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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

August 13, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Mr. Brian Bryant
International President
International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Dear Mr. Bryant,

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, I am committed to ensuring that the dues American workers pay to unions go to improving pay and securing better working conditions. Recently, the U.S. Department of State released a report titled *Cuba: The Capital of 21st Century Communism*, which outlines how the Cuban regime has cultivated influence within U.S. labor unions through trips to Cuba, strategy sessions attended by union officials, outreach efforts.¹ According to the report, certain International Association of Machinists (IAM or IAM Union) officials, have embraced these efforts, including by participating in travel to Cuba and taking policy positions aligned with the regime.² I am concerned that IAM Union member dues are financing efforts to change U.S. policy related to the Cuban regime, a State Sponsor of Terror, instead of supporting American workers' priorities.³

IAM Union has provided the Cuban regime with a platform to influence U.S. policy through the actions of at least one local IAM Union official and one union member. For example, they have organized or participated in a meeting as part of the U.S. Hands Off Cuba campaign to change U.S.-Cuba policy. This meeting was held at Machinists Hall, a local IAM Union hall, where David Ramírez Álvarez, second secretary at the Embassy of Cuba, instructed union members on ways to support Cuba's policy

¹ U.S. Dep't of State, *Cuba the Capital of 21st Century Communism* (July 20, 2026), <https://www.State.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Cuba-Report.pdf>.

² This is exemplified by IAM Union representative Mark Friedman's organization of a delegation that travelled to Cuba. Friedman stated to Cuban press that their visit would not have been complete without stopping at the Fidel Castro Center, participating in the May Day march, and a so-called Solidarity Convention. The group is also ostensibly seen in the cited article advocating against U.S. policy while in Cuba. *U.S. Trade Unionists and Political Activists Travel to Cuba for May Day*, *Trabajadores* (April 18, 2026), [Sindicalistas y activistas políticos de EE.UU. viajan a Cuba para el Primero de Mayo | Trabajadores](https://www.trabajadores.org/activistas-politicos-de-ee-uu-viajan-a-cuba-para-el-primer-de-mayo).

³ *Initiation Fees and Dues FAQs*, IAM Dist. 190, <https://iamdistrict190.org/organizing/initiation-fees-and-dues-faqs/> (Last visited July 22, 2026).

priorities and oppose U.S. law related to Cuba.⁴ During the same meeting, an individual identified as an IAM representative stated “the job now is defending Cuba in whatever way we can” while encouraging delegations to the island.⁵ IAM District 190’s Area Director, Kevin Kucera, also attended this meeting.⁶ One labor-focused delegation to the island includes tourist sites like museum and aquarium visits, “downtime in Havana beaches,” and “whatever else you want...”⁷

The Cuban regime has also used the IAM Union for propagandistic purposes. Speaking on behalf of IAM Union and the AFL-CIO, Mr. Kucera appeared in a video released by the Cuban Embassy urging Americans to protest in defense of “the solidarity of Cuba”.⁸ The Cuban Embassy characterized his advocacy as support for ending the U.S. “blockade.”⁹ In a separate video, Mr. Kucera welcomed two Cuban Embassy representatives to a meeting while advocating for a wholesale change in U.S. policy towards Cuba.¹⁰

Tom Brandon, the IAM Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the California State Conference, has likewise advocated for policies supporting the Cuban regime. He has been described as part of a team that worked to unanimously pass a resolution out of the California AFL-CIO convention urging the removal of Cuba as a state sponsor of terror.¹¹

These examples raise serious concerns that IAM Union officials have used their positions within the union to advocate for policy objectives promoted by the Cuban regime as part of a foreign influence scheme. American workers should not be compelled to finance advocacy that advances the foreign policy aims of a hostile foreign power, particularly one responsible for the deaths of at least three U.S. citizens and one U.S. resident in international waters.¹² To that end, I request answers to the following questions by August 27, 2026.

Union dues

1. What is the average amount of money each IAM Union member pays annually in dues?

⁴ Asra Q. Nomani, *Inside Cuba’s foreign influence campaign: From the ‘60s Venceremos Brigade to a California union hall*, Fox News (May 26, 2026), <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/inside-cubas-foreign-influence-campaign-from-venceremos-brigade-1960s-saturday-union-hall>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Center for Political Innovation (@RealCPIUSA), X (June 2, 2026), <https://x.com/RealCPIUSA/status/2061873658218586209>.

⁷ US Hands Off Cuba Committee Flyer, US Hands Off Cuba Comm., https://www.ushandsoffcubacommittee.com/uploads/3/7/7/8/37781147/trade_union_invite_mayday_in_cuba.pdf (Last visited on July 22, 2026).

⁸ *International Association of Machinists leader Kevin Kucera, statement in defense of Cuba, for an end to the US blockade* (@EmbajadaCubaenEstadosUnidos), Facebook (February 26, 2026), <https://www.facebook.com/EmbaCubaUS/videos/international-association-of-machinists-leader-kevin-kucera-statement-in-defense/2029721364639847/>.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ U.S. Hands Off Cuba (@ushandsoffcuba), Instagram (May 31, 2025), <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKVZIpLB90t/>.

¹¹ Mark Friedman, *California AFL-CIO: Remove Cuba from U.S. List of ‘State Sponsors of Terrorism’*, World-Outlook (July 29, 2024), <https://world-outlook.com/2024/07/29/california-afl-cio-remove-cuba-from-u-s-list-of-state-sponsors-of-terrorism/>.

¹² Press Release, U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *United States Unseals Superseding Indictment Charging Raul Castro and Five Castro Regime Co-Defendants for 1996 Shoot-Down of Brothers to the Rescue Aircraft* (May 20, 2026), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/united-states-unseals-superseding-indictment-charging-raul-castro-and-five-castro-regime-co>.

2. In 2025, Kevin Kucera earned more than \$165,000 in salary.
 - a. Were any of the political activities described above, or any other activities related to U.S.-Cuba policy, conducted during work hours or using union resources including but not limited to union computers, phones, office supplies, or other union-owned equipment?
 - b. Was Mr. Kucera reimbursed for any costs related to the above-mentioned political activities or any activities related to U.S.-Cuba policy?
3. Did the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee pay fair market value for its use of Machinists Hall? Did the event displace or conflict with any other scheduled or requested use of the Hall by workers?
4. Has the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee or the Cuban regime or an organization on their behalf reimbursed IAM Union or its members for any costs whatsoever?
5. Has IAM Union at any level, including districts or locals, ever paid for any costs related to its participation in the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee?
6. Has IAM Union paid for, covered any costs, or provided in-kind donations (such as the use of space) related to any member of the Cuban regime participating in a meeting, strategy session, or other gathering for any reason?
7. Have IAM Union dues been used to cover the cost of or expenses related to trips by IAM members at any level to Cuba? ¹³
 - a. If not, has the Cuban regime, *Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos* (ICAP) or the National Network on Cuba (NNOC) covered the costs of these trips or reimbursed IAM Union for the cost of, including partial costs, or expenses related to the trip? Has any of the previously mentioned entities subsidized these trips at below-market value for IAM members at any level?

Union policies and contacts

1. IAM's mission states it is the "natural right of working people to enjoy to the full extent the wealth created by their labor." However, Cuban workers are prohibited from forming independent labor unions outside of the government-controlled union and have faced repressive actions for attempting to do so. How does IAM reconcile its stated mission with advocacy by IAM officials or members in support of the Cuban regime or its policy objectives?¹⁴

¹³ Ed Newman, *Americans in Havana Express Solidarity and Rejection of U.S.*, Radio Habana Cuba (April 28, 2026), [blockadehttps://www.radiohc.cu/americans-in-havana-express-solidarity-and-rejection-of-u-s-blockade/](https://www.radiohc.cu/americans-in-havana-express-solidarity-and-rejection-of-u-s-blockade/).

¹⁴ Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Organization of American States, *Labor and Union Rights in Cuba Report*, at page 30 (April 5, 2023), https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/2023/Cuba_derechoslaborales_EN.pdf; U.S. Dep't of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *Cuba: Section 7. Worker Rights*, <https://www.state.gov/report/custom/6810dacb2a/>, (Last visited July 22, 2025).

2. The Cuban regime has a decades-long history of infiltration and espionage with the aim of influencing US policy toward Cuba.¹⁵ Is IAM Union national concerned that its members might be the target of an influence campaign with member dues being used to advance the interests of a State Sponsor of Terror?
3. Does IAM Union maintain an official position regarding U.S. policy towards Cuba?
 - a. If so, does this position align with the position adopted by California AFL-CIO? If not, please explain any differences.
4. Approximately how many IAM Union member hours have been devoted to advocacy concerning U.S.-Cuba policy, including travel, meetings, lobbying efforts, public events, or other related activities?
 - a. How does that number compare with the time IAM has spent on contract administration or other issues related to collective bargaining?
 - b. Have any IAM Union members coordinated with ICAP or the NNOC regarding advocacy related to U.S.-Cuba policy?
 - i. If so, please describe the content and outcome of each conversation and the Cuban regime-affiliated, ICAP, or NNOC participants.
5. Have IAM Union officials or members at any level coordinated with the NNOC to adopt its model resolution language?¹⁶
 - a. If so, has IAM Union at any level paid any costs associated with the adoption of a resolution related to U.S.-Cuba policy? Has the NNOC, ICAP, or the Cuban regime paid any costs associated with the adoption of a resolution related to U.S.-Cuba policy?
6. Does IAM have any written policies or reporting requirements governing contacts with governments designated by the United States as State Sponsors of Terror?
 - a. If so, please provide copies of such policies.
7. Does IAM Union encourage its national, district, or local officers or representatives to use their IAM positions to urge American to protest or advocate on behalf of a foreign power and State Sponsor of Terror?
 - a. If such conduct is prohibited by IAM Union rules or policies, please provide a copy of that policy and any applicable sanctions.

¹⁵ Eric Bazail-Eimil, *The Too-Weird-to-Be-Fiction Story of Cuba's Spying Ambassador*, Politico (Dec 6, 2023), <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/12/06/cuba-espionage-secret-agent-00130339>; Dep't of Justice, FBI, *Ana Montes*, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/cases-and-criminals/ana-montes>, (Last visited July 22, 2026); Press Release, U.S. Dep't. of Justice, *Former State Department Official Sentenced to Life in Prison for Nearly 30-year Espionage Conspiracy* (July 16, 2010), <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/former-state-department-official-sentenced-life-prison-nearly-30-year-espionage-conspiracy>; *Florida Couple Sentenced as Cuban Spies*, Reuters (February 27, 2007), <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/florida-couple-sentenced-as-cuban-spies-idUSN2R422415/>; Press Statement, U.S. Dep't. of State, *Secretary Rubio Terminates Legal Status of Cuban Communist Foreign Influence Operative* (July 1, 2026), <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/07/secretary-rubio-terminates-legal-status-of-cuban-communist-foreign-influence-operative>; Press Release, U.S. Dep't. of Justice, *Unsealed Indictment Charges Former U.S. Federal Employee with Conspiracy to Commit Espionage for Cuba* (April 25, 2023), <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/unsealed-indictment-charges-former-us-federal-employee-conspiracy-commit-espionage-cuba>.

¹⁶ Resolutions, National Network on Cuba, NNOC, <https://nnoc.org/resolutions/>, (Last Visited July 23, 2026).

8. To date, have any IAM Union officers, including local officers or business representatives, consulted with the Cuban regime, the Cuban Embassy, ICAP, or NNOC – including government, diplomatic, academic, or labor union leaders – regarding contract terms or other potential provisions that would impact how IAM Union structures its contract demands?
 - a. If so, please describe the content and outcome of each conversation and Cuban regime, Cuban Embassy, ICAP, or NNOC participants.
9. According to a former Cuban intelligence officer, at one time, “roughly 90 percent of ICAP personnel are thought to be DI (Cuban Directorate of Intelligence)-affiliated.”¹⁷
 - a. Has IAM Union conducted any vetting of its officers or members’ interactions with ICAP personnel or conducted background checks on ICAP personnel interacting with the union?
 - b. If not, is IAM Union aware of this concern?
10. Has IAM’s political action committee, including its California political action committee, ever made any political contribution or endorsement with the aim of changing U.S.-Cuba policy?
 - a. Has anyone involved in IAM’s political action committee at any level coordinated with, spoken to, or considered the interests or advice of ICAP, NNOC, or the Cuban Embassy in making contributions to or supporting candidates at any level?
 - i. If so, please describe the content and outcome of each conversation and the Cuban regime-affiliated, ICAP, or NNOC participants.
11. Has any member of IAM Union met with federal government officials to advocate for a change in U.S. policy as it relates to Cuba?
 - a. If so, please provide the following information:
 - i. Number of meetings
 - ii. Dates of meetings
 - iii. Meeting attendees
 - iv. Specific asks of IAM Union members in meetings
 - v. Any communication, including documentation, between such IAM union members and federal officials that occurred in addition to the meeting
 - vi. Any communication, including documentation, between such IAM union members and members of the Cuban regime, the Cuban Embassy, ICAP, or NNOC – including government, diplomatic, academic, or labor union leaders.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Chairman

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor, and Pensions

¹⁷ Chris Simmons, *Perspectives: Cuban Spies Continue to Exploit ‘Sister City’ Program*, Wash. Times, Aug. 9, 2009, at A4.

