



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Michael T. Carrigan, President  
Timothy E. Drea, Secretary Treasurer

*Published for Labor Activists*

May 29, 2009

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

The General Assembly will remain in session through this weekend and is scheduled to adjourn the Spring legislative session on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. The Illinois AFL-CIO will send a final legislative update next week with a breakdown of bills that pass in the final hours of this session.

## STATE NEWS

### Contribution, PAC Funding Caps Passes General Assembly

A bill limiting the amount of campaign contributions and the funding of labor union political action committees passed the House and will become law after Gov. Pat Quinn signs it as promised.

The bill, House Bill 7 (SA 1 and 2), fundamentally changes the way most unions and labor organizations fund their PACs and donate to campaigns. First, the bill limits the amount a labor organization (or corporation) can donate to a PAC to \$20,000 per calendar year. This means if a labor organization funds its PAC through treasury money it would be limited to \$20,000 per year.

Labor to Labor political communication is not limited by this bill and labor organizations are allowed to contribute up to \$10,000 to a single candidate committee and \$20,000 to a multi-candidate committee from treasury funds. Below is a rundown of the legislation.

*Sets political contribution limits to single candidate committee per calendar year:*

- \$5,000 from individual
- \$90,000 from PAC
- \$10,000 from labor organization, association or corporation

*Sets political contribution limits to multi-candidate committees:*

- \$10,000 from individual
- \$90,000 from PAC
- \$20,000 from labor organization, association or corporation

*Sets limits on non-candidate committees (most Labor PACs):*

- \$10,000 from individual
- \$90,000 from PAC
- \$20,000 from labor organization, association or corporation – THIS MEANS THAT TREASURY MONEY TRANSFERRED TO THE PAC COUNTS TOWARD THE \$20,000 PER YEAR

*Entities may only sponsor one Non-candidate PAC.*

*Allows a public official to create second non-political, constituent services committee:*

- Limits contributions to \$5,000 per source per calendar year

*Tracks self-funded candidates:*

- If candidate or family member donates (\$250,000 for statewide and \$100,000 for others) the candidate must file within one day a notification with the state.
- Other candidates in race will be able to raise money above the limit ceilings

*Caps will be adjusted every two years for inflation.*

*Independent expenditures (not made in consultation with candidate) are not contributions:*

- Aggregate Independent expenditures of at least \$3,000 trigger reporting requirement
- Entities that spend \$3,000 or more during 12-month period must organize as a political committee (PAC).

*State political committees must report to Board of Elections quarterly (now semi-annual):*

- Non-candidate committees are assumed to be non-participants in election until contribution is made. Then committee is in violation unless reporting occurs within five days (or 24 hours in last five days before election).
- Any contribution of \$500 or more in the 60 days before an election (A-1) must be filed electronically. General Assembly candidate PACs must report \$500 or more contributions from May 1 to adjournment and Governor PACs for 90 days following adjournment.

*Injunctive relief:*

- Any person can bring action in circuit court to restrain those that are out of compliance and conducting electioneering communications.

*DPI limits:*

- Prohibits Democratic Party of Illinois from making endorsements, contributions or expenditures in connection with the election of a candidate.



## Lobbyist Ethics Bill Heads to Governor

A bill affecting lobbyists passed the Senate 58-0 last week. Senate Bill 54 (House Amendment 1) raises the registration fees to \$1,000 per lobbyist (from \$350) and includes increasing expenditure reporting requirements to weekly during legislative session and monthly when not in session. Also, the bill requires lobbyists to take an annual ethics training program administered by the Secretary of State. It also includes enforcement mechanisms and penalties. The bill now heads to the Governor's desk.

Other ethics related legislation to pass includes:

**SB 1333** – Gives Governor 90 days to review appointees to boards and commissions and “double-exempt” political appointments under the previous two gubernatorial administrations

**SB 189** – Expands the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act.

## No Excuse Mail-In Absentee Voting Passes Both Chambers

The House-approved bill significantly expanding absentee voting capabilities will be sent to the Governor after passing on a largely partisan 69-48 roll call Friday. The bill passed the Senate on a 59-0 vote in April.

The legislation provides that voters may request a mail-in absentee ballot without specifying a reason for absence from the polling place on election. Previously, the law required an excuse for inability to vote at the polling place on Election Day. It is effective immediately.

Other election-related bills to pass:

**SB 1801** – Expands Early Voting hours on holidays and the weekend before the election.

**HB 723** – A vacancy in nomination by a person designated by a committee of the political party and only if that person files nominating petitions with the number of signatures required for an established party candidate for that office within 75 days after the day of the general primary.

## Hungry for Justice

Mahaley Somerville, 87, was at the Capitol this week to lobby in her own unique way.

Mahaley and other community activists are holding a hunger strike at the Capitol stressing to lawmakers the dire need for increased tax revenue to support critical programs for Illinois' most needy citizens.

“I'm not worried about my health,” said Somerville. “I'm worried about the health of my community if we try and fix this budget by removing these programs.”

Hungry for Justice – a grass roots organization - is backed by close to 200 allies including labor unions and faith and community groups. They plan to continue the hunger strike until May 31 unless the General Assembly passes a budget “that raises new revenue, increases tax fairness for working families and protects the safety net for seniors, children and working families.”

Hungry for Justice participants are staying at the offices of the Black Caucus in Springfield.

## Union Members Running for State Universities Retirement System Board

Public employee unions are reaching out to their members via mailers, leafleting and phone calls encouraging them to vote for fellow union members and union-recommended candidates to sit on the State Universities Retirement System's (SURS) newly formed Board of Trustees.

The Illinois AFL-CIO, SEIU, IFT, AFSCME, and the IEA have collaborated on GOTV post cards to be sent to both participants and annuitants.

**Endorsed participant candidates for SURS are: Jeff Beaulieu (IEA), Joseph Iosbaker (SEIU), Dorinda Miller (AFSCME) and Antonio Vasquez (IFT). Endorsed annuitant candidates are: Mitch Vogel and John Engstrom.**

On April 3, 2009, Gov. Quinn signed Public Act 96-0006 that eliminated the current Governor-appointed Board of Trustees of the State Universities Retirement System. The new board will be made up of 11 trustees: four appointed by the Governor, four contributing members elected by contributing members, and two annuitants elected by the annuitants of the System.

Ballots were mailed today to System participants. They are due back no later than 10 a.m. on June 17.

**2nd Annual COPE Golf Outing • Monday, June 8, 2009**

**If you haven't registered call Terri Payne @ (217) 492-2622**

## **SB 1350 - Labor and Business Reach Agreement on Unemployment Insurance**

Sen. Forby (D – Benton)/Rep. Lang (D - Skokie)

**Passed the House 118-0-0. On calendar order of concurrence in the Senate.**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocated funding to State Unemployment Trust Funds to assist states to modernize the payment of Unemployment benefits.

Under the ARRA, Illinois was allocated \$300 million. Under current Illinois law, the state qualified for \$100 million in Modernization Funds but needed to adopt additional provisions to qualify for the remaining \$200 million. After engaging in spirited negotiations with representatives from the business community an agreement was reached to ensure Illinois unemployed workers would benefit from the Modernization Funding. The agreement will:

- Allow long term unemployed workers to qualify for an additional 7 weeks of extended benefits in addition to the current 13 weeks.
- Allow the Illinois Department of Employment to ensure the Trust Fund is solvent from 1/1/0 to 1/1/13.
- Set a dependent allowance of at least \$15 per dependent subject to an aggregate cap of \$50 or 50% of the weekly benefit amount.
- Guarantee workers who voluntarily leave employment due to compelling family reasons will not be disqualified to receive unemployment benefits.
- Impose a .2% (two-tenths) reduction in the weekly dependent child allowance for those at maximum level and filing for initial benefits on or after 1/1/11 and a .3% (three-tenths) reduction effective 1/1/12.
- Establish a moratorium on non-agreed UI Bills moving in either chamber for the remainder of the 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Due to a projected deficit of \$5 billion in the Trust Fund on 1/1/2011, labor and business will most likely be back at the negotiating table to discuss solvency of the fund.

## **IBEW 21 Holds Hearing on Mandatory Overtime**

The House Labor Committee held a subject matter hearing this to hear first hand testimony on the negative effects of forced overtime on workers in the Illinois telecommunications industry. Rosetta Shinn, the Executive Director of Political and Legislative Affairs for the IBEW #21, testified to the many negative effects workers and their families are facing when required to work overtime with little to no notice. In addition, four AT&T workers from Local 21 gave first hand testimonials to the excessive amounts of mandatory overtime increasing stress on family life, which jeopardized their health and safety and undermined the effectiveness of their work.

## **HB 2625 – Teamster and UAW License Plates**

Rep. Walker (D – Arlington Heights)

Sen. Hutchinson (D – Chicago Heights)

### **SUPPORT**

Provides for the creation of special Illinois license plates for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the United Auto Workers. The fees associated from the plates will be sent to each unions charitable trust fund.

**5/26/09 – Passed the House Elementary & Secondary Ed Committee. Calendar Order of Concurrence in House.**

## **SB 1369 - State Facility Overtime**

Sen. Frerichs (D - Champaign)

Rep. McAsey (D – Crest Hill)

### **SUPPORT**

Creates the State Facility Overtime Act. Provides that the Director of the State agency responsible for the operation of specified State facilities (or the Director's designee or agent) may not require an employee to accept work in excess of an agreed upon, predetermined, and regularly scheduled daily work shift, not to exceed 40 hours per week. Provides that the State Facility Overtime Act shall not apply in the event of unexpected absences discovered at the commencement of a shift which could not be prudently planned for by the employer and which would significantly affect safety or care.

**5/27/09 – Passed Labor Committee as amended 16-3-0. Second Reading.**

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **Federal Grants Issued to Repair Damaged Railways**

Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Szabo (Illinois – UTU) announced on Wednesday that \$15 million in federal disaster grants will be given to nine states to help pay for emergency repairs to damaged railroad infrastructure due to flooding.

The Illinois' Department of Transportation will receive over a half of a million dollars in assistance.

### **House Passes Bill to make Organizing FedEx Easier**

On Tuesday, the U.S. House passed legislation that would place FedEx's workers under the National Labor Relations Act instead of the current Railway Labor Act, making it easier for them to organize.

Under the Railway Labor Act, workers can only organize nationally. But the National Labor Relations Act allows organizing by terminal or worksite.

All UPS drivers are covered under the National Labor Relations Act.