

ILLINOIS AFL - CIO

NEWS UPDATE - 02/24/17

House committees continued to meet in Springfield this week to consider bills to be sent to the House floor for consideration. The Senate was not in session this week. The deadline to pass House Bills out of committee is March 31st. The Senate returns to Springfield on Tuesday, February 28th.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Senate Leaders Continue Collision Course with Middle Class

Cullerton and Radogno wrongly push members for a vote on Feb. 28th

Senate President Cullerton and Republican Leader Radogno continue to whip votes in their respective caucuses for the Senate package of bills that will cut pension benefits, reduce injured worker benefits, and privatize public services. The Senate leaders would like to call the bills on February 28th.

The pension proposal continues to change, but Senate President Cullerton may be adding a third tier of pension benefits for prospective employees starting after a certain date. Language may emerge offering state employees 401(k) retirement benefits, in lieu of a much more stable defined benefit plan. This new anti-worker language is appealing to the republicans who are eager to diminish retiree benefits. It appears that the Democrats will largely be asked to shoulder the burden to raise taxes in Illinois to provide revenue for the state.

In addition to cutting benefits for injured worker benefits, it appears that Senate President Cullerton and Senator Kwame Raoul (D – Chicago) are seeking language to reduce payments to doctors who treat injured workers. This creates an access to medical care issue for injured workers, in that doctors will stop taking workers' compensation cases. Injured workers may have to drive or be transported long distances to health care providers if this new language passes.

The Illinois AFL-CIO continues to be opposed to this package of bills that is being thoughtlessly pursued by Senate President Cullerton and Republican Leader Radogno. These senators work for you, and they should keep you in mind when crafting and voting on broad legislation such as this.

Union Households Contact Senators

2,000-Plus Callers Urge Opposition To Senate Deal With Anti-Worker Proposals

In an ongoing phone campaign to targeted State Senate offices, more than 2,000 union households have contacted their senators urging opposition to the leaders' budget plan that includes components of Gov. Bruce Rauner's anti-worker agenda.

The proposed budget deal connects tax increases with Rauner proposals to slash Workers' Compensation, make unconstitutional cuts to pensions and privatize public

services. It includes – at this time – 13 interconnected bills that all must pass and be signed into law or none go into effect.

The calls are boosting the efforts by labor leaders and lobbyists at the Capitol urging negotiation for fair budget that excludes Rauner's non-budget, anti-worker demands.

AFSCME Members Vote To Authorize Strike

From an AFSCME Council 31 press release:

In the first-ever strike authorization vote in Illinois state government, an 81 percent majority of the members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31 have voted to give their union bargaining committee the authority to call a strike.

The vote comes after Governor Bruce Rauner broke off negotiations with the union more than a year ago and has refused to even meet with the AFSCME bargaining committee ever since.

“We have come to this juncture for one reason only: The refusal of Governor Rauner to negotiate with our union,” AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said.

Instead of working toward compromise, Governor Rauner has been seeking the power to unilaterally impose his own extreme demands, including a 100% hike in employee costs

for health care that would take \$10,000 out of the pocket of the average state worker, a four-year wage freeze and an end to safeguards against irresponsible privatization.

“Bruce Rauner may think he can dictate, not negotiate, but this vote shows that AFSCME members are determined to stand up for basic fairness,” Lynch said.

AFSCME Council 31 represents some 38,000 Illinois state employees who protect kids, care for veterans and the disabled, respond to emergencies, help struggling families and much more.

The vote to authorize the union bargaining committee to call a strike does not necessarily mean that there will be a strike. The bargaining committee will meet in the coming days to chart its path, and pending litigation could also play a role.

Local Election Early Voting Starts

*Primary Tuesday; Consolidated
Election Set For April 4*

Early voting started Thursday for the April 4 Consolidated Elections. Contact your local election authority or use this link to find out where you can vote – <http://www.elections.il.gov/VotingInformation/EarlyVotingLocations.aspx>

“Local elections are extremely important to working families,” said Illinois AFL-CIO President Michael T. Carrigan. “Many decisions affecting our livelihoods are made by cities, school boards and township governments. And we’ve seen how Gov. Rauner has attempted to use local governments to attempt to build support for his anti-worker agenda.”

Contact your local union or Central Labor Council to find out who labor is endorsing in local races: http://www.ilaf-cio.org/labor_councils.htm

Local primary elections are set for next Tuesday, Feb. 28.

IDOL Director Hugo Chaviano Resigns

In what has been a common theme under Bruce Rauner’s administration, another member of his cabinet has resigned. Hugo Chaviano, who was the director of the Illinois Department of Labor, resigned late on Friday, February 17th. Under his direction, IDOL failed to post prevailing wage rates for the past two years.

Anna Hui, who was assistant director of labor, has been appointed as the new director.

“We are opposed to Anna Hui’s appointment. She is an appointee of Governor Rauner, and she was an assistant under the previous director for nearly two years,” said Michael Carrigan, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO.

“The Department under her supervision has failed to enforce prevailing wage laws around Illinois, which is unacceptable.”



**Primary Elections February 28
Consolidated Elections April 4**

IL AFL-CIO, Democratic Chairmen's Association Urge Restraint For Governor's Race Endorsements

Illinois AFL-CIO President Michael T. Carrigan and Illinois Democratic County Chairmen's Association President Doug House are urging restraint concerning endorsements for the 2018 Governor's race until more information is gathered.

In a joint letter, Carrigan and House asked for restraint until the candidate field is more complete and vetting is accomplished. From the letter:

"In order for us to achieve success next year, it is important

that the Democratic Party and Labor make sure that all the steps we take are solid and sure-footed. We must make sure we understand the full field of candidates, vigorously vet them, and make decisions based on whom most exemplifies the principles of the Democratic Party and who is best positioned to win the Governor's race.

"While this may take some time, we will be better served in the end by providing us with the best chance at victory in 2018."

Chairman Jay Hoffman Says No to Right to Work

House Labor Committee Chairman Jay Hoffman used his powers this week as committee chair to block HB 672 (right to work) and HB 673 (fair share elimination) from advancing to the House floor. The committee also voted down a bill (HB 660) this week to prohibit labor unions from getting social security numbers of their members. The bill was brought forward by fake news and false policy group, the Illinois Policy Institute.

The House Labor committee advanced HB 813 to the House floor by a vote of 16-11. The legislation requires large employers (65 employees or more, currently 75) to provide workers 90 day notice (currently 60) of a layoff.

HB 2351 also passed out of House Labor 16-12. It allows a lien to be placed on an employer's property for the amount of unpaid wages owed to an employee.

5th Annual Illinois USA Conservation Dinner

The Union Sportsmen Alliance (USA) is working to unite union sportsmen and sportswomen and like minded individuals to educate future generations of sportsmen, conserve healthy wildlife habitat and volunteer their time and skills for projects that improve access to quality places to hunt, fish, shoot and recreate outdoors.

On **March 6, 2017**, USA, in conjunction with the Chicago & Cook County Building and Construction Trades Council, the Chicago Federation of Labor and the Illinois AFL-CIO, will host the 5th Annual Illinois Conservation Dinner at the Sheet Metal Workers Local 73 Hall, 4550 Roosevelt Road, in Hillside.

Table sponsorships of \$5,000, \$3,000 or \$1,500 feature Remington Model 783 Rifle or a 40-quart ORCA Cooler. Individual tickets are \$150 and include a USA gift (knife).

For more information, visit
www.ilaf-cio.org/events.htm

