



UE Locals 506 and 618 Strike Wabtec Locomotive Plant, Demanding Green Jobs

Union says corporation's unwillingness to solve problems in the plant stands in the way of "jobs of the future"

For more information contact: Scott Slawson, UE Local 506 President, (814) 899-3108

(Erie, PA)— After rejecting the company's last, best and final offer today, the 1400 members of UE Locals 506 and 618 are on strike at Wabtec's locomotive plant in Lawrence Park.

"Building green locomotives is essential to the future of our country, and will benefit the local economy here in Erie," said UE Local 506 President Scott Slawson. "Unfortunately, Wabtec's unwillingness to work with us to resolve problems, either through the grievance process or through contract negotiations, is a major impediment to that bright future."

Slawson also denounced the company's announcement during bargaining that they are considering moving at least 275 jobs out of the plant.

"While the union is working hard to bring new work into the plant and new jobs to Erie through our Green Locomotive Project, the company is refusing to work with us on this project, and is instead holding the community of Erie hostage with the threat of moving work," Slawson said. "We will not give in to their blackmail."

A [recent report](#) by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst found that the production of green locomotives at the Erie plant could bring thousands of new, high-quality jobs to northwest Pennsylvania, an area that has been especially hard-hit by de-industrialization. During contract negotiations, the union has proposed language that would guarantee that green locomotive work be done in Erie.

In addition to the green locomotive proposal, the union has proposed returning to the dispute resolution process used for over eight decades prior to the plant's sale to Wabtec in 2019. Under that process, workers had the right to strike after exhausting the grievance procedure, which gave the company an incentive to settle disputes at the lowest possible level. Since the union's first contract with Wabtec went into effect in June 2019, the number of grievances reaching the final stage of the grievance procedure has increased tenfold.