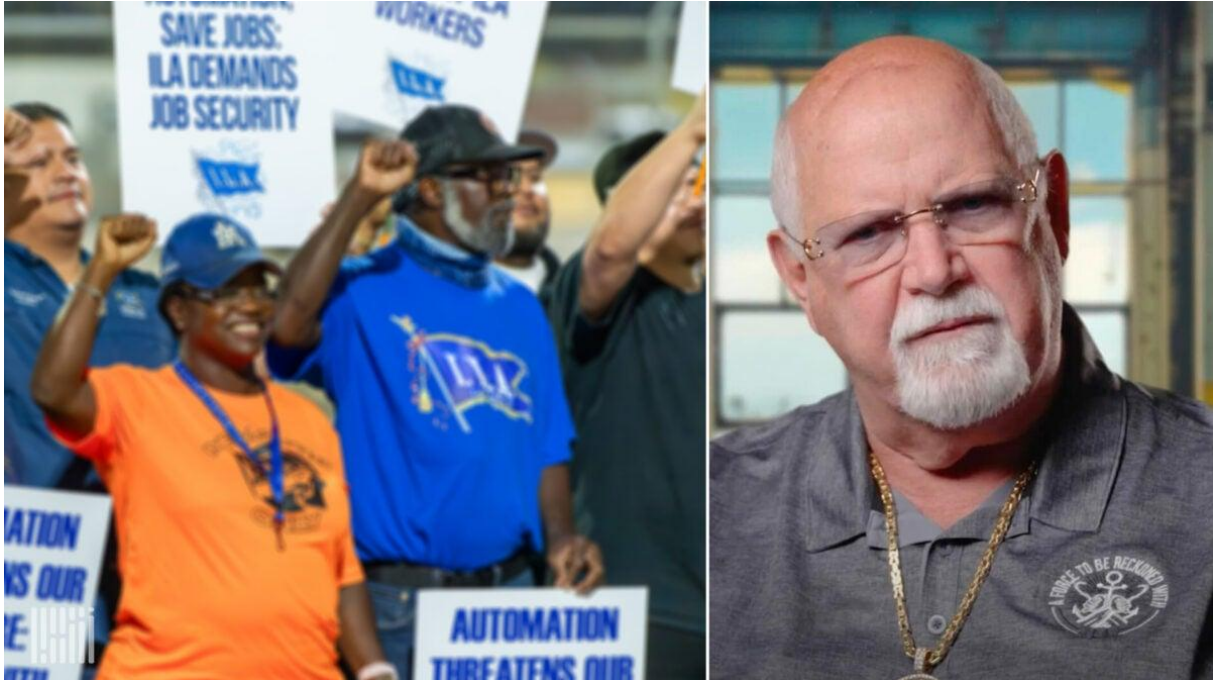


No sure thing? ILA head tells rank and file contract vote an 'obstacle' to overcome

New union contract worth \$35 billion, Daggett says

Stuart Chirls

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ILA President Harold Daggett, right. (Photo: Jim Allen/FreightWaves)

After hammering out a tentative contract described as the richest in the history of the union, the leader of the International Longshoremen's Association is taking nothing for granted ahead of a ratification vote by members next Tuesday.

"Even though I am extremely pleased with the proposed extension that the ILA has negotiated, there is still one final obstacle that must be overcome before the ILA can say that its members will be protected for the next six years, the ratification vote," ILA President Harold Daggett wrote in a Feb. 14 letter to members. "I hope to have the ratification vote among ILA members in good standing in all ILA ports covered by the master contract on Tuesday, Feb. 25.

"I ask that each of you also approve the agreement by voting yes to its ratification."

The union agreed to a new six-year master contract with terminal operators and ocean carriers represented by the United States Maritime Alliance covering 25,000 workers in container handling at 14 ports from Texas to Massachusetts.

The pact includes a 62% pay raise over the life of the contract, improved benefits and job guarantees linked to the introduction of automated equipment at container terminals.

Union locals for the past two weeks have been reviewing the terms of the master contract and local area pacts.

"Our collective strength helped produce the richest contract in our history," said Daggett at a meeting of his own local Wednesday in New Jersey.

In a video laying out details, Daggett said the new contract package is worth \$35 billion dollars — a figure he called “a conservative estimate.”

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