still be a great asset to this
20 union.

21 MR. LEVE: Thank you. Are there any other
22 nominations for the office of Eastern Trustee? Are there
23 any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? I
24 declare nominations closed. There will be an election in
25 room 101 for the office of Eastern Trustee tomorrow. And

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1 last, nominations for Western Trustee are now open.

2 MR. LAKE: Chris Lake, Lansing Fire Fighters Local
3 421. I stand before you today to nominate Brother
4 Weisenberg for Western Trustee. Dave was the local
5 president when I hired on a few years ago. Retired out of
6 our Local and now has served as Trustee for this union for
7 several years. He's done an outstanding job and I nominate
8 Brother Weisenberg for Western Trustee.

9 MR. LEVE: Are there any other nominations for
10 Western Trustee? Are there any other nominations? Are
11 there any other nominations? Nominations are closed.
12 Brother Weisenberg, do you accept the nomination?

13 MR. WEISENBERG: Yes.

14 MR. LEVE: Thank you. Seeing no other candidates,
15 I declare you elected by acclamation. Congratulations.

16 (Audience applause)

17 MR. LEVE: And I did make a mistake for the
18 Eastern Trustee. I did not ask the candidates if they
19 accepted the nominations. I'm assuming they are. But Ed do
20 you accept the nomination?

21 MR. HOSMER: Yes.

22 MR. LEVE: TJ?

23 MR. MANNING: Yes.

24 MR. LEVE: Thank you. Nominations are now closed.

25 MR. DOCHERTY: Now that nominations are taken care

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1 of we are going to move on to some of our resolutions. I
2 want to make a point that throughout this process our
3 general counsel Michael O'Hearon will be our parliamentarian
4 if we have any issues that arise. We're going to begin as
5 the Rules of Order call for, we have to begin with all per
6 capita items. So I'm going to call the Constitution and
7 By-Laws Committee up for a partial report.

8 MR. HEIM: Brothers and Sisters I'd ask you to
9 pull out Resolution 6 per capita tax increase.

10 "Whereas the membership of the Michigan Professional
11 Fire Fighters Union has declined by more than 500
12 members during the past twelve months. And whereas
13 there is a strong possibility for further reductions of
14 membership in the future as many cities and townships
15 continue to attempt to balance their budgets on the
16 backs of fire fighters and paramedics. And whereas the
17 loss of membership since the last convention equates to
18 a reduction of more than \$70,000 in annual per capita
19 tax revenue to the MPFFU. And whereas in order to
20 replace this lost revenue the MPFFU per capita tax rate
21 of the remaining 3700 MPFFU members would have to
22 increase by \$1.58 per member per month. And whereas
23 there is already a cost of living per capita tax
24 increase of .36 cents per member per month that is
25 scheduled to take effect on July 1st, 2012. Therefore

1 be in resolved that in order to replace the revenue
2 that was lost due to the reduction in membership, the
3 Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union Constitution
4 and By-Laws shall be amended to reflect an increase of
5 \$1.22 effective July 1st, 2012."

6 On behalf of the committee, I move to adopt
7 Resolution Number 6. The committee deliberated on this
8 resolution at length. The committee took into consideration
9 the loss of membership and the declining revenue as a result
10 of the current economic climate, layoffs, and internal
11 decisions that have impacted the overall number of members
12 within our organization. It also took into consideration
13 the increased need for local assistance, legislative
14 participation, and various service needs to defend ourselves
15 from the current onslaught of attacks. With an uncertain
16 economic future, expiration of SAFER Grants throughout the
17 state, and factors that could result in the further
18 reduction in membership, the committee believes that the
19 increase will be necessary to provide the required
20 assistance our members deserve.

21 The committee examined the policies adopted by the
22 MPFFU executive board including the voluntary reduction in
23 compensation of 25% to provide a fiscally responsible budget
24 for fiscal year 2012. And the committee also discussed the
25 possible reinstatement of locals that have voluntarily

1 withdrawn. While remaining optimistic, the likely return of
2 these members returning within a time frame that
3 significantly impacts our immediate needs is very unlikely.
4 This resolution if adopted will bring revenue levels back in
5 line with the budget of our previous year and place this
6 organization in a strong position to carry out the needs of
7 our members. We'll also show our disillusioned Brothers and
8 Sisters that have pushed for division and separation all of
9 the free ride leave when the fight gets tough self-centered
10 members that this organization shall not falter or fail its
11 membership in its greatest time of need. Mr. Chairman, on
12 behalf of the committee I move for adoption of Resolution
13 Number 6.

14 MR. DOCHERTY: Okay. Committee moves to adopt
15 Resolution Number 6. We're going to open the mikes up for
16 discussion on this issue. Seeing nobody at the mikes.
17 Everyone raise your hand in favor of supporting the
18 recommendation to adopt Resolution Number 6.

19 (Show of hands)

20 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Raise your hand if you
21 oppose. Motion carried.

22 MR. HEIM: Brothers and Sisters, I would now ask
23 you to pull out Resolution Number 12. Add PSO committee to
24 the standing committees of the MPFFU.

25 "Whereas the members of the Michigan Professional Fire

1 Fighters Union are under unprecedented attacks on many
2 levels. And whereas including in these attacks is a
3 renewed push by both the Michigan legislature and the
4 Governor's office to encourage committees to merge
5 traditional separate fire and police departments into a
6 public safety office or PSO Department that cross
7 trains fire fighters and police officers to dual roles.
8 And whereas the resurgence of PSO departments has
9 already spread like a plague through the State of
10 Michigan decimating any career MPFFU and IAFF fire
11 departments. And has directly contributed to many of
12 our union members being forced into layoffs and/or
13 reduced safe fire fighting staffing levels. And
14 whereas it is recognized that in most instances when
15 the citizens of a community under the threat of PSO
16 have been properly educated, the citizens have chosen
17 at the election booths to keep their fire and police
18 department separate. And whereas the effects of
19 trying to educate the legislature and the Governor's
20 office about the fallacy of how a PSO merger saves
21 taxpayer dollars have been and will continue to be a
22 constant battle for the MPFFU PSO Comment members.
23 Therefore be it resolved that Article 7 Section 8 of
24 the MPFFU Constitution and By-Laws shall be amended to
25 include the PSO Committee as a standing committee of

1 the MPFFU.

2 On behalf of the committee I move for adoption of
3 Resolution Number 12.

4 MR. DOCHERTY: You heard the committee recommends
5 adoption of Resolution Number 12. We'll open the floor to
6 discussion at the mikes. Seeing no one at the mikes. All
7 in favor or supporting Resolution 12 please raise your
8 hands.

9 (Show of hands)

10 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed? Motion
11 carried.

12 MR. ABBEY: Brothers and Sisters can you please
13 turn to Resolution Number 7, special assessment. Resolution
14 Number 7, special assessment.

15 "Whereas the members of the Michigan Professional Fire
16 Fighters Union as well as other public sector unions
17 are under attack on any different fronts. And whereas
18 in order to fight against these attacks, the MPFFU in
19 conjunction with the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions have
20 initiated a Project Our Jobs campaign to place a
21 referendum on the on the November 2012 ballot. And
22 whereas this referendum will amend the Michigan
23 Constitution to protect the collective bargaining
24 rights of our members as well as all union members.
25 And whereas if this referendum is successful, it will

1 prohibit any further attacks on our collective
2 bargaining rights by the legislature or the Governor.
3 And whereas the campaign for this important referendum
4 will be very costly and will take support and financial
5 commitment by all of labor to get passed. And whereas
6 the IAFF has already committed the initial \$100,000 to
7 allow our organization a seat at the campaign table.
8 Therefore be it resolved that upon adoption of this
9 resolution, each local belonging to the Michigan
10 Professional Fire Fighters Union shall be assessed a
11 one time \$25 per member special assessment. And be it
12 further resolved that an invoice shall be sent to each
13 local based on the number of members in the local as of
14 May 1st, 2012. And be it further resolved that payment
15 from each local shall be due no later than July 15th,
16 2012. And be it finally resolved that the monies
17 generated from this assessment will be used to help
18 fund activities related to the MPFFU Fighting Back
19 campaign, and the AFL/CIO Protect Our Jobs campaign."

20 On behalf of committee, I move to adopt Resolution
21 Number 7. The committee deliberated this resolution taking
22 into consideration the importance of the issue addressed and
23 the significant impact of this Constitutional Amendment.
24 The \$25 assessment was used to match the \$100,000
25 contribution made by the IAFF in this fight. It will be

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1 seen by both the IAFF and organized labor as a commitment to
2 this important cause. It is the hope of all involved that
3 additional funds will be added as a result of our
4 commitment. The overall estimated cost of this campaign is
5 in excess of \$17 million. The committee recognized the
6 commitment and proposed as a reasonable contribution to a
7 campaign of this magnitude. It took into consideration the
8 size of our organization and the ability of our members to
9 meet this level of commitment during these tough times. The
10 committee strongly recommends that the body use the \$25
11 assessment proposed as a ceiling and encourages members and
12 locals that wish to contribute larger amounts to do so
13 independently of this assessment. Mr. Chairman, on behalf
14 of the committee I move to adopt Resolution Number 7.

15 MR. DOCHERTY: We hear the committee recommends
16 adoption of Resolution Number 7. We'll open the floor to
17 debate. Microphone number one.

18 MR. LAKE: Chris Lake, Lansing Fire Fighters Local
19 421. I stand in favor of this. This is an attack that we
20 have to fight, this special assessment is needed. Our
21 International Association of Fire Fighters ponied up
22 \$100,000 right off the bat. Now it's our turn to stand up
23 and fight this fight. The ball is rolling, we can't stop
24 it, we've got to jump into it and fight this all the way and
25 not give up. That's all I have to say. Thanks. Microphone

1 number two.

2 MR. SCOTT: Rob Scott, Southfield 1029. Just one
3 question. This special assessment, will we get another seat
4 at the table or are we just going to have one seat at the
5 International?

6 MR. DOCHERTY: I can answer that because I was
7 sitting there. What it does is there's voting strength by
8 the amount of donated monies to the campaign. Each
9 organization has one seat at the table, but the strength is
10 delegated by the contributions to the campaign. So it will
11 give us a greater influence. Microphone number 2?

12 MR. BROSANAN: Bernie Brosnan, Local 1206 from
13 Redford Township. I just want to be clear that this is not
14 a continuation of the assessment from last year; correct?
15 This is a separate campaign all together?

16 MR. ABBEY: It is the committee's understanding it
17 is not. The only reason that was even put in there was if
18 we need to leverage that money any way we can. For example,
19 for a seat or if we can use that -- the money there -- for
20 example, if it takes \$50,000 to get to that next level and
21 they need \$50,000 and we still have \$50,000 left, we might
22 need that, we would not put that back into our budget, that
23 would go into the Fighting Back campaign for the continued
24 fight. The committee's intent of it is to give all that
25 money to the AFL/CIO Protect Our Jobs campaign.

1 MR. BROSNAN: And similar to at last year's
2 special convention when we were talking about the assessment
3 from last year, there was quite a debate that went on
4 especially in regards to transparency of how the funds are
5 being used. And I can only assume that we'll have similar
6 transparency; correct? Which would be fine with me.

7 MR. ABBEY: The committee saw this as we're giving
8 this money to the Protect our Jobs campaign. But we wanted
9 to leave an out if for some reason we needed something
10 somewhere else. We wanted to have some flexibility there
11 because it is for the Protect Our Jobs campaign and the
12 transparency would be more so in that campaign because --
13 the money would be given to them. So however they use it.

14 MR. BROSNAN: Thank you.

15 MR. DOCHERTY: No other speakers? All in favor to
16 support the resolution, raise your hand.

17 (Show of hands)

18 MR. DOCHERTY: Opposed?

19 (Show of hands)

20 MR. DOCHERTY: Motion carried.

21 MR. ABBEY: Brothers and Sisters can you please
22 turn to Resolution Number 26, the creation of a legislative
23 director/officer. Resolution Number 26, the creation of a
24 legislative director/officer.

25 "Whereas the MPFFU executive board is facing more

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1 challenges now than before. And whereas the demand for
2 local's help is greater than it has ever been, the
3 demand to be in Lansing is also greater. Therefore be
4 it resolved that the MPFFU executive board make a
5 legislative director/officer from an interview process
6 of candidates who apply for this appointment."

7 On behalf of committee, I move to reject
8 Resolution Number 26. The committee deliberated this
9 resolution and determined that the creation of a legislative
10 director/officer was unnecessary and cost prohibitive. Mr.
11 Chairman, on behalf of the committee I move to reject
12 Resolution Number 26.

13 MR. DOCHERTY: We have a recommended rejection by
14 committee on Resolution 26. We'll open the floor to
15 discussion. Microphone number two.

16 MR. SCOTT: Rob Scott, Local 1029 Southfield. I
17 actually put this resolution together coming from our past
18 district meeting. And as we heard today, these gentlemen up
19 here, we're in the fight of our lives. We're busier than
20 ever. So I figured do something, put something together to
21 kind of make their work load a little easier. And we heard
22 Melissa our lobbyist speak earlier that they're fighting
23 every day at the capital. So why not give her some help?
24 And that might free up President Docherty a little bit.
25 Just thinking outside the box a little bit. And actually

1 with this I know there's a couple things on the
2 compensation. And my intent on it, I know it's not in here,
3 was whoever -- if it passes and whoever gets it if it passes
4 would get compensated on a days work, a days work, days pay,
5 that's it. So it wouldn't be a salary. And also there's
6 another resolution in here that we put together for
7 Southfield, 24, about the District VP at Large. Actually I
8 like this one better.

9 MR. DOCHERTY: Anyone else wishing to speak on
10 this issue? I see no other speakers at the microphones.
11 We're going to call the question. A yes vote on this would
12 mean you are agreeing with the rejection vote of the
13 committee. All in favor to reject the resolution.

14 (Show of hands)

15 MR. DOCHERTY: Opposed?

16 (Show of hands)

17 MR. DOCHERTY: Motion carried. Resolution
18 rejected.

19 MR. HEIM: Brothers and Sisters we would ask you
20 to turn to Resolution 24, Vice-President At Large.

21 "Whereas the MPFFU executive board is facing more
22 challenges now than before. And whereas the demand for
23 local's help is greater than it has ever been and the
24 demand in Lansing is greater. Therefore be it resolved
25 that a Vice-President At Large be made to lessen the

1 burden on the MPFFU executive board in these difficult
2 times we are facing. And be it further resolved when
3 the demand is not as great, the Vice-President At Large
4 be removed."

5 On behalf of the committee I move to reject
6 Resolution 24. The committee deliberated this resolution
7 and determined that the creation of a Vice-President At
8 Large was unnecessary and cost prohibitive. Mr. Chairman,
9 on behalf of the committee I move to reject Resolution
10 Number 24.

11 MR. DOCHERTY: Committee recommends rejection of
12 Resolution Number 24. We open the floor for discussion.
13 Seeing no other people wishing to speak, I'll call for the
14 question. All in favor or rejecting Resolution 24 raise
15 your hands.

16 (Show of hands)

17 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed?

18 (Show of hands)

19 MR. DOCHERTY: Motion rejected.

20 MR. HEIM: Brothers and Sisters I now ask that you
21 pull out Resolution 27, daily compensation rate for District
22 Vice-Presidents and Trustees. Brothers and Sisters I stand
23 corrected here. We're going to switch to a different
24 resolution, we have to go through all the per capita
25 increases, proposed increases first. We're going to switch

1 to Resolution Number 15, 1-5. Okay. So on Resolution 15,
2 funding of millage -- it's one of the ones passed out this
3 morning. Includes the amendments that were made by the
4 committee, they're struck through. And I'll read it in its
5 entirety. Funding of millage grant program.

6 "Whereas the current Millage Grant Program Article 14
7 was established when funding was not an issue because
8 of telemarketing money and more members. And whereas
9 the financial resources of the MPFFU have been strained
10 due to the decrease in telemarketing money, number of
11 members paying per capita, and the increase of costs
12 due to the labor climate in the state. And whereas
13 many locals receive this grant even if they are not in
14 need of financial assistance. And whereas many locals
15 need this assistance because they do not have the
16 financial ability to fully fund a campaign. Therefore
17 be it resolved that the delegates assembled at the 50th
18 Biennial MPFFU Convention vote to increase per capita
19 by .20 cents a month per member to fund the millage
20 grant program. And be it further resolved that the
21 MPFFU executive board create a list of criteria for
22 locals to meet to qualify for the grant."

23 The amendments in the committee include the struck
24 out language. The bottom resolved was in conflict, if the
25 vote was taken and it was rejected the bottom resolved

1 wouldn't carry. So it tries to do two things at once, it
2 had to be separated out. So the bottom, 28, 29, and 30 were
3 separated out. It was struck from this particular
4 resolution. On behalf of the committee, I move to adopt
5 Resolution Number 15 as amended. The committee after
6 significant deliberation of this resolution recognized that
7 the current language contained in the MPFFU Constitution and
8 By-Laws as it pertains to the Millage Grant Program remains
9 unfunded, uncapped, and unsustainable. The committee
10 recognizes the importance of the grant program but also
11 recognizes that it's in need of significant reform. A more
12 organized approach will ensure the selection process and the
13 decision to distribute funds to be balanced and cost
14 appropriate. The committee removed the last resolved as I
15 explained to its own independent resolution for
16 consideration on a separate stand alone issue to be later
17 considered on the floor. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the
18 committee, I move to adopt Resolution Number 15 as amended.

19 MR. DOCHERTY: Okay. Committee is recommending
20 adoption of Resolution 15. Open the floor to discussion.
21 Microphone number two.

22 MR. BALA: Scott Bala, Roseville. I guess a
23 clarification. So we're still -- there's no cap on the
24 number of grants; correct? So as I rise in support of this
25 as a local that's used this on a number of occasions, having

1 that check, taking to those committees and those programs is
2 invaluable political action at your local level. It's
3 helped us quite a bit in recent years. Again, rise in
4 support of this.

5 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two.

6 MR. BROSNAN: Bernie Brosnan, Redford Township
7 Local 1206. Just have a question about -- regarding the
8 list of criteria for locals to meet to qualify for the
9 grant. Has there been some discussion as to what the
10 criteria, specific criteria would be?

11 MR. HEIM: We did discuss it at length in
12 committee. The probably we really had with establishing
13 anything really firm was that limited flexibility, which we
14 ran into problems with even the dates and times of the
15 millage. So depending on how this thing was drafted, it was
16 limited to six or any of the other changes, locals that had
17 spring millage proposals and others may be apt to get more
18 benefit from this. And as the funds ran out, those in the
19 fall would be excluded from that. So this was a chance for
20 us to sit down in a much more organized fashion, think
21 through those proposed, where they would land, and what
22 locals would be affected. And also to determine not only
23 the financial need of the local itself that was asking for
24 the grant, but also for us to take into consideration the
25 amount of expenditures we had based on the funds we brought

1 in. So it was to provide more flexibility than originally
2 specified in the resolution that had been put before us.
3 And also to allow the board the ability to make independent,
4 reasonable decisions as the process continues.

5 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

6 MR. ABBEY: Shaun Abbey, MPFFU Delegate-at-Large.
7 In the committee we voted to take out the number, but it
8 still creates a fund. So there is a cap. The issue in the
9 committee was what if you get seven? Well, the whole
10 problem with the program the way it is now, is it's not
11 capped it's just free flowing money. Now, if you guys want
12 to make this \$2 and have -- we can get as many as we want
13 that would be terrific. I mean, it's up to you. But I mean
14 we're trying to get a number, that's where the .20 cents
15 came in that we thought locals could swallow. And then to
16 create a fund.

17 The fund right now would be around \$9,000 a year
18 so that would fund six millage grants that year based on the
19 criteria we have. The criteria we have would hopefully do
20 things like the IFF EDF loan does where how much money you
21 have, what your per capita is, have you assessed any money,
22 what this is going to do to your local if this passes,
23 doesn't pass, things like that. And we trusted that the E
24 board would be able to come up with a good list.

25 But there needs to be parameters to this, that's

1 why we made this motion. And that's why there has to be a
2 cap. If there's not a cap, then I understand arguments
3 we've had in the past with what if you're the seventh guy, I
4 understand that, that's just the way it is. But we do not
5 have unlimited funds. So that's why the set amount. So
6 when that \$9,000 is gone for this year -- it was the intent
7 of the group and the committee when we talked creating the
8 fund the way we did, that that money would roll. So if
9 there's only \$5,000 used, we wanted it to roll. And that's
10 something we discussed with Secretary/Treasurer Chesney and
11 make sure that we can do that. But we'd let that 4,000 roll
12 over to next year So that next year there will be \$10,000 in
13 that fund. So again, that's something that would have to
14 come from the E board. Thanks.

15 MR. HEIM: Just as a point of reference here for
16 the comments that were just made. The resolution that was
17 written does not prohibit the ability of the board to use
18 general expenditure funds for anything that they normally
19 could use it for. So if there was a need or emergency, this
20 does not totally eliminate the possibility of using funds
21 from other places to fund millages. This is just to bring
22 in funds specifically for that in the line item. So I want
23 to make sure everyone understands that.

24 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

25 MR. WEISENBERG: Dave Weisenberg, Western Trustee

1 Delegate-at-Large. Mr. Chairman, the convention is going
2 too smooth so I thought I'd throw a wrench into it for you.
3 As the chairman of the Finance Committee I cannot make a
4 recommendation based or from the committee, but this was
5 brought up during the Finance Committee's deliberations.
6 One of the things that was -- I'm sorry. I've got to make a
7 motion, then I can talk. I'd like to make -- propose an
8 amendment to the resolution. The resolution itself does not
9 include the \$1500 fund, but Article 14 does, states the
10 millage is for 1500. I'd like to recommend a motion that
11 says that we will change that to 1,000 per locals.

12 MR. DOCHERTY: So you're going to add a resolved?

13 MR. HEIM: Yes. Brothers and Sisters it's on page
14 45 of your Constitution.

15 MR. DOCHERTY: Do you have language you'd like to
16 add in?

17 MR. WEISENBERG: I'd like to strike the \$1500
18 amount and replace that with 1,000.

19 MR. DOCHERTY: So it would be, "Be it resolved
20 that the millage Grant Program maximum will not exceed
21 1,000"?

22 MR. WEISENBERG: Right.

23 MR. DOCHERTY: Do we have support on the motion?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

25 MR. DOCHERTY: Discussion on the motion to amend.

1 MR. WEISENBERG: Dave Weisenberg,
2 Delegate-at-Large. Mr. Chairman, the thought of the
3 committee was that we all realize of course that this
4 organization is under strained budget. We're seeing more
5 and more locals being attacked. We're trying to cut down
6 per capita, we're trying to save where we can. And let's
7 face it, the reality is, as Brother Bala said, he's used the
8 millage a lot of our locals have. But let's be honest, the
9 reality of it is, whether it's \$1,000 or \$1500, isn't going
10 to pay for the millage. It's really a token, it's a way of
11 saying listen, the MPFFU is there for the fight and we're
12 trying to help you out. The thought process was very simply
13 that if we're going to be limited to a \$1500 amount -- or
14 excuse me. If we're limited to \$9,000 funding, that we
15 could split that up. Instead of six locals getting it, we
16 could possibly have it to nine instead. Simply logic.

17 MR. DOCHERTY: Anybody else wish to speak on the
18 amendment? Number two?

19 MR. BROSANAN: Bernie Brosnan, Local 1206 Redford
20 Township. So the amendment is going to add a resolve to
21 reduce or to change Article 14 in the Constitution to \$1,000
22 from \$1500?

23 MR. DOCHERTY: It states it cannot exceed \$1500,
24 we would amend it to say it cannot exceed \$1,000.

25 MR. BROSANAN: I understand. Am I understanding

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1 that this amendment to the resolution comes from the idea
2 that there were only six or is this an older idea that after
3 the language was amended in the amended resolution?

4 MR. DOCHERTY: Can you restate your question?

5 MR. BROSNAN: I may not be being very clear. The
6 old resolution, the original resolution said that it was
7 going to create six millage grants. But there's not
8 necessarily going to be a cap on these millage grants
9 according to Resolution Number 15; is that correct?

10 MR. HEIM: I believe so. And also the committee
11 did address the \$1500 mark, we talked about it, and when we
12 reviewed the Article and the committee felt it was not our
13 position to rewrite and restructure the intent of the
14 resolution that had gone past what the original mover had
15 intended. So we talked about it, we thought of adding it,
16 we felt that was beyond the control of the Constitution and
17 By-Laws Committee.

18 MR. BROSNAN: Thank you.

19 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two?

20 MR. SCOTT: Rob Scott, Southfield 1029. Just need
21 some clarification. The original amendment had in there
22 funding for six. Then it was amended, but went to
23 Constitution and By-Laws, it's the one that we have in front
24 of us that has crossed out funding or removal and "removal"
25 is crossed off. And down there, to create six, "six" is

1 crossed out. So to fund the Millage Grant Program; right?
2 And Brother Weisenberg brought up about in his amendment go
3 up six again. So is six going to be in there or is this
4 just going to be "fund"? Let's get some clarification.

5 MR. HEIM: I would like to hear the amendment that
6 was proposed read back so that would make some sense to me
7 too is to hear it. I'm not sure.

8 MR. CHESNEY: I was going to ask for clarification
9 too. But it's my understanding right now that the amendment
10 would read, Article 14 would be amended to say that the
11 "MPFFU shall provide financial assistance to locals in an
12 amount not to exceed \$1,000 biannually for costs associated
13 with ballot issues regarding millages, referendums, and
14 other issues." Basically amending Article 14 to change the
15 number 1500 to 1,000. The maker of that motion says that's
16 correct.

17 MR. DOCHERTY: Okay. I'm going to re-read the
18 resolved as it will be written, just to make sure we're all
19 clear on this amendment issue. "Be it resolved upon request
20 or submission of appropriate invoices or itemized
21 expenses" -- sorry. I'm in the wrong place. Scratch that,
22 do over. "Be it resolved the MPFFU shall provide financial
23 assistance to locals in an amount not to exceed \$1,000
24 biannually for costs associated with the ballot issues
25 regarding millage, referendums, and other issues (printing

1 of materials etc)." That will be the resolved. Only change
2 in it is that it's changed from 1500 to 1,000. Microphone
3 number two.

4 MR. SCHROEDER: Matt Schroeder, Ann Arbor. Point
5 of clarification. .20 cents equals \$9,000. So with \$1,000
6 I think the amendment would provide for nine. We didn't try
7 to tie a number to it in committee. The thought process
8 that \$1500 equals six at \$9,000. So that \$9,000 is a flat
9 number and that's how we were able to derive that number.
10 So just a point of clarification.

11 MR. DOCHERTY: Anyone else wishing to speak on the
12 amendment? Seeing no one else at the mikes, we're going to
13 vote on the amendment, the resolve I just read. All in
14 favor of the amendment signify by raising your hands.

15 (Show of hands)

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed hands up.

17 (Show of hands)

18 MR. DOCHERTY: Okay. The amendment passed. Back
19 on the original resolution as amended. Any other
20 discussion? Microphone number one.

21 MR. ABBEY: Shaun Abbey, MPFFU Delegate-at-Large.
22 I want to make sure everyone understands this is to create a
23 fund, that's the fund. We create criteria and that's the
24 criteria. The monies on the fund you can always try to get
25 resources from MPFFU in other ways, but the amount of these

1 grants have gone from anywhere from like they used to be
2 \$8,000 a year up to \$25,000 a year. We have no resources to
3 take an unfunded \$25,000 hit to our budget that we have no
4 control of. It can be 30,000 this year and 10,000 next
5 year. And again, this is nothing -- my local has taken a
6 grant. And my local has probably got more money than the
7 state does. But we took the grant because the grant is
8 there and offered. And lots of other locals have too. And
9 I'm not saying -- I mean, the grant is here, it's a thing
10 that was provided, why wouldn't you take it? So my point
11 being is, we have to be fiscally responsible. We would
12 create a criteria to do this.

13 MR. HEIM: Mr. President, there was consideration
14 of a possible friendly amendment to the amendment that was
15 made to include changing the word in Article 14 instead of
16 "shall," "can," which reflects the rest of the resolution
17 and the intent of the mover.

18 MR. DOCHERTY: Number one?

19 MR. CHESNEY: Did you agree to that?

20 MR. DOCHERTY: The maker of the motion agree to a
21 friendly amendment to switch from "shall" to "can"?
22 Support?

23 MR. CHESNEY: Can I ask a point of clarification
24 on that? I'm not sure what that does, so let's make
25 everybody clear on what that does. Steve, what's your

1 intent of that?

2 MR. HEIM: To me the way that Article 14 reads, it
3 says we shall provide, there's no exceptions, there's no
4 list of the criteria, there's no anything in there. The way
5 it reads if someone puts it in, it shall be provided there's
6 no cap. There's no mention of the budget, there's no
7 mention -- if you read Article 14, "The MPFFU shall provide
8 financial assistance not to exceed \$1,000." That's why it's
9 friendly. It isn't meant as a revolutionary thought it.
10 It's just that it should be "can" instead of "shall."
11 "May." Sorry. "May" is better than "can."

12 MR. DOCHERTY: We have a friendly amendment.
13 Anybody that wishes to speak on the friendly amendment?

14 MR. SCOTT: Rob Scott, Southfield. Maybe instead
15 of "can" we're sitting back here talking maybe it should say
16 "may."

17 MR. DOCHERTY: It's "may." We will change that
18 resolved to, "The MPFFU may provide financial assistance to
19 locals in the amount not to exceed 1,000 biannually for
20 costs associated with ballot issues regarding millage
21 referendums and other issues." Any other discussion on the
22 friendly amendment? All in favor of the friendly amendment
23 please raise your hand.

24 (Show of hands)

25 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed?

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1 (Show of hands)

2 MR. DOCHERTY: Amendment carried. Microphone
3 number one?

4 MR. CHESNEY: I have a point of clarification but
5 it's really a disagreement. The last speaker said that this
6 resolution will only grant or only provide us the ability to
7 grant so many millage grants and I don't see where it says
8 that. So I want to clarify, was that inaccurate, that
9 statement he made? I want somebody to clarify it.

10 MR. HEIM: I do not believe that this changes the
11 Constitution and By-Laws in any way that affects the ability
12 of the executive board or the president to expend funds that
13 are not directly tied to this. I don't know how having a
14 budget that helps provide supplement to a particular revenue
15 stream would limit you from being able to use the rest in
16 another way. Similar to how we've been paying it without a
17 guaranteed revenue stream for the past decade.

18 MR. CHESNEY: That was my understanding too. But
19 I wanted to know if the chairman felt the same way?

20 MR. DOCHERTY: You're asking for my opinion? Yes.
21 It's my opinion that this -- all this does is provide a
22 funding source of pool money where we can go beyond that
23 pool of money as we have in the past. If we feel there's a
24 need and there's -- we were to exceed whatever that pool is
25 equivalent to, which is \$9,000, that we would be able to as

1 a board direction, grant more grants above that and use our
2 general fund up.

3 MR. CHESNEY: I'd like to speak in favor of the
4 resolution as amended. Originally I was thinking that we
5 were just not in a position to continue to afford to give
6 these grants because there was no funding source. I've
7 recognized from the people who have applied in the past that
8 the \$1500 is really a drop in the bucket to the amount of
9 money that's actually spent. And I came here with the
10 thought that it doesn't really do anything. But then I
11 talked to a couple of people and they pointed out that it
12 really wasn't the amount of money that we gave them, it was
13 the fact that their local was supporting this millage or the
14 MPFFU was supporting the millage that really gave the
15 perception that nobody else really knew how much we were
16 contributing and how heavily we were involved. And that
17 sold me and convinced me that this is a good program. And
18 the fact that we have some funding for it I think is great.
19 But I do believe that there may be instances where we might
20 have to do more than nine in a year or whatever, and we
21 should find a way to do that. So I'm in favor of the
22 resolution as amended.

23 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two.

24 MR. WERNER: Kirk Werner, Commerce Township Local
25 2154. I stand in support of this resolution. When the

1 committee met, in line 25 when it speaks of the list of
2 criteria that the executive board is going to come up with,
3 we had some discussion regarding that. And that criteria
4 can include everything of how many grants you've gotten in
5 the past, so on and so forth, but it's the criteria of when
6 the money is gone, the money is gone. So there's several
7 criteria that the executive board can come up with. Or if
8 there's maybe some extra funds laying around, which is
9 probably not likely, then they can issue more just like
10 President Docherty said. So that criteria is not only the
11 establishment of who gets it, but it also talks to the
12 funding. And if we need to issue -- or if the state needs
13 to issue 10 or 12 that year, then if they have the ability
14 to do so, then that criteria allows them to do that. Thank
15 you.

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Anyone else wishing to speak on
17 this resolution? Microphone number two.

18 MR. MCCOY: John McCoy, Shelby Township 1338. How
19 many grants did we give in the last year with this \$1,000?
20 How many locals received \$1,000?

21 MR. DOCHERTY: \$1500.

22 MR. MCCOY: 15 total?

23 MR. DOCHERTY: Well, no. The \$1500 is what the
24 grant was.

25 MR. MCCOY: Oh, I'm sorry.

1 MR. DOCHERTY: I'll defer that to our
2 Secretary/Treasurer if he knows?

3 MR. CHESNEY: I don't have the right paperwork
4 with me. Eight or nine maybe.

5 MR. MCCOY: Eight or nine? And they all received
6 the 1500? Because another key in that language is not to
7 exceed 1500, or 1,000, whichever number you're going to go
8 with now. You don't have to give them 1500, you don't have
9 to give them 1,000, you can give them 500 to spread that out
10 maybe even. So that's something to consider too if this
11 passes if the executive board comes up with the criteria.
12 The other thing is, and I hate to bring it up, but Brother
13 Abbey brought up the fund balance that he has. That rubs me
14 wrong. That he's got more money than the state union, but
15 it's okay that you're getting your piece of the pie. I'm
16 okay with that. But shouldn't that be part of the criteria
17 too that you submit your annual audit maybe to the state
18 also and they review that. So I'd like to see that played
19 into that also when you do get a grant. Thank you.

20 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number 2.

21 MR. BEAUCHAMP: Chris Beauchamp, Hazel Park Fire
22 Fighters. There was a comment made about rollover. I know
23 times right now there's probably no rollover. But in the
24 future I believe we will come back. And if there is a
25 rollover, funds are not being used completely, is there a

1 hard cap for that? Or a stipulation on when this fund -- we
2 stop contributing to this fund?

3 MR. HEIM: Brother Abbey is talking about the
4 rollover itself is going to be -- the funds just don't get
5 used until the next budget year. There isn't a hard cap,
6 there isn't a limitation that's not specifically spelled out
7 in here. So if it wasn't directly written in the
8 resolution, the rules and policies for expenditures will
9 remain the same.

10 MR. BEAUCHAMP: So if there's 5,000 being rolled
11 over, we're only going to collect 4,000 from the membership
12 or is it going to be an additional 9,000?

13 MR. HEIM: This is .20 cents per month per member.

14 MR. BEAUCHAMP: So that continues, there's no end
15 to that, it's open-ended?

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Until our next convention.

17 MR. BEAUCHAMP: And my local did receive this fund
18 last year and it helped us greatly. I do support this
19 resolution.

20 MR. HEIM: Just a point of information,
21 Secretary/Treasurer Chesney informed me of this. 15 grants
22 in 2011, 15.

23 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two.

24 MR. MCLEOD: Dave McLeod, Local 3232. What's
25 going to be the criteria for locals to receive this money?

1 I mean, we're talking about a resolution here to give to
2 locals to receive money on a possible millage campaign that
3 we don't know what the criteria is going to be for the
4 locals. So that was just my question is what on the
5 committee have they talked about what the criteria is going
6 to be?

7 MR. HEIM: The way the resolution was presented,
8 it did not provide the opportunity for the committee to
9 write the criteria. It provided for the executive board's
10 ability. So we did not try to craft it in committee. So
11 think practically speaking, it's something that the
12 executive board will have to address immediately. One of
13 the things too to consider that was part of our discussions,
14 just the increase in the amount of millages that are out
15 there and those that are proposed has really skyrocketed
16 since the invention of this idea. So it went from one or
17 two ten years ago to now, I'm from the 4th, I've got 35
18 locals, probably half of them are considering millages.
19 We're anticipating a very huge spike and we're going to have
20 to narrow this down. And just was not the job of the
21 Constitution and By-Laws Committee to tackle the way that it
22 had been written and submitted to us.

23 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

24 MR. HOSMER: Ed Hosmer, Delegate-at-Large. The
25 numbers are -- I have the 2009, 2010, 2011 detailed

1 financial breakdowns. It was \$9,547 in 2009 across eight
2 locals. And what Brother Heim said is correct. Over the
3 last decade it was on average six, seven, eight a year.
4 There was a big jump in 2010 to 17 disbursed, and then 15 in
5 2011. And it was \$23,112 in 2010, and \$22,500 in 2011.

6 MR. DOCHERTY: Point of clarification. Also when
7 we talk about not to exceed 1500, many or some locals have
8 not used the full amount and they return a portion of that
9 money to us after the campaign was done. Microphone number
10 two?

11 MR. BROSNAN: Bernie Brosnan Local 1206. I agree
12 with the intention of this resolution. I think it's
13 important, realizing the costs and the expenses and limited
14 funding. However, I disagree with the notion that there's
15 going to be some sort of -- and much like Brother McLeod
16 said, that we're being asked to vote on this without knowing
17 exactly what the list of criteria or even an idea of what
18 the list of criteria is going to be. And I have a problem,
19 and I don't question anybody's integrity or intentions, but
20 it could be that there's only going to be two locals that
21 are eligible to receive millage grants. I mean if it says
22 locals of -- if that becomes the criteria, I know this is
23 sort of a conspiracy theory, but okay locals of only 200
24 members or more can get -- are eligible for grants. And
25 I'll say that I come from a smaller local that received one

1 of these grants and I understand how important they can be.
2 And I don't think that's what the intention of this is.
3 However, this is -- I believe that this committee is asking
4 us to vote on something on sort of a trust that there's
5 going to be, you know, a fair list of criteria. I think
6 there will be, and I think I have an idea of what it's going
7 to be. But I think we should also have it understood what
8 that criteria is going to be. Thank you.

9 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

10 MR. CHESNEY: I'd like to offer an amendment. I'm
11 not sure it's in order. I'm not sure where we're at in
12 this.

13 MR. DOCHERTY: We're debating the resolution as
14 amended.

15 MR. CHESNEY: So that's in order to offer an
16 amendment? I'd like to amend the resolution by eliminating
17 lines 24 and 25. And I'd like to speak on that if it's --
18 got the wrong ones, 25, 26.

19 MR. DOCHERTY: 25, 26. Do we have support for
20 that amendment?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

22 MR. DOCHERTY: With support, go ahead Terry.

23 MR. CHESNEY: I think it would be very difficult
24 to establish some sort of criteria. We've discussed this
25 over the years several times on this program and on another

1 grant program that we had. And in this particular program,
2 if a local submitted a request for the money we've given it
3 to them. And basically this isn't an area where a local is
4 going to create some millage just to get 1500 bucks or
5 \$1,000 if that's the case. So I don't know that there's a
6 need for criteria. If the local asks, I think we should
7 give it to them and that will clear up some of the
8 confusion.

9 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you. Microphone number two.
10 Are you rising to speak on the amendment?

11 MR. NELSON: Yes. Everything in general. Jason
12 Nelson, Sterling Heights Local 1557. We're having a lot of
13 discussion and I support and I understand the intent of
14 where we're trying to go. However we're talking about one
15 sentence, and since we've been here there's been three
16 different amendments, a lot of questions on how is this
17 going to affect us, how is it going to be? What are these
18 rules that are going that come down? Why can't we put this
19 back that to committee, they've heard us speak. Why can't
20 they hammer something out and bring it back.

21 MR. DOCHERTY: Sorry to interrupt but you have to
22 speak on this amendment right now.

23 MR. NELSON: Well, let's send this amendment back
24 to committee. And then I'll come back up and do the next
25 one. I can come back up as much as you'd like. Do I have

1 to make a motion?

2 MR. DOCHERTY: You make a motion.

3 MR. NELSON: I would like to make a motion for us
4 to send this back to the committee for the comment to hammer
5 it out or do what they must. Maybe they can present
6 something to us tomorrow and we can move forward.

7 MR. DOCHERTY: So you're making a motion to refer
8 this to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee?

9 MR. NELSON: Yes.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

13 MR. DOCHERTY: The question we're trying to
14 clarify is whether you can make a referral motion while a
15 motion to amend is on the table. We've got to look it up
16 and make sure. Brothers and Sisters quiet down. There's a
17 motion to refer to committee, that is in order and can be
18 put forward during an amendment motion. So we have support
19 for referral.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Support.

21 MR. DOCHERTY: Discussion on referral to
22 committee, referral back to committee?

23 MR. CHESNEY: Yes. I'd like to speak against
24 that. I think that is what the delegate body is here for,
25 we're having a dialogue on it, we're trying to address

1 concerns and issues and we're almost there. Why send it
2 back to committee? I'm opposed to that. I would think that
3 we can resolve this resolution right here on the floor right
4 now.

5 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

6 MR. HEIM: Steve Heim, Delegate-at-Large, 4th
7 District Vice-President. As one of the co-chairs on the
8 Constitution and By-Laws Committee, and a member of the
9 executive board, I'm standing against the idea of sending it
10 back to committee. I'm not sure how the committee is going
11 to function smarter and more wise than the executive board
12 that was just elected with absolutely no one running against
13 us with complete support. But just for the process if
14 they're going to send it back to the Constitution Committee
15 for us to do the same thing you're terrified of the
16 executive board doing somehow at our meetings, is to me
17 seems a little strange. I think that we should go back to
18 the original, allow us to go back to a meeting and write a
19 document like we would do every other thing we do and manage
20 the money like you've asked us to do in every other decision
21 across, every expenditure we have. So I move against
22 sending it to committee.

23 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two.

24 MR. BADE: Tim Bade, Secretary Sterling Heights
25 Fire Fighters. I'm in favor of sending it back to

1 committee. The whole reason why we want to is because there
2 is so much discussion here. And the fact that we think that
3 you can't come up with a set of criteria, that's why you're
4 there. To come up with the criteria. That's the concern
5 that everybody has. The International has criteria. They
6 look at when you ask for grants how much you're assessing
7 your members, whether or not you have a fund balance,
8 whether or not you specially assessed your members. I mean,
9 there is a set system out there. And we're not really
10 addressing the problem. And that is what the committee is
11 for. And if this is a bad resolution, then the committee
12 should have come out and said it was a bad resolution from
13 the beginning rather than coming back and having us tear
14 apart the thing here on multiple levels. I speak in favor
15 of sending it back to the committee and either have them
16 reject it as a bad resolution or come up with a good one
17 after they've heard the body speak.

18 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

19 MR. LAKE: Chris Lake, Lansing Fire Fighters. I'm
20 opposed to sending it back to be redrafted. I believe that
21 if it does go back we're venturing too far where it's non
22 Germaine to the initial resolution. At this point I think
23 we've covered most of what needs to be taken care of and it
24 should be handled right here on the floor.

25 MR. DOCHERTY: Anyone else wishing to speak?

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1 Seeing no other speakers at the Microphone, call to
2 question. All in favor of re-referral back to the
3 Constitution and By-Laws Committee, please raise your hand.

4 (Show of hands)

5 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. All opposed to
6 referral?

7 (Show of hands)

8 MR. DOCHERTY: Motion was denied. Back on the
9 amendment, Terry's amendment that stated that we would
10 strike lines 25 and 26 from the resolution. Any other
11 discussion on striking lines 25 and 26?

12 MR. BROSNAN: Bernie Brosnan, Local 1206. I rise
13 in favor of the amendment to strike lines 24 and 25. I
14 think that does do exactly what we're looking for in terms
15 of -- it basically eliminates the --

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Point of clarification. You're
17 referring to 25 and 26; right?

18 MR. BROSNAN: I mean 25 and 26, yeah. Sorry. I
19 think that the executive board has done a good job in terms
20 of giving these grants out in the past. And I would accept
21 that and rise in favor of this amendment.

22 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

23 MR. ABBEY: Shaun Abbey, MPFFU Delegate-at-Large,
24 2nd District Vice-President. I speak against the amendment.
25 It comes down to again we talked about having criteria. And

1 when I spoke earlier, I'm not trying to throw my local under
2 the bus because there is 20 other locals in here that did
3 the same thing that I know of. The criteria that we set
4 would be something like what kind of funding you have. So
5 these locals that are worried about getting a set amount of
6 money, so that pot is there so there is enough money for you
7 to give. Maybe your local needs \$1500 and another local
8 doesn't. If you give the executive board the leeway and the
9 ability to create a set -- to say similar to the EDF loans
10 the IAFF has, then we could give assistance to people that
11 need it and not to people that don't. That's the only thing
12 about this that we're trying to do. Just save the budget,
13 give the resources to the locals that need it, and save
14 those resources from locals that might not. Again, this is
15 nothing against my local, or any other local that took that
16 money. That's what the program is there for. That's why
17 it was in the Constitution and By-Laws. Any local that took
18 it that had money, that's -- when we put this thing together
19 we had lots of money to give those grants out. We are not
20 in those days anymore, we've got a tight budget, we have to
21 watch every penny. So why give money to a local that might
22 not need it when another local seriously is in dire straits.
23 Maybe they need \$2,000 and they appeal to the board and say
24 we need \$2,000. Well, maybe that's something the board can
25 do. But with -- but by giving money to those that don't

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1 need it without criteria, you're going to be using that
2 money.

3 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two.

4 MR. BALA: Scott Bala, Roseville. I speak in
5 favor of the amendment to strike lines 25 and 26. I think
6 would also help clean up some of the concerns Brother Abbey
7 may have had in an earlier amendment when we struck the word
8 "shall" and put "may." So the MPFFU may provide financial
9 assistance to locals in the amount to not exceed. So
10 there's some flexibility to give it to those people that
11 we've elected to use their common sense and to use their
12 guidance in those capacities. I think it's a good
13 amendment. I think we've done a good job here on the floor
14 to get this to where it is. So again I would speak in favor
15 of the amendment.

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

17 MR. LAKE: Chris Lake, Lansing Fire Fighters. I
18 speak in favor of the amendment. I believe that it does
19 clean up the language, it gives us a funding revenue, a
20 stream for revenue into this program that did not exist
21 previously. It still allows the executive board the ability
22 to -- there's no number to it. It could be six, it could be
23 ten, it could be 20. But there's an actual defined revenue
24 source now of .20 cents per capita going to the fund, which
25 we didn't have before. It was just before general fund

1 money that we used and we covered it, it wasn't the criteria
2 then, it was a millage campaign. Local 421 used this grant,
3 it does -- it speak volumes when that's in your literature
4 that MPFFU and the Local 421 together put in money in these
5 millage campaigns. So I see this as clearly a revenue
6 stream to help fund this program that has been an unfunded
7 program up to this point. Thank you.

8 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number two.

9 Mr. GROSS: Thank you Mr. Chair. Bakos Gross,
10 Trenton Fire Fighters. I am up here supporting the
11 amendment and I'm calling for the question.

12 (Audience applause)

13 MR. DOCHERTY: Call for the question is not in
14 order because we do not have three against that have spoken.
15 Are there any other people wishing to speak? I see no other
16 speaker --

17 MR. RAINES: Tom Raines, Local 102 Saginaw. I
18 rise opposed to the amendment. By changing the word "shall"
19 to "may" we've already changed the -- given the executive
20 board the leeway of maybe giving people money, maybe not
21 giving people money. I don't see the harm in letting them
22 create the criteria to go along to make that decision. If
23 not, you should change it back to shall.

24 MR. DOCHERTY: Microphone number one.

25 MR. TOMASEWSKI: Kevin Tomasewski, Westland Local

1 1279. I rise in favor of the amendment. First of all,
2 taking the money from the locals and then giving us
3 regulations on how we get it back is exactly what we're
4 upset at Governor Snyder for doing to us. I don't find that
5 appropriate to do right now. Also, if the locals don't need
6 the money, why don't they give it back if they have so much
7 money.

8 MR. DOCHERTY: Anyone else wishing to speak?
9 Seeing no other people wishing to speak, call to question.
10 All in favor of the amendment to eliminate lines 25 and 26
11 please raise your hand.

12 (Show of hands)

13 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. All opposed to
14 removing the lines?

15 (Show of hands)

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Amendment carried. Back on the
17 original resolution. Any other discussions on the original
18 resolution as amended?

19 MR. OSBORN: Fred Osborn, Cadillac. I was
20 originally for this all along, this whole amendment. And I
21 still believe in getting money. And it looks like you've
22 been doing it in the past. So to me it just looks like a
23 funding because I don't know what -- can you tell me what
24 fund this came out of, the 20,000?

25 MR. DOCHERTY: General fund.

1 MR. OSBORN: Just the general fund. So this is
2 more of just -- to me it looks like just a membership
3 increase of .20 cents because you're spending the money
4 anyway. I'm not against the program, but I think we're here
5 to maybe set a limit on how much we give and if it's to come
6 out of the general fund I'm just throwing that question out.
7 So that's all I have.

8 MR. DOCHERTY: Any other speakers on the
9 resolution as amended? Seeing none we'll call the question.
10 All in favor of the resolution as amended signify by raising
11 your hands.

12 (Show of hands)

13 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed raise your
14 hands.

15 (Show of hands)

16 MR. DOCHERTY: Motion carried as amended. Okay.
17 Let's take a quick break, ten minutes so we can get back and
18 finish up some more today.

19 (Off the record)

20 MR. DOCHERTY: Now we're going to have another
21 guest speaker, our 8th District Vice-President, Paul
22 Hufnagel.

23 (Audience applause)

24 MR. HUFNAGEL: Thank you, Mark. Looks kind of
25 familiar. Great to be here. I heard there's another guest

1 speaker and who it was and they left, I see. It's going to
2 be -- we're going to take it easy on you. Just thinking
3 about it, this is the first convention in about 14 years I
4 haven't chaired it. So I understand when delegates have
5 heard enough speeches and remarks during the day. So I'm
6 just going to -- I was in here for the district meetings
7 last month, and end of March I guess. I pretty much gave
8 you a report then. So I just want to mention a couple
9 things and we'll move on and get to the rest of the evening.

10 First I want to thank your executive board
11 President Mark Docherty, Secretary/Treasurer Terry Chesney,
12 and all your board members, trustees, for the work they do
13 for you and also for the work they do for the IAFF. They're
14 a great asset to us. We have a lot of programs I'll talk a
15 little bit about but they're a big part of it and
16 coordinating the services between the IAFF and you. And as
17 I always say, get you more bang for your buck. I also want
18 to mention Secretary/Treasurer Miller, he's doing a great
19 job for us. Tommy has been our friend for a long time.
20 When he was Indianan president for over 20 years, part of
21 that time I was the state president here in Michigan, I had
22 the opportunity and the good fortune to work with him. A
23 very good leader back then and continues to be one today.
24 He's done a great job for us not only on the national level
25 but prior to that here in the 8th District. Between him and

1 General President Schaitberger, I think we changed a lot of
2 things for the good in this district and around the county.
3 The district field service reps field reps bringing more of
4 your per capita dollars back into the state. And I think
5 really improving your services on the ground here and your
6 programs. So I want to thank Tom for the great job he does
7 and continues to do for us. Thanks, Tommy.

8 (Audience applause)

9 MR. HUFNAGEL: Like I say, I'll be brief. You've
10 heard enough of me over the years and you had me in here
11 over a month ago. But I just want to mention a little bit
12 more about some of the things we're doing and some of the
13 challenges we've got. I know you talked about Michigan and
14 you probably heard enough. I think there is some positive
15 news out there even though we're getting thumped pretty
16 regularly. I think there is some positive news. Other
17 states we've had similar challenges, not nearly at the level
18 we have here and in Ohio. But in Kentucky, Indiana, and
19 Illinois for instance their pension systems are under
20 attack. Illinois has strong collective bargaining laws but
21 they also have a good legislature and they're not after
22 them, but they've got severe pension problems. So they're
23 battling to keep their pensions funded and to keep their
24 pensions at fair levels of compensation for their work.

25 In Ohio, we talked briefly about that and you

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1 heard some of it here from the president of the AFL Karla
2 Swift talked about it. And a lot of us were down there that
3 weekend and prior to helping them and working with them.
4 The IAFF put a lot of resources in there, did a great job.
5 The Ohio fire fighters just did an outstanding job. Their
6 state association and their leadership, Mark Sanders and
7 Mark Horton and their executive board put together an
8 unbelievable plan and then carried it out. But the ground
9 work and Mark and the leadership will tell you was really
10 done with the locals there with their feet on the ground,
11 their boots on the ground, door-to-door. First getting
12 signatures then getting people out to vote, getting them
13 out, and educating them. So a great job in Ohio and the
14 IAFF played a big role in that.

15 I played a small role as a District VP, was in on
16 some of the discussions and the resources we brought in
17 there. And similar to what we did here in Michigan where we
18 came in and helped with some PR work with some funding for
19 various things that your organization was doing, protecting
20 Public Act 312. So the IAFF has been there on the ground
21 for you and will be on the ground for you.

22 Another thing that Tom did mention, the money he
23 saved and the things he's doing there with the money he
24 saved, for instance on the auditing, personnel changes, and
25 so forth, that money was used to initially fund the Fighting

1 Back campaign. When he first initiated that campaign, there
2 was no money. We were in the middle of the budget year.
3 But we came up with the money in several accounts and
4 various areas and threw together three-quarters of a million
5 dollars to get started. This last budget we've had a line
6 item in there for that and increased it slightly to have
7 more money for these fighting back campaigns statewide. So
8 Tom just did an outstanding job in there and he's still
9 doing that. And in the headquarters and managing that part
10 of it and General President Schaitberger always does an
11 outstanding job. So the resources they've given us and the
12 board put together for you, we're going to keep those coming
13 and make sure you can fight back these attacks.

14 Another area was the SAFER grant program. I did a
15 little research before I came to this meeting. And it's
16 pretty interesting. Since 2008, the 8th District has had
17 \$108,412,000 come back into the district. There's been over
18 93 locals receive SAFER grants. The 8th District received
19 pretty much a yeoman's share of the money that's been out
20 there when you look at the country proportionately. But the
21 reason for that is the hard times we've had here and the job
22 losses, and the things we were battling. So it probably
23 kept 1,000 or better fire fighters on the job. I know it
24 was a big deal here in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana
25 lesser so. But Ohio and Michigan really got a good chunk of

1 this change and it was a big help and kept our fire fighters
2 on the job.

3 And the interesting fact President Obama's budget
4 for 2013, he has a billion dollars SAFER money in there.
5 Keep that in mind when we start going to the polls this
6 fall. You know where the support comes from and take a look
7 at, as you heard earlier, who supports us. But a billion
8 dollars is going to be in his budget. We don't know if
9 we'll get that much, but hopefully they can get it through
10 there we can have a good election this fall. But the other
11 thing it's going to do it's going to have preference and
12 incentives for hiring returning military veterans as fire
13 fighters. So it's a win/win for everybody. For the troops
14 that are out there protecting our country and for the jobs
15 we do every day on the street.

16 The other areas I know we haven't mentioned much,
17 but in a lot of your trainings done here by the state. But
18 a lot of those programs, and many of you know that, come out
19 of the IAFF. Over the years I've been there, I've never
20 seen the level and the quality of programs we have now. And
21 I believe we have about 50 PEP modules. That's Partnership
22 in Educational Program is what the acronym stands for. So
23 that's been a great program. I know your
24 Secretary/Treasurer Terry has done a great job over the
25 years putting together your training. And we're going to

1 try to do more of that and keep developing programs.

2 I've mentioned before we're going to have a pilot
3 program here in the 8th District this fall, some ALTS
4 training basically brought back to the district. Once
5 again, the information is going to come out shortly. The
6 hotel is book. They're printing the brochures, we're going
7 to look at the classes we want to present in conjunction
8 with your leadership. But you're going to be able to get
9 these ALTS classes. We think the registration will be 125
10 bucks and the room is 89 bucks a night. It's going to be in
11 September, it's the 19th and the 20th, got rooms for the
12 18th and 19th. It's a reasonable price, easy driving
13 distance from here. I know that because I've drive to Indy
14 I think more than I drove to my house sometimes. We have a
15 lot of meetings down there in Tom Miller's home local. So
16 we did a lot of work out of there. Great venue, state
17 association is also going to sponsor a refreshment hour or
18 two over at Ike & Jones. So that will be another incentive
19 for you to get down there. Anybody that has been to Ike &
20 Jones, you will have a good time. You'll have a big
21 headache the next day, but you'll have a good time.

22 The other area that I did a little research and
23 looked at before I was going that come to these
24 conventions -- I've got three conventions this month and
25 one in Illinois -- looked at the municipal financial

1 analysis. The one that before me Tom talked about and I
2 talk about. I think the point has been driven home with
3 this economy. We're using them and using a lot of them. We
4 have 750 locals in the district approximately. We've had
5 150 MFA's done since the last convention. That's
6 outstanding. That's about several months short, probably a
7 little under, maybe a year or nine months we've had 150 of
8 them just in the 8th District. And they've very valuable.
9 I think a lot of times they keep your membership corralled
10 on their expectations. And they keep you in good stead with
11 management because you know what the score is, you know
12 where their money is, you know what they've got in the bank.
13 So that program has been really successful. You need any of
14 that, just give me a call or shoot me an email, we'll move
15 it on. And you should have a running total of those.

16 I know a number of years ago I went into Bay City,
17 I think Terry and I went in there and talked to them, they
18 were having some problems. I think they had at that time an
19 eight or nine year running tally of their MFA's. So they
20 could see the revenues and expenditures. And there was no
21 getting around it, their revenues were flat and sometimes
22 even decreasing. So that gives you an idea of what you're
23 going into bargaining, what you're facing. So a good
24 practice to get into a lot of those programs out there and a
25 lot of areas that where we can help you.

1 And the other area I wanted to talk about a little
2 bit more is the district field service representatives. We
3 have three of them in the 8th District. We have more than
4 any other district in the International simply because of
5 the number of locals, 750. I'm reminded that number every
6 day when we try to provide services the number of calls you
7 get and how busy they keep us. But we've got good locals
8 out there, like I said. I've got great state associations
9 that really I couldn't do my job effectively without these
10 state leaders here helping out and serving as service reps
11 and district field service reps.

12 So a big plus for us. They also have done a lot
13 of organizing. We looked since the last convention, we've
14 had 21 new locals -- we've added 21 new locals and about 300
15 members. So we're losing some by attrition but we're
16 gaining some on the other side. And I think a lot of locals
17 are seeing the wisdom of having some protection in their
18 contract. So that's good news on that end. I mean, we're
19 growing. We're holding our own on the numbers. We're
20 slightly behind the 10th District in numbers. But good
21 signs, good things, and the economy coming around. And
22 hopefully things are going to look up for us and we get on
23 the uptick here pretty quickly and get back in the business
24 of bargaining for some wages and benefits instead of
25 concessions.

1 In closing -- I'm going to wrap it up now. I went
2 longer than I even thought I was going. But I haven't
3 changed much since the last convention or two. But I'll cut
4 it off here. I know you listened to a lot of speakers
5 today. But I want to emphasize again the work that your
6 state association does for you. I still have an office here
7 in Lansing, I had to move up to the third story, the low
8 rent district Local 421 gave me an office up there. And
9 what is it a fifth of whiskey a month for rent? So anyway,
10 I'm up there in my local. But my point is, I'm back in the
11 AFL-CIO a lot and I see the activity. I'm still down around
12 the capitol, I'm still downtown, I'm still going to some
13 central labor counsel meetings here whenever I can. And I
14 can tell you and testify for you, your state association is
15 doing a great job as they always have. And they're going to
16 continue to work hard, they need your support. And I think
17 I see that here today when you're ponying up some money.
18 You see the importance of what they're doing and where you
19 want to go and how you want to get there. And I give you a
20 lot of credit, you as local leaders, not just them for doing
21 the work, but you as local leaders for giving them the tools
22 to do it, being out there in support. With that, I'll
23 close. I want to thank you again for the opportunity to be
24 here. If there is anything you need or I can do, you've got
25 my email and cell number, just give me a call. But I know

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1 you're going to have a successful convention. I look
2 forward to having a couple beers with you tonight. Thank
3 you.

4 (Audience applause)

5 MR. HUFNAGEL: And Mark asked me -- Mark Sanders,
6 Mark Horton and Mark Docherty -- we've got too many Marks
7 running these state unions. But anyway, Ohio fire fighters
8 really appreciate the help that you sent down there. As a
9 matter of fact I got an email from Mark Sanders today the
10 president of Ohio who told me to say hello and to thank you
11 for all the support that came out of Michigan from locals
12 and from your E board. And what they've done is they've
13 sent some plaques up for people that send them checks or did
14 some things for them a little extra and they want to
15 recognize them. So we'd like to present some plaques to
16 several individuals in the state association. And it says
17 presented to and it says Michigan Professional Fire Fighters
18 Union for their solidarity and support in defeat of Ohio
19 SP5, issue 2 and 11-8-11. And I thank you from the Ohio
20 Professional Fire Fighters Association. And I know they
21 really appreciate it. And I think they in turn sent some
22 money back to your state association that you had initially
23 given to them. They didn't use up all of their SP5 campaign
24 stuff. So they really appreciate the support. They said
25 even though we're from Michigan they still want to work with

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1 us and think we're great guys. I also have one for Redford
2 Township, if you want to come on up. And Eggleston
3 Township, another Ohio Fire Fighters support plaque.

4 (Audience applause)

5 MR. DOCHERTY: Thank you, Paul. We're going to
6 get back to resolutions. I'm going to call the Resolutions
7 Committee up for a partial report.

8 MR. REYNOLDS: If you could turn your attention to
9 Resolution 18. Endorsement of Thomas Miller for IAFF
10 General Secretary/Treasurer.

11 "Whereas Brother Thomas Miller has done an outstanding
12 job as the General Secretary/Treasurer of the
13 International Association of Fire Fighters. And
14 whereas Brother Thomas Miller has demonstrated his
15 leadership abilities in every aspect of his duties and
16 responsibilities as IAFF General Secretary/Treasurer.
17 And whereas, Brother Thomas Miller seeks to be re-
18 elected to the position of IAFF General
19 Secretary/Treasurer at the upcoming IAFF convention.
20 Therefore be it resolved that the delegates assembled
21 at this 50th Biennial Convention of the Michigan
22 Professional Fire Fighters Union support and endorse
23 Thomas Miller for IAFF General Secretary/Treasurer."

24 Mr. President, on behalf of the committee we move
25 to adopt Resolution 18.

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1 MR. DOCHERTY: You have a recommendation by the
2 committee to adopt Resolution 18. Any discussion on the
3 motion? All in favor of Resolution 18 raise your hand?

4 (Show of hands)

5 MR. DOCHERTY: Hands down. Opposed? Motion
6 carried unanimously.

7 (Audience applause)

8 MR. DOCHERTY: Now we're going to suspend -- that
9 concludes the report of the Resolutions Committee. At this
10 point we're going to suspend business for today and we're
11 going to take one more presentation from Muscular Dystrophy
12 Association. And then we'll be going to caucuses after that
13 and then on to our reception.

14 MR. NYE: Good afternoon everybody. For those
15 that don't know you -- or don't know me, I'm sorry. Don't
16 know yourselves after last night, Jim Leve. For those that
17 don't know me, my name is Monty Nye with Local 1600 in
18 Meridian Township. I'm the MDA liaison between anything to
19 do with MDA between the MPFFU and MDA. I'm the one that
20 comes around and bugs you during Fill the Boot time. I
21 don't think I bug anybody any more than our MDA rep on the
22 other side Sarah Grutza. So I think there's some guys out
23 there that were talking about that earlier. I just wanted
24 to first of all, we're going to have a patient family speak
25 to you today to say thank you for all that you do. I got

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1 looking over our stats over the last ten years, the state
2 union has raised over \$3.2 million to help fight over the 40
3 different neuromuscular diseases covered under the MDA
4 umbrella. Last year even with our tough economic times, all
5 the other troubles that the locals are facing, our crews
6 still went out and collected over \$361,000. That's a
7 fantastic accomplishment with what we've had going on here
8 in Michigan. A lot of people, I don't know if you've seen
9 this before, we have a boot camp coming up. And we show
10 this video at boot camp a lot. And people really haven't
11 heard our history with MDA and how we got to where we're at
12 today. So we've got a quick video to show you.

13 (Video presentation)

14 (Audience applause)

15 MS. GRUTZA: Thank you. Again, my name is Sarah
16 Grutza, I work with the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I
17 work alongside Monty. And actually I think if anybody is
18 bugging anybody it's me bugging Monty. So a lot of you can
19 probably imagine. Thank you again. I think the incredible
20 thing that he said on there was you, in the early 1980's
21 reached the million dollar mark. You're up to \$480 million
22 raised, which is absolutely incredible. So you've raised
23 \$479 million in 30 years.

24 (Audience applause)

25 MS. GRUTZA: Last year was incredible despite

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1 everything that you guys are going through you still stood
2 by us and I cannot thank you enough. I got a chance to
3 thank you all at the district meeting. And I appreciate the
4 MPFFU always allowing us to come out there. So thank you
5 again, we're excited for this year. We already have two
6 locals, Warren and Alpena, they're going to be doing their
7 Fill the Boots next week, which is awesome. So please
8 contact your local MDA rep. I work out of the Sterling
9 Heights office. We have down here we have Tiffany Bice from
10 Canton, Amanda Wentzloff from the Grand Rapids area, and
11 then Colleen Connolly from the Lansing area right here, and
12 then Kaitlyn works with me in Sterling Heights. She's also
13 our camp director. And without further adieu I have -- I'd
14 like to introduce Lisa Cozza, she's going to speak.
15 Marissa, her little girl right there, she's one of our
16 campers. And Lisa this year -- or last year was honored
17 nationally through MDA as an outstanding caregiver. So she
18 comes into the office, not only does she take care of
19 Marissa and her other son, but she takes care of MDA. She
20 comes in and is volunteering, she helps out with Shamrocks,
21 fire fighter visits, she also helps out with our muscle walk
22 team. So Lisa, come on up.

23 (Audience applause)

24 MS. COZZA: Good afternoon. Well, it is an honor
25 to be here today and a privilege to have the opportunity to

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1 thank you, the International Association of Fire Fighters
2 for your continuous dedication to Make a Muscle and Make a
3 Difference for MDA. As fire fighters your job consists
4 mostly of helping others. And for you to go above and
5 beyond that to help kids and adults with Muscular Dystrophy
6 just proves how extraordinary you all are. Through year
7 round fund-raising events such as softball tournaments and
8 of course the Fill the Boot campaign, your contributions to
9 MDA have been astounding. And I have to commend you for
10 putting yourself at risk sometimes during the Fill the Boot
11 drive. I understand that some of you were actually out
12 there on Black Friday at the intersections near some of the
13 malls. Wow. To me that's -- it's almost -- it's terrifying
14 to even go shopping on Black Friday, let alone be standing
15 in the middle of the intersection with all these crazy
16 shopper drivers driving by. So I commend you for that.
17 Last year the IAFF in Michigan raised \$361,000. That's
18 awesome. And since 1954, you along with fire fighters
19 across the country have raised a total of \$480 million. I'd
20 like for you all to give yourselves a round of applause.
21 You deserve it, that's amazing.

22 (Audience applause)

23 MS. COZZA: On behalf of my daughter Marissa, my
24 son Christopher who couldn't miss school today, and myself,
25 I would like to thank each and every one of you for helping

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1 raise money for the MDA. You help MDA do great things for
2 our family with your donations and I really appreciate it.
3 We love the fire fighters, right Marissa?

4 My love of fire fighters is not just because of
5 what you do for MDA, but also because I am the daughter of a
6 fire fighter myself. My father Tom Wilson worked as a fire
7 fighter and EMT for Washington Township from 1966 to 1988.
8 He was number four at station one. And I'm very proud of my
9 dad and the work he did there. And I guess that's why I
10 have a deep appreciation of fire fighters for your bravery
11 and your dedication to help others no matter what or when.
12 Because let's face it, car accidents, building and brush
13 fires, and natural disasters are not on a 9:00 to 5:00
14 schedule nor do they take holidays off. And because of that
15 I appreciate the sacrifices that you and your families have
16 to make when you have to be away from your loved ones during
17 holidays, birthdays, and other special events.

18 So Washington Township Fire Department is actually
19 where my involvement with Muscular Dystrophy Association
20 first began. As a little girl I would go with my family to
21 the fire department events such as the Christmas, picnics,
22 and their annual pancake breakfast. And it was at these
23 events where I met Eddie, a son of a fireman. And Eddie was
24 in a wheelchair, and I remember asking my mom why is Eddie
25 in a wheelchair? Why can't he do what the rest of us do?

1 And my mom told me that he had a disease called Duchenne
2 Muscular Dystrophy. And I really didn't know exactly what
3 that meant other than Eddie had weak muscles and that his
4 muscles would continue to get weaker.

5 At age 6 I started watching the Jerry Lewis
6 telethon with my mom. And she explained how MDA was raising
7 money to help people with Muscular Dystrophy people like
8 Eddie. She explained how people would watch the show, and
9 then they would call a TV station and make a donation.
10 Well, I told my mom I wanted to help Eddie get better and
11 that I wanted to donate my monthly allowance to the
12 telephone. So my mom called in a pledge and matched my
13 donation as well. And every year after that, I along with
14 my parents, would contribute to MDA. I watched the telethon
15 with my mom year after year and together we would laugh at
16 Jerry Lewis' jokes, and cry at the end when he sang "You'll
17 never walk alone."

18 And through the years watching the telethon, I
19 would see stories of families and their kids affected by
20 Muscular Dystrophy. And I remember thinking to myself, how
21 do these moms do it? I could never have the strength to
22 deal with what they must go through. Never in a million
23 years did I ever imagine that one day I would have a
24 daughter affected by the disease. Or that I would come to
25 depend on the help of MDA, the same organization that I had

1 helped every year since I was 6 years old.

2 When my beautiful daughter Marissa was born
3 everything seemed fine. But as she became several months
4 old I noticed that she was not meeting her milestones. She
5 seemed floppy, she couldn't sit up on her own. She didn't
6 make her legs stiff or bear weight. And I knew something
7 was wrong. So after months of testing for everything under
8 the sun her neurologist decided it was time to do a muscle
9 biopsy to test for Muscular Dystrophy. Marissa was 2 years
10 old then. On August 3rd, 2004 we were at the surgeon's
11 office to get her stitches out. The surgeon came in the
12 office and said, well, as you know it's congenital Muscular
13 Dystrophy. And I just felt like I had got punched in the
14 face that day. I was devastated. I didn't cry right away,
15 I guess I was in shock because I just kind of stood there
16 and said oh, okay. Of course later I did break down. And
17 once the crying was over I realized, well, we have our work
18 cut out for us.

19 Driving home that day I had so many questions and
20 so many fears of the unknown racing through my head. We got
21 home and by a strange coincidence there was a letter in the
22 mail from Jerry Lewis MDA asking for a donation in the
23 memory of Matty Stepanek. He's an author and one of MDA's
24 former goodwill ambassadors. And he had recently died then
25 at the age of 14. I cried again because it was a reality

1 check as to what could happen with Marissa. How do we get
2 through this I wondered.

3 Well, I knew right then and there that we were not
4 in this alone. That the Muscular Dystrophy Association
5 would be there for us. And they have been in so many ways.
6 So how does Muscular Dystrophy affect Marissa and what's a
7 typical day like for her? She's severely cognitively
8 impaired and relies on me to feed her, bathe her, dress her,
9 and change her diapers. She's 10 years old now. She has
10 low muscle tone in her cheeks and her mouth so she has a
11 hard time eating solid foods so we still have to puree a lot
12 of things for her. She only says half a dozen words, so
13 most of her communication is through eye gazing, pointing,
14 or a series of noises that she makes. It makes it
15 challenging and frustrating for both of us sometimes because
16 it's hard to know always or figure out what she wants or
17 what is bothering her. Through much intensive physical
18 therapy her strength and motor skills have improved quite
19 bit. And instead of getting worse they're actually getting
20 better.

21 She can now walk short distances with a walker or
22 hold someone's hand and take a few steps. And she can pedal
23 an adaptive bicycle. She loves not having to be in her
24 wheelchair all the time. She loves to play with other kids
25 especially her 14 year old brother Christopher whom she

1 adores. She laughs at jokes, loves stories, music, likes
2 watching DVDs just like any other kids. She loves swimming,
3 going to the beach, therapeutic horseback riding. And she
4 is on the Marysville Little League Challenger baseball team.
5 Marissa attends special ed school at Woodland Developmental
6 Center. And she loves riding the bus there. I take Marissa
7 every week for physical therapy which is approximately 54
8 miles away from our house. And this summer we will be
9 taking her to speech therapy and occupational therapy as
10 well. I try to do as many activities and go to as many
11 places as possible with both Marissa and Christopher. And I
12 try not to let her disability dictate our life. The word
13 cant is not allowed in my house. That's a four letter word
14 in our house.

15 How has MDA helped our family? Well, they have
16 helped us, financiers, by funding research. In addition to
17 weak muscles, as I mentioned, she is severely cognitively
18 impaired. And when they first diagnosed her with Muscular
19 Dystrophy they just had a general diagnosis of congenital
20 Muscular Dystrophy. They said it's of an unknown type.
21 Well, through the research through the University of Iowa
22 which is funded through MDA, they've discovered what's
23 called a glycosylation deficiency. And I won't get too
24 scientific about this. But basically she is lacking a sugar
25 protein in her brain and in her muscles as well. And so now

1 that they found this out, they're trying to figure out how
2 to replace that sugar protein. So at first when she was
3 diagnosed, we didn't know even that much. So even just
4 through a short number of years we found out more about what
5 exactly is going on with her. Especially with it being such
6 a rare type. And our hope of course is that with the
7 research that one day a cure will be found.

8 MDA also helps us through their MDA clinics that
9 they provide. Marissa attends the MDA clinic through
10 Children's Hospital DMC in Detroit. There we get to see a
11 top notch teach of specialists including neurologists,
12 physiatrist, physical and occupational therapists,
13 dietician, equipment specialist, and an orthopedic
14 specialist, all in one place at one time. And I can't tell
15 you how great that is to not have to drive to Detroit eight
16 or nine times for separate things. MDA also provides free
17 flu shots to the kids as well in the fall. MDA also helps
18 fund equipment repairs when insurances don't pay for it.
19 And they also have an equipment loan closet which you can
20 borrow equipment at no charge. Right now we have one of
21 their walkers and we've had it for about six months and it's
22 been wonderful.

23 MDA also provides parents with resources or
24 referrals to places which can help with various things.
25 They also provide support groups and I try to attend as many

1 mom to mom support groups as I can. And it's great to be
2 with other moms who are going through the same thing as you.
3 And we not only just talk about that though we have fun, we
4 laugh. And it's a good thing, and it's a great thing for
5 moms to get out once in awhile. MDA also provides fun
6 activities for the kids and adults. There is an annual
7 boating outing every August on Lake St. Clair. And last
8 year was our first year attending that and Marissa loved it.
9 In fact, as the boat went faster she loved it even more.

10 We also attend a Tiger game every year. And
11 there's an annual Christmas party out in Farmington Hills at
12 Drakeshire Bowling Alley. And last year Marissa beat her
13 brother at a game of bowling. And then there's camp. Camp
14 is what all kids look forward to all year long. And the
15 best way to describe MDA camp is for me to read a poem for
16 you by the late Mattie Stepanek. Entitled "MDA summer camp
17 is."

18 "MDA summer camp is a place for kids wish onto paper
19 that is placed into balloon carried baskets. And
20 hopefully pray as their thoughts and dreams ascend into
21 the heavens. MDA summer camp is a feeling of friends
22 helping friends, whoever they are, however they are,
23 wherever they are, for whatever reason just because
24 they are. MDA summer camp is an understanding that the
25 worth of a person should never be measured by the

1 number of years lived or by physical or mental
2 abilities, but by the strength of spirit. MDA summer
3 camp is a time for commemoration, and liberation,
4 rejuvenation, and celebration in spite of the realities
5 of life. Thank God that MDA summer camp is."

6 It takes \$800 in donations to send one kid to
7 camp. And I am so grateful that Marissa got to go for the
8 first time last year. She went to Camp Cavel in Lexington.
9 And although Old Mother Hen here was a little apprehensive
10 because of her lack of communication skills, I wondered how
11 she would do away from me, and also how they would know what
12 her needs were. But she did great. She had the most
13 wonderful time. Her favorite activity was tree climbing.
14 She got to ride horses, she went swimming, and she even rode
15 a Harley Davison, something I've never done. She had a
16 great time and she met some wonderful friends. One of the
17 gals that was in her cabin with her is named Autumn and they
18 just bonded instantly. And any time we see Autumn now at
19 any event, they just squeal in happiness at each other. And
20 although Marissa can't tell us as eloquently as Mattie did
21 in his poem about how wonderful camp is, her smile was worth
22 1,000 words when I went to pick her up from camp.

23 Lastly, MDA helps me by the reassurance of knowing
24 that they are there for me whenever I need them. It's not
25 always easy taking care of Marissa and doing everything that

1 I need to do. I have to search for a lot of inner strength
2 sometimes to keep me going. And it is certainly easier for
3 me to find it knowing that I have the love and support of my
4 family, my friends, and my MDA family. I don't feel so much
5 like I'm fighting an uphill battle against Muscular
6 Dystrophy because I have a plethora of reinforcement troops
7 behind me. And I feel that today right here and right now
8 that I found yet an even bigger because I've also got the
9 International Association of Fire Fighters backing me up too
10 and it's a great feeling and I thank you for that.

11 One last thing I would like to leave with you.
12 Marissa has good days and bad days just like all of us do.
13 I try to always stay positive. And when we hit a bad day I
14 tell myself, well, maybe today wasn't such a good day but
15 tomorrow will be better. And I think that's something that
16 we could all use in our life. Is when the chips are down
17 just think about that. Maybe today wasn't so good, but
18 tomorrow will be better. Tomorrow is always filled with
19 hope because tomorrow may be the day that Marissa walks on
20 her own completely. Because tomorrow may be the day that
21 she talks. Because tomorrow may be the day that researchers
22 find a cure. So thank you fire fighters for all you do to
23 help support MDA. By doing so, you give parents like me
24 hope for tomorrow. Thank you all and God bless you.

25 (Audience applause)

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1 MR. CHESNEY: At this point in the agenda we're
2 supposed to recess for caucuses. 4th District is going to
3 meet back in that corner. The 6th District is going to be
4 up here. The 2nd District is going to be out in that
5 hallway. And the rest of you will be excused. The
6 MDA/MPFFU reception is going to be right out those doors
7 prior to getting to the tunnel. We were going to do it
8 outside, they were afraid it was going to rain. So you can
9 get some stuff and go outside. But the two caucus groups,
10 that's your incentive to get done early.

11 (Convention adjourned at 4:37 p.m.)
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