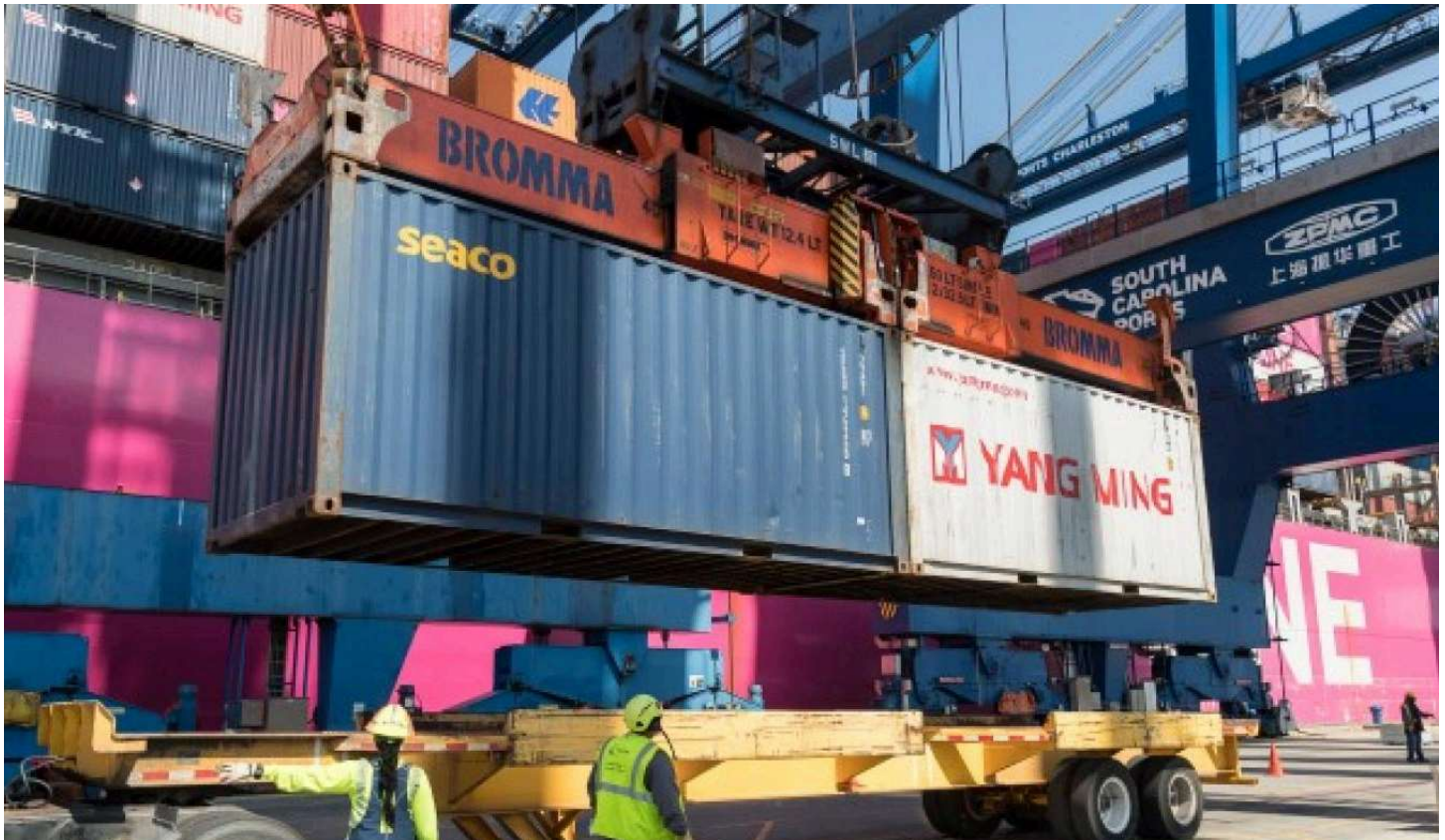


ILA seeking huge wage hike from maritime employers: sources



The ILA is looking to add to the string of big wage increases that unions have won from US employers recently. Photo credit: International Longshoremen's Association.

Michael Angell, Senior Editor, and Peter Tirschwell | Aug 5, 2024, 4:12 PM EDT

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) is seeking an almost 80% wage increase over the life of its next six-year contract with maritime employers on the East and Gulf coasts, two ocean carrier sources familiar with the negotiations told the *Journal of Commerce*. The disclosure comes as the ILA over the weekend sent a 60-day notice to the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) warning that the union is prepared to strike if a new labor deal is not signed before the current contract's Sept. 30 expiration.

The ILA said in a statement Saturday that locals across the East and Gulf coasts will convene for meetings in New Jersey during the first week of September to review the union's wage demands. The ILA will also use the meetings to "instruct locals on strike

strategies and what to expect if the ILA is on strike at the beginning of October,” the statement said.

ILA President Harold Daggett said in the statement that the union’s 45,000 members “are ready to hit the streets if our demands are not met.”

“With less than 30 days to go before the end of our current master contract when these meetings are held [in September], we must prepare our locals and our ILA membership for a strike on Oct. 1, 2024,” Daggett said.

The ocean carrier sources told the *Journal of Commerce* the ILA is currently seeking a \$5-per-hour increase in wages for each year of the contract’s term. That represents a 76% increase over six years in the top straight-time wage for longshore workers.

The union’s wage proposal comes amid what appears to be another banner year for ocean carrier profitability as liner operators raise earnings forecasts and beat analysts’ profit estimates.

The ILA’s proposed wage increase is a huge jump from the modest \$1-per-hour bump that marked the previous two collective bargaining deals agreed to between the union and USMX.

The wage proposal would also be much higher than the 32% wage increase that the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) was able to secure in its contract with West Coast maritime employers, although ILWU members also secured a one-time shared \$70 million bonus.

The ILA’s proposal comes amid other union victories in contract talks with employers. The United Auto Workers (UAW) was able to secure wage and cost-of-living increases that would raise wages for its highest-paid workers by more than 33% during its four-year contract with automakers. And the Teamsters were able to secure an increase of \$7.50 per hour through the duration of their current five-year contract with UPS.

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