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Biopharmaceutical Industry Teams Up with Labor to Create Jobs and Promote Medical Innovation

Local 7 Plumbers & Steamfitters Prepares Apprentices to Build Clean Rooms for Industry

LATHAM, N.Y. – A partnership between biopharmaceutical companies and labor unions in New York state was announced last week at the UA Local 7 Plumbers and Steamfitters in Latham. The new group, called Pharmaceutical Industry Labor Management Coalition (PILMA) of New York, works to grow this important sector of our economy, create high-quality jobs, and promote medical innovation to cure disease.

Members of the Local 7 Plumbers & Steamfitters were joined by biopharmaceutical industry officials and local elected officials to announce a partnership that centers on the mutual benefit the industry and labor gain from working together to provide innovative and affordable medicines to the American people.

The biopharmaceutical industry is reliant on the work of labor unions to build and maintain its manufacturing and research and development facilities. Union workers fulfill 80% of the industry's construction, maintenance and renovation needs. Every \$10 billion invested by the industry creates 130,000 union jobs. And Building Trades unions spend more than \$1 billion each year on training for these specific industry projects.

“The Pharmaceutical Industry Labor Management Association (PILMA) is an innovative partnership between organized labor and PhRMA, and we are pleased to announce that PILMA is now active in New York State,” said PILMA Executive Director Tim Dickson. “The kind of craftsmanship and skilled workforce development on display at the Plumbers and Steamfitters UA Local 7 Training Center is exactly why we know that labor provides the most highly qualified workers for the construction of pharmaceutical facilities.”

Local 7 Plumbers & Steamfitters operates an apprenticeship program that specifically trains members in clean room technology. The apprentices undergo rigorous training so that they are qualified to build clean rooms used in pharmaceutical company's manufacturing and research and development facilities.

The union contracts with the following biopharmaceutical facilities in the region: Regeneron Pharmaceuticals in Rensselaer; GlaxoSmithKline in Oak Hill; and Dr Reddy's Laboratories in Middleburgh. Local 7 also has performed much of the construction work at the SUNY College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, AMRI, St. Peter's Hospital and Albany Medical Center.

“Local 7 is thrilled to have joined forces with the biopharmaceutical industry,” said Ed Nadeau, Business Manager. “Our job training is the best in the business and the industry provides us

with high quality jobs that allow us to showcase our work. We look forward to working together on issues of mutual concern."

PILMA NY is determined to: Work together on legislative, regulatory and other key issues affecting the pharmaceutical industry and organized labor; discuss areas where there is disagreement between the parties in a committed effort to find common ground and mutual benefit; investigate the issues affecting access to affordability of medicines; focus on maintaining strong state employment and research leadership for the U.S. industry.

Senator Neil Breslin said, "Touring the high technology training center at the Plumbers and Steamfitters UA Local 7 and learning about PILMA, the Pharmaceutical Industry Labor Management Association, illustrates that the Capitol Region should continue to be one of the best places in the country to create and expand bioscience technology and pharmaceutical companies. We not only have the academic institutions to educate the best scientists and researchers, we have a high quality training center providing the best skilled labor to support the construction needs of this industry."

Assemblymember Phil Steck said, "PILMA is a great example of how our local labor leaders and the pharmaceutical industry have come together to create jobs and provide a skilled workforce to fill those jobs. I am pleased that Plumbers and Steamfitters UA Local 7 and PhRMA are working to stimulate bioscience economic development right in our backyard."

Assemblymember John T. McDonald III said, "Being a business owner and practicing pharmacist, I know how important it is to have workers trained in clean room technology, meeting all of the necessary safety requirements and certifications to build facilities that produce cutting edge medicines. I know that in our region, the Plumbers and Steamfitters UA Local 7 is partnering with the pharmaceutical industry to create the most qualified workers meeting an increasing employment demand."

Assemblymember Angelo Santabarbara said, "I support initiatives that are designed to help train our workforce for skills demanded in the 21st Century. The Capitol Region has a growing high-tech industry and this partnership has the potential to help many individuals secure good-paying jobs. I also appreciate that PILMA has the potential to help former military members, as PhRMA and Plumbers and Steamfitters US Local 7 have been strong supporters of Helmets to Hardhats."

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