



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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**Call The Illinois AFL-CIO at (217) 544-4014 For More Information
On These And Other Legislative Issues Important To Working People**

The Illinois House will return to Springfield on Tuesday, March 3rd at noon. The Illinois Senate will return on Wednesday, March 4th at noon. As a general reminder the deadline to get bills out of committee is Thursday, March 12th, and in the Senate the deadline is Friday, March 13th.

STATE NEWS

HB 210 – Court Reporter Funding

Rep. Mautino (D – Spring Valley)

SUPPORT

Makes FY09 appropriations to the State Comptroller for expenses related to court reporting. The sum of \$3,633,750 is appropriated for official court reporting. The sum of \$760,000 is appropriated for State contributions to the State Employees' Retirement System and \$356,250 for State contributions to Social Security.

2/25/09 – Passed the House 115-0-0.

HB 786 - Roofing Contractors

Rep. Rita (D - Chicago)

SUPPORT

General contractors who fraudulently use a roofing contractors license number to obtain a building permit may be charged with identity theft under the criminal code.

2/25/09 – Passed Business/Occupational Licenses 14-0-0. Second Reading.

HB 875 – Repeals Nuclear Power Plant Ban

Rep. Osmond (R – Antioch)

SUPPORT

Amends the Public Utilities Act. Lifts the ban on construction of new nuclear power plants in Illinois.

2/25/09 – Passed the House Environment & Energy 17-4-0. Second Reading.

HB 952 - Prevailing Wage

Rep. Beiser (D - Alton)

SUPPORT

Amends the Prevailing Wage Act by including demolition on

public works projects.

2/25/09 – Passed House Labor Committee 17-6-0. Second Reading.

HB 1027 – Interfund Borrowing

Rep. Hannig (D – Gillespie)

Sen. Schoenberg (D – Evanston)

SUPPORT

Creates the Interfund Borrowing Act of 2009. For the purpose of making hospital access payments as set forth in approved Medicaid State plan amendments, requires transfers from the State Employees' Retirement System Fund and the General Obligation Bond Retirement and Interest Fund to the Hospital Provider Fund.

2/27/09 – Signed into Law, PA 96-0003

HB 1146 - Employment Verification

Rep. Ramey (R - West Chicago)

OPPOSE

Provides that until such time as any Employment Verification System is able to automatically verify the work authorization status of 99% of employees, the Illinois Department of Labor shall post on its website a link to a federal government website that provides an employer information about the federal e-verify program (rather than discouraging employers from participating in such program and prohibiting the State of Illinois from participating in the program, unless otherwise required by federal law). Bill passed with an agreement an amendment will be forthcoming and brought back to committee.

2/25/09 – Passed Labor Committee 15-8-0. Second Reading.

EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT RESOLUTION INTRODUCED IN THE ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Senator Toi Hutchison (D – Chicago Heights) introduced Senate Joint Resolution 35 this week in the Illinois Senate. The resolution calls for the support of the General Assembly for the Employee Free Choice Act, which would authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the bargaining representative when a majority of employees voluntarily sign authorization cards designating the union they wish to represent them. The resolution also urges the 111th Congress to pass the federal piece of legislation that would also provide for first contract mediation and arbitration, and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's freedom to choose a union. This is an Illinois AFL-CIO initiative this year and we will continue to update you as to its progress.



Unemployment Update

Nationally, for the week ending February 21, 2009, seasonally adjusted initial Unemployment Insurance claims increased by 36,000 from the previous week's revised figure of 631,000. In Illinois, initial claims filed decreased by 6,248 from the previous week, due to fewer layoffs in the construction, trade, and manufacturing industries according to the US Department of Labor.

Secretary of Labor Confirmed

On Tuesday, the U.S. Senate voted 80-17-2 to appoint California Congresswoman Hilda Solis as the new Secretary of Labor. She was sworn in Tuesday evening. Both Illinois Senators Durbin and Burris voted for the appointment.

Republicans had delayed the vote on Solis' appointment for over two months sighting her pro-labor voting record while in the California legislature and the U.S. Congress, her support of the Employee Free Choice Act and because she served on the board of American Rights at Work. Solis had a 97 percent lifetime voting record with the AFL-CIO as a congresswoman.

Hilda Solis served in the California State Assembly from 1992-1994. She served in the State Senate for two terms from 1998-2001. In 2000, she was elected to Congress representing California's 31st and 32nd Congressional Districts that include East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley.

Solis grew up in a union household. Her father was a Teamster organizer and her mother worked for 22 years on the assembly line at Mattel Inc. and belonged to the United Rubber Workers.

Secretary Solis, 51, will manage an agency with an annual budget of \$53 billion and 17,000 employees.

AFL-CIO, Change to Win Charge Anti-Union Organization with Illegal Fundraising

On Thursday, the AFL-CIO and Change to Win filed a joint complaint with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) against Rick Berman's Center for Union Facts and Bernie Marcus' the Marcus Foundation for violating their "charitable" tax status by engaging in partisan political activity on behalf of Republican Senate candidates during the 2008 election.

The complaint alleges that the two 501(c)(3) organizations should have their tax status revoked because Marcus, Berman and another Marcus Foundation official explicitly endorsed and tried to raise money to elect six Republican candidates on a conference call held just two weeks before Election Day. On the teleconference, they repeatedly asked for contributions, to the candidates and the Center for Union Facts itself, in order to elect Senators who opposed the Employee Free Choice Act.

The call, hosted by Bank of America, was titled "The Impact of Card Check Legislation on the Retail Industry" and was attended by representatives of numerous businesses. But the teleconference was primarily devoted to a discussion about how to support the Republican Party and the specific Republican candidates who opposed this legislation.

The complaint states: "During the call, Marcus warned the participants that, if elected, a Democratic Congress and a President Barack Obama would enact 'EFCA,' and he states that this would 'be the demise of civilization' and 'would destroy America,' and that any CEO of a public company 'should be shot' if not actively fighting 'EFCA.'"