

ILA, port employers sign historic 6-year contract

Union dockworkers get 62% raise, automation job protections

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A crane unloads a container ship at the Port of New Orleans. (Photo: Port of New Orleans)

The International Longshoremen's Association and United States Maritime Alliance signed a new six-year master contract covering U.S. Eastern Seaboard and Gulf Coast ports.

The deal, which gives union members a 62% raise over the course of the contract and job protections linked to automation technology, is retroactive to Oct. 1, 2024, and runs through Sept. 30, 2030. The pact covers 24,000 employees in container handling at 14 ports from Texas to Massachusetts.

ILA International President Harold Daggett, who served as the union's chief negotiator, celebrated the deal as the best package ever secured for members. It also includes accelerated wage raises for new workers, ensures the return of full container royalty funds to the ILA and enhances the union's national health care program.

"I am proud to have produced this new agreement with the help of my ILA Wage Scale Committee for my ILA members," Daggett said in a release marking the signing ceremony in North Bergen, New Jersey. He expressed gratitude to the terminal operators and ocean carriers represented by USMX for recognizing the contributions of ILA members in building and growing the industry.

Negotiations, which began in 2023, included a three-day strike in October 2024.

USMX Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Paul De Maria, who led the negotiations for the alliance, emphasized the agreement's focus on creating modern and safe working conditions. He highlighted the importance of enhancing strong and efficient supply chains to ensure American companies can compete effectively in the global marketplace.

The new contract received unanimous support from USMX membership, underlining the broad consensus achieved between labor and management.

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