The strike against the Trump Taj Mahal casino is about to become the longest in the 38-year history of Atlantic City's casino era.

The walkout by Local 54 of the Unite-HERE union began July 1. On Thursday, it will have lasted 35 days, surpassing the 34-day strike the union staged against seven casinos in 2004.

That seems certain to happen: The union says no negotiations are scheduled with the casino that Donald Trump opened in 1990 but which now belongs to the Republican presidential nominee's friend and fellow billionaire Carl Icahn .

The central issue in the strike is the union's demand for restoration of health insurance and pension benefits that a bankruptcy court judge allowed the casino's former owners to eliminate in 2014. The casino remains open for business.

"We knew when the workers rejected the company's proposal that any time you go out on strike, you don't necessarily get to control how long it lasts," said Bob McDevitt, president of the union representing nearly 1,000 striking housekeepers, cooks and food and beverage servers. "But the workers are strongly committed to social justice in this fight. We're prepared to stay out for as long as it takes to get a fair contract."

A spokesman for Icahn declined to comment. Icahn previously said the company offered a contract that would have temporarily restored health care, but at a lesser level than employees of the city's other seven casinos.

The Taj Mahal says it is losing millions of dollars and needs an 18-month breathing period in order to rebuild its business and cash flow. Union negotiators rejected that proposal, insisting that Taj Mahal workers be treated the same as those at other casinos, including the Tropicana, which Icahn also owns.

"Our disappointment is that Carl Icahn took care of the Tropicana workers, but not us," said

Chuck Baker, a cook at the Taj Mahal since the day it opened 26 years ago. "That's hard to swallow. It's like having kids, and you give to one of them but not the others. It's not right, and you just don't do that."

Trump once owned three Atlantic City casinos, but cut most ties with the city by 2009. Having lost ownership of the company to bondholders in a previous bankruptcy, Trump resigned as chairman of Trump Entertainment Resorts, retaining a 10 percent stake in return for the use of his name. That interest was wiped out in bankruptcy court when Icahn took over in March.

The union held a rally in the state capitol Trenton on Monday in support of a bill pending in the state Legislature that would entitle strikers to unemployment benefits after a walkout reaches 30 days.

Strikers have been receiving support from a union strike fund, and some have qualified for government food assistance and have had payment plans arranged for them by utility providers.

Baker said many of the Taj Mahal workers are Day 1 employees like him, on the job since the moment Trump opened the doors in 1990. And he channeled the former owner in assessing the Taj Mahal's future.

"We're not out here as a union to destroy this place," Baker said. "We want to make the Taj Mahal great again."

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