



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

PUBLISHED FOR LABOR ACTIVISTS BY THE ILLINOIS AFL-CIO

MICHAEL T. CARRIGAN, PRESIDENT

TIMOTHY E. DREA, SECRETARY TREASURER

JASON KELLER, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

STATE NEWS

Save Our State - SOS Rally!

The Coalition for a Responsible Budget is holding a rally in Springfield on **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21** beginning at 11:30 am to call attention to the dire need for new state revenue. AFSCME, SEIU and community organizations are spearheading the rally. They hope to make it "the largest demonstration Springfield has ever seen."

Please plan to attend if your schedule allows. For more information go to: www.abetterillinois.com.

Governor Quinn Signs Executive Order for PLAs

Governor Quinn appeared before the Statewide Building Trades quarterly meeting in Bloomington on Wednesday, March 31 to reaffirm his commitment to rebuilding and maintaining Illinois' infrastructure. While speaking to the group he reminded the crowd of nearly seventy building trades' members of his work on the \$31 billion capital works program that he signed into law in July of 2009. In addition, he signed a new Executive Order 2010-3 for project labor agreements for contracts issued by the state.

"Project labor agreements are important to ensuring that public works projects are run in a responsible manner that saves the state money and also ensures worker safety," said Governor Quinn. "I urge state agencies awarding public works contracts to utilize PLAs on projects that use state or federal funding."

Under the executive order, state agencies awarding public works projects are encouraged to evaluate projects that are funded, in whole or in part, with federal dollars to determine whether a PLA can be utilized. This executive order supersedes the one issued by Governor Blagojevich in 2003 (EO 2003-13). President Obama signed a similar executive order last year for project labor agreements for federal projects.



USDOL Regional Rep. Meets with Labor

Ken Bennett, who was appointed by President Obama to serve as the US Department of Labor regional representative under Secretary Solis attended the Illinois AFL-CIO Executive Board meeting on March 23 in Springfield. He told the board, "It's a new day at the Department of Labor." "We work for the workers and we want them to know it."

Metropolitan Exposition Authority

In January Speaker Madigan and Senate President Cullerton passed legislation (SB 1868 – PA 96-0882 – Cullerton/Hamos) to sweep the members of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority Board in Chicago within thirty days of the Governor's signature. The legislation allowed for three members to be appointed by Governor Quinn (one of which had to have academic credentials in labor law or human resources), three members to be appointed by Mayor Daley, with the Chair of the board to be appointed by Mayor Daley (seven members total). The Governor signed the legislation on February 17.

The terms of the former members of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority Board ended March 19. On Friday, March 19, new appointments were made for an interim board. The Chairman is John Gates, a holdover from the current board, who is chairman of the investment firm PortaeCo LLC. Daley appointees includes: Andre Rice, president of Muller & Monroe Asset Management; Bruce Rauner, chairman of venture capital firm GTCR Golder Rauner; and Sheila O'Grady, president of the Illinois Restaurant Association. Quinn appointees includes: attorney Devon Bruce; management consultant Anita Cummings from the United Business Association of Midway; and Peter O'Brien, a holdover from the prior board and vice president of MADDO Management LP.

Their first meeting was held Tuesday and they began reducing employee benefits right away. There was a policy in place that allowed Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority employees to be awarded vacation time based on years of service in other government employment. That policy was rescinded Tuesday. The policy was put in place in 1989 to draw the highest qualified employees from other government entities.

In the same meeting where the new board cut employee benefits, board members hired two consulting firms at a total cost of \$190,000.

The firms hired are Pricewaterhouse Coopers and C.H. Johnson Consulting Inc. and are tasked with helping the city compare their convention business with other convention centers in the country.

In addition to the interim McPier Board meeting, there is a legislative task force formed by HJR 101 this year. It consists of 16 General Assembly members, with Speaker Madigan and Senate President Cullerton serving as co-chairs. The task force is asked to examine and recommend ways to improve the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority's operational stability and profitability. The first meeting of the task force took place on Thursday, April 1.

At the first task force hearings trade show customers at McCormick Place called for Illinois state legislators to make quick and major changes to lower costs and change work rules. They claim if nothing changes, they will be forced to leave. Senate President Cullerton raised the possibility of a state subsidy for McCormick Place operations. He pointed out that both Orlando and Las Vegas provide subsidies for their operations. Those subsidies are provided by (Continued on next page)

Metropolitan Exposition *(Continued)*

hotel taxes. Union leaders from Chicago had their chance to speak publicly on the issue yesterday. Tim Foley (IBEW #134), Tony DeGrado (Steelworkers #17), Robert Fulton (Ironworkers #136), John Coli (Teamsters Joint Council #25) and Kevin McLaughlin (Carpenters #10) testified yesterday. Those leaders called for the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau to be merged with McCormick Place to save money. Coli stated that the bureau is “duplicative and its function should be taken over by McCormick Place.” Union leaders went on to blame show contractors Freeman and GES for grossly increasing costs of holding trade shows in Chicago. Coli said “contractors mark up costs 120 percent compared with a nationwide average of 30 percent.” “It’s not the \$28.15 Teamster working 700 hours a year,” he added.

Quinn Announces \$5 Million to Support Clean Energy and Create Green Jobs

Stimulus Funds will Help Produce Wind Turbine Parts at Ingersoll Machine Tools’ Rockford Facility

Governor Quinn announced \$5 million for Ingersoll Machine Tools, Inc. to develop wind energy turbine components and create and retain more than 150 green jobs at its facility in Rockford. The funding is through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The grant was awarded through the Green Industry Business Development Program, a component of the state’s Energy Plan, administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and funded by ARRA. Over \$100 million in federal recovery funding is available to implement the plan, which is Illinois’ most comprehensive effort to date to achieve significant gains in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Illinois currently ranks third in the nation for the installation of new wind energy generation – behind only Texas and Colorado – and wind energy accounts for approximately 3 percent of generation in Illinois. Wind generation has attracted over \$1.3 billion in investment in the state and created over 3,500 jobs.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Illinois General Assembly will return to Springfield on Tuesday, April 13. Both chambers are scheduled to convene at noon. The House and Senate will begin considering bills sent over from the opposite chamber. Both chambers will have until Friday, April 23 to pass substantive bills out of committee.

HB 4658 – Credit History/Employment Rep. Franks (D – Woodstock) **SUPPORT**

Prohibits employers from checking a potential employee’s credit history and further outlaws denying employment to those with poor credit histories. Provides for a civil action remedy in circuit court for job seekers or current employees that are discriminated against because of their credit history. Allows certain financial institutions and state agencies to perform extensive background checks, including credit checks, in certain circumstances.

*3/25/10 – Passed House 89-24-0.
Referred to Senate Labor.*

HB 4886 – Four Day School Week

Rep. Black (D – Danville)
Sen. Frerichs (D – Champaign)

OPPOSE

Provides that a school district may, by board resolution, adopt an alternative school calendar for a 4-day school week, which must be approved by the State Board of Education. Requires a minimum of at least 150 days to ensure 141 of actual pupil attendance. Labor’s opposition with this legislation is due to the concern of reduced salaries for cafeteria workers and bus drivers (typically wage/hour employees), additional child care costs for working families on non-school days, and keeping students attentive during an extended day.

*3/22/10 – Passed House 81-21-0.
Referred to Senate Education.*

HB 5513 – Sprinklerfitters

Rep. Rita (D – Blue Island)
Sen. Martinez (D – Chicago)

Neutral

Amends the Criminal Code of 1961. Provides that a person is guilty of identity theft when applying for a building permit and uses a license number of a fire sprinkler contractor that the applicant knows will not be doing work on the project. Class 4 felony.

3/24/10 – Passed House 115-0-0. Referred to Senate Licensed Activities.

HB 5514 – Roofing Contractors

Rep. Rita (D – Blue Island)

SUPPORT

Amends the Illinois Roofing Industry Licensing Act. Adds that a person is guilty of identity theft, if in the course of applying for a building permit, they provide a license number of a roofing contractor who will not do the work on the project. Class 4 felony. Effective Immediately.

3/26/10 – Passed House 86-7-0. Referred to Senate Licensed Activities.

HB 6349 – Illinois Preference Act

Rep. Beiser (D – Alton)

NEUTRAL

The Illinois AFL-CIO has been part of a working coalition for the past two months regarding upgrading the Illinois Preference Act. There are two laws in the Illinois Legislative Compiled Statutes regarding high unemployment for workers on public work projects. One has been ruled unconstitutional and the other has been rendered unenforceable by the Illinois Supreme Court, holding employees of the Illinois Department of Labor personally liable if mistakes are made. This legislation would state that whenever unemployment in the State of Illinois has exceeded 5% as measured by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, public

works projects must employ at least 90% Illinois workers on the project. Creates a private right of action for enforcement. Provides any interested party may file a complaint. Illinois Laborer is defined as an individual who has resided in Illinois for at least 30 days. Each violation is liable for a penalty of \$1,000 per person per day, \$5,000 for a second violation and \$15,000 for a third or subsequent violation.

*3/25/10 – Passed House 107-5-0.
Referred to Senate Labor.*

SB 1182 – Department of Corrections Payroll

Sen. Trotter (D – Chicago)
Speaker Madigan (D – Chicago)

SUPPORT

Supplemental appropriations bill for the Department of Corrections payroll for correctional officers and to continue operations for the rest of the fiscal year.

3/25/10 – Passed House 115-1-0. Passed Senate 36-21-0. Passed both chambers.

SB 3522 – Residency Requirement

Sen. Steans (D – Chicago)
Rep. Joyce (D – Worth)

SUPPORT

Prohibits residency within the school district from being considered in determining the employment, compensation, promotion, or assignment of a Chicago public school teacher. Current law holds this prohibition applies only if residency within the district was not required as a qualification of employment before being hired on staff.

*3/25/10 – Passed Senate 40-7-9.
Referred to House Rules.*

Ground Broken on Western Illinois University Riverfront Campus

Construction Will Create 2,000 Jobs, Triple University's Enrollment

Governor Pat Quinn visited the future site of Western Illinois University-Quad Cities' Riverfront Campus on Wednesday, March 31 to break ground on the renovation of approximately 60,000 square feet of space for the new campus that will triple university enrollment.

The project will create 2,000 new jobs, generate a construction impact in excess of \$125 million and support more than 100 permanent new jobs at WIU-Quad Cities.

Despite having a regional population of more than 350,000 people, WIU-Quad Cities is the only public university in northwestern Illinois.

Funding for the project comes from *Illinois Jobs Now!*, the capital funding bill that Governor Quinn signed into law last summer. The State has already issued nearly \$2 billion in bonds to fund critical construction projects across Illinois.

NATIONAL

Miners Die in Explosion

On Monday, at least 25 coal miners lost their lives when a horrific explosion rocked the Massey Energy Upper Big Branch Mine where they were working in southern West Virginia. Another four miners are still trapped underground.

The mining company has a long record of safety violations and fines.

The mine is non-union, but United Mine Workers of America President Cecil Roberts issued this heartfelt statement.

"The hearts and prayers of all UMW members are with the families of those lost at Performance Coal Company's Upper Big Branch mine. We are also praying for the safe rescue of those still missing, and for the safety of the courageous mine rescue team members. They are putting their lives on the line, entering a highly dangerous mine to bring any survivors to safety.

"As a mine operated by a subsidiary of Massey Energy, the Upper Big Branch mine is a nonunion mine. Nevertheless, I have dispatched highly trained and skilled UMW personnel to the immediate vicinity of the mine, and they stand ready to offer any assistance they can to the families and the rescuers at this terrible and anxious time. We are all brothers and sisters in the coalfields at times like this."

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka also commented on the tragedy saying, "this incident isn't just a matter of happenstance, but rather the inevitable result of a profit-driven system and reckless corporate conduct."

Massey Mine has been cited for over 450 safety violations at the Upper Big Branch mine alone and paid over \$1 million in fines in 2009.

Labor Lawyers Appointed to NLRB

After nearly nine months of Republicans blocking his nominees to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), President Obama appointed Craig Becker and Mark Pearce during the Congressional recess.

Both Becker and Pearce are labor lawyers. Becker is an attorney for both the AFL-CIO and the Service Employees Union (SEIU). He is a graduate of Yale Law School. After graduation he practiced and taught labor law at several universities including UCLA, Georgetown and the University of Chicago. Pearce is a founding partner of Creighton, Pearce, Johnsen & Giroux in Buffalo, NY. He practices union side labor and employment law before state and federal courts. He is a graduate of State University of New York Law School and Cornell University.

The NLRB has been basically dysfunctional for more than two years with only two of its five members seated. Becker and Pearce can serve through the end of 2011 with no Senate action.

No Defense For Kirk's Poor Labor Record

Illinois voters will go to the polls this November and the first choice they will face is who to put in now President Barack Obama's former seat.

Many factors make the battle for this seat critical. In years that the president is not on the ballot the political party in the White House (Democrats) typically loses seats in Congress. On average, it is more than 20 seats in the House. Also, the national recession and corruption investigations in Illinois have made the road that much more difficult.

Mark Kirk, a U.S. Congressman from the 10th District, is the Republican's choice for the Senate race. His record does not reflect support on Labor issues.

"We're going to hear from his campaign how moderate he is," Michael T. Carrigan, president of the Illinois AFL-CIO said, adding "but that is just a carefully manufactured public persona. He is nothing more than the usual conservative who believes in deregulating big business and tying the hands of workers. We have a long record of his anti-worker votes in Washington."

The Illinois AFL-CIO threw its support behind Democrat nominee Alexi Giannoulias in the primary election for U.S. Senate. Giannoulias, the current State Treasurer, faces Kirk in the fall. Recent polls show Giannoulias with a slim lead over Kirk. "This race, among a handful of others in the country, will really decide the fate of working families for two decades or more," Carrigan said. "We can go down the path of Congressional Republican brand of business-based policies and hope for the trickle down or we can be pro-active with job creation, health care reform and economic policies focused on the middle class and working poor. We can't contribute to the obstructionist tactics of the Senate Republicans by sending another vote their way from Illinois."

Senate Republicans have continually stalled pro-worker legislation and appointments by threatening the use of the filibuster. Kirk's record shows he will be no different, as evidenced by his 22 percent lifetime voting record on Labor issues, including opposition to a health care bill financed by a tax hike on the wealthy with no excise tax on existing benefits and his votes against foreclosure relief for homeowners and the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. He also supported the Bush Tax Cuts for the Wealthy that have helped create the dire financial difficulties the nation now faces. The U.S. Senate has 59 members who are, or generally align with the Democrats. The remaining 41 are Republicans. Senate rules allow for any member to halt the progress of legislation by debating endlessly (filibuster). To break a filibuster, it takes a cloture vote of 60 senators (supermajority).

"In order for us to move our agenda on the national level and allow President Obama to make progress we have to make sure a senator is elected from Illinois that reflects the values and priorities of regular working women and men," Carrigan said. "Mark Kirk has been part of the problem in Washington for 10 years. We need to look a different direction and support Alexi Giannoulias for U.S. Senate."

