

MARBA MATTERS

GRIEVANCES AND ARBITRATIONSⁱ

Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Arbitrations

MARBA received no arbitration demands in the month of March.

Laborers Joint Grievance Committee

The Laborers JGC did not meet in March. The next meeting will be on April 29, 2025, at the Laborers District Council office in Burr Ridge beginning at 9:00 a.m. The Union will advise the JGC of the number of grievances to be heard at a later date.

Operating Engineers Joint Grievance Committee

The Operators JGC did not meet in March. The next regularly scheduled JGC meeting is set for May 7, 2025, at the Operators offices in Countryside beginning at 8:30 a.m. The Union will advise the JGC of the number of grievances to be heard at a later date.

Teamsters Joint Grievance Committee

The Teamsters JGC did not meet in March. The next meeting date is scheduled for April 24, 2025, provided there are any grievances set to go forward.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING/LABOR ISSUES

Negotiation Update Emails to Begin Soon

MARBA has been in the process of gathering information relative to the list of expiring contracts in and around the Chicagoland area. This includes agreements in the Rockford, Bloomington, Quad Cities, and Northwest Indiana areas. Beginning in April 2025, MARBA will be sending out a weekly update (generally on Fridays) as to the status of the negotiations for the various agreements due to expire this year. If you would like to be included on these emails, please contact Aaron Janik at ajanik@marba.org. Additionally, a list of contracts due to expire in 2026 and 2027 is available on the MARBA website. That list may be accessed by clicking [here](#) and then clicking on the Contract Expirations tab.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Chicago Procurement Officers Sends Letter to City Vendors Asking for "Relief"

Sharla Roberts, Chicago's Chief Procurement Officer, recently sent a letter to City vendors asking those

vendors to voluntarily reduce their rates by 3%. It is not yet known if “all” vendors received this letter or if it was sent to a certain class of vendors or individual vendors. It is also unclear what authority the City has to enforce the request should vendors not voluntarily reduce their invoice(s) amount. That said the City has indicated in its letter that it will continue to seek to do business with those “vendors that offer the most competitive prices.” The budget passed by the City Council factored in an \$8.6 million dollar savings from the request despite the fact it may not see those savings.

Department of Labor Secretary Confirmed

The United States Department of Labor has a new Secretary. A former member of the United States House of Representatives, Ms. Lori Chavez-DeRemer (R) previously represented the 5th District in Oregon. She lost her seat in the 2024 election. The Senate confirmed her as the 30th DOL Secretary by a vote of 67-32. Ms. Chavez-DeRemer grew up in a union household with her father being a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The IBT issued a press release in which they celebrated her confirmation. She was one of three (3) Republican house members to have supported the Protecting the Right to Organize Act. The PRO Act, a Democrat backed bill, has been considered one of the most pro-Union bills ever introduced. The AFL-CIO, however, struck a more reserved note upon her confirmation, with Liz Shuler (AFL-CIO President) stating, “it remains to be seen what she will be permitted to do” as Secretary.

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service Agency Shuttered by Executive Order

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), one of the smallest, if not the smallest, federal agencies, is in the process of being shuttered per an Executive Order issued by President Trump. The agency which employed 200 people was formed to assist parties with the collective bargaining process. MARBA’s distribution of its annual bargaining rights sent to MARBA Associations references the FMCS Form F-7. The F-7 form, the notice bargaining parties are required to submit to the FMCS, notifies the agency of the bargaining relationship and commencement of collective bargaining. The agency’s budget, set annually at \$55 million dollars, equated to 0.0014% of the Federal Budget. The agency estimated it saved roughly \$500 million dollars a year in overall costs to the American taxpayers by “mediating” collective bargaining disputes and assisting the parties in reaching final agreements. The agency is still operating but at a significantly reduced capacity.

STATE OF THE ECONOMY

Economic Indicators

Unemployment Rate	February 4.1% (January 4.0%), Illinois 4.8% (46 th)
Labor Participation Rate	February 62.4%, January 62.6%, December 62.5%
CPI All Urban Consumers	February 2025 over February 2024 = 2.82%
CPI Chicago All Items	February 2025 over February 2024 = 3.84% Annual 2024 over 2023 = 3.46%
CPI Midwest All Items	February 2025 over February 2024 = 3.10% Annual 2024 over 2023 = 2.69%

Union Membership	2024 = 9.9% (Private Sector 5.9%), 2023 = 10.0% (Private Sector 6.0%), 2022 = 10.1% (Private Sector 6.0%)
Unionized Construction Workers	11.2% (2024), 11.4% (2023), 11.7% (2022), 12.6% (2021)
30 Year Fixed Mortgage	As of 3-27-25 6.65%, down 0.14% over the prior year. Annual Average 6.90% (24), 6.61% (23), 5.34% (22), 2.96% (21)
15 Year Fixed Mortgage	As of 3-27-25 5.89% down 0.22% over the prior year. Annual Average 5.98% (24) 5.93% (23), 4.58% (22), 2.27% (21)
Brent Crude Oil Price	\$74.83 per barrel (as March 27, 2025) \$145.61 per barrel all time high July 2008 \$2.23 per barrel all time low May 1970
Privately Owned New Housing Building Permits	1.2% below revised January rate 6.8% below February 2024 rate
Privately Owned New Housing Starts	11.2% above revised January rate (+/-15.7%) 2.9% below February 2024 rate (+/-13.0%)
GDP	Q4 2024 (3 rd) +2.4% Q4 2024 (2 nd) +2.3% Q4 2024 (Adv) +2.4% Q3 2024 +3.1%
DJIA	41,978.05 as of March 31, 2025 (2:00 p.m.) 43,407.30 as of February 27,2025 (2:00 p.m.) 44,538.40 as of January 31, 2025 (2:00 p.m.)

JANIK'S J.D. – AN UPDATE ON LABOR/CONSTRUCTION LEGAL ISSUES
AARON JANIK- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARBA

Appeals Court Rules President Trump Can Remove NLRB Member Wilcox

On March 28th, the D.C. Court of Appeals ruled, in a 2-1 decision, that President Trump’s removal of Gwynne Wilcox, National Labor Relations Board Member, from her position is permissible and that while her case is pending resolution, she is no longer able to serve on the NLRB. The decision indicated President Trump is likely to succeed on the merits of the case meaning he has the authority to remove Wilcox (as well as other NLRB type agency members). The decision to terminate Wilcox appears to be purely political as the letter signed by the President informing Wilcox of her dismissal did not allege the removal was for cause, as is required per statute. Wilcox’s removal case invokes a decision from 1935 (*Humphrey’s Executor*). In that case, the Supreme Court ruled that President Roosevelt lacked the authority to remove Executive branch officials of a quasi-legislative or quasi-judicial board for any reason other than what Congress authorized. In the case of Wilcox, removal of NLRB members can only be effectuated for malfeasance or neglect of duty. President Trump has taken the position that Wilcox’s appointment by a Democratic president has diminished his ability to advance his agenda as it relates to labor matters. President Trump is arguing the *Humphrey’s* decision is not good law and should no longer be adhered to.

Once again, the decision by the Appeals Court to allow Wilcox’s removal while her case is being decided, leaves the NLRB without a quorum. Her initial removal was held unlawful by the District Court, and she was returned to her position before the Appeals Court ruling upholding the removal. Without a quorum, the Board cannot conduct any business including the disposition of unfair labor practices. The matter has been set for oral arguments at the Appeals Court for May 16. A decision would then need to be issued and most likely an appeal would be taken to the Supreme Court.

In other NLRB news, President Trump has nominated Crystal Carey, a management side attorney with the law firm of Morgan Lewis, to serve as NLRB General Counsel. Ms. Carey spent the first nine (9) years of her legal career at the NLRB and the last six (6) at Morgan Lewis. Morgan Lewis has represented some of the largest employers in the nation at the NLRB including Amazon, Apple, and Tesla. The Morgan Lewis firm is also the firm attacking the constitutionality of the NLRB. If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Carey would replace Acting General Counsel William Cowen.

UPCOMING SEMINARS AND EVENTS

UCA SPRING SHOWCASE

JOIN THE UCA AS THEIR MEMBERS HIGHLIGHT THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2025
 TIME: EDUCATION PROGRAM 4 P.M. TO 5:30 P.M., TRADE SHOW 5 P.M. TO 6:30 P.M.,
 DINNER 6:30 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M.
 LOCATION: VENUTI’S RISTORANTE AND BANQUETS
 2251 LAKE STREET
 ADDISON, IL 60101
 COST: \$85 PER ATTENDEE, CONTACT UCA FOR ADDITIONAL PRICING
 CONTACT: CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER

CALENDAR

APRIL 4	11:30 A.M.	AUTO MECHANICS TRAINING FUND (AURORA)
APRIL 10	10:00A.M.	TECH ENGINEERS NEGOTIATIONS (MARBA)
APRIL 11	1:00 P.M.	VMAX GROUP TRAINING (ONLINE)
APRIL 16	3:00 P.M.	VMAX GROUP TRAINING (ONLINE)
APRIL 24	9:00 A.M.	TEAMSTERS JGC (MARBA)
APRIL 25	1:00 P.M.	VMAX GROUP TRAINING (ONLINE)
APRIL 29	9:00 A.M.	LABORERS JGC (BURR RIDGE)

¹ Information for MARBA Matters was obtained from the following sources: BNA Construction Labor Reports, Crain’s Chicago Business, Northwest Times of Indiana, Chicago Tribune, and Sun-Times, CDQ, and the BLS, as well as various websites and other publications.

Did You Know?

For only the second time ever and first since 2008, all four Number 1 seeds made the Final Four.

