



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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The Illinois General Assembly wrapped up their business today. Members in both chambers continued to meet with key groups to reach agreement on bills, prior to the deadline for passing bills out of their respective chamber on April 15. The Illinois House and Senate will return on Monday next week and work straight through to Friday. Workers Compensation negotiations continue in Springfield. No consensus has been reached between all of the interested parties. We will continue to update our affiliates on this issue.

WE ARE ONE RALLIES FIRE UP WORKERS

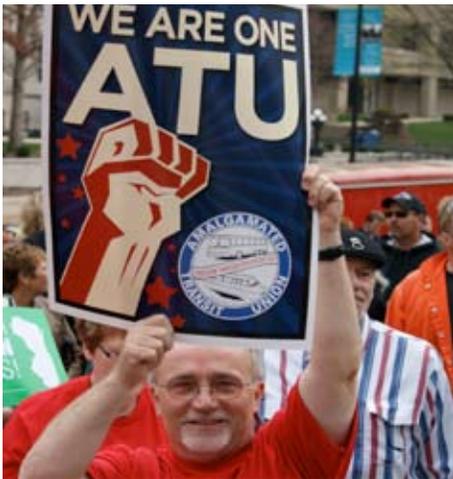
A nation-wide week of solidarity rallies kicked off on Monday spotlighting and connecting the plight of workers' rights today with those of Memphis sanitation workers during the 1968 strike where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated.

In Illinois on Monday, seven community rallies were held in Champaign, Decatur, Kankakee, Ottawa, Peoria, Rock Island and Rockford. Held in conjunction with the NAACP in many communities, the rallies proved to be energizing for union members and non-union members alike. In Decatur, Eisenhower High School honor students Shay and Shy Allen, 17-year-old twins, read highlights of Dr. King's speech to the Memphis sanitary workers on April 3, 1968 the day before he was shot and killed. In Ottawa, La Salle-Peru High School student Nadia Valentine, a 15-year-old sophomore fired up the crowd with her speech supporting unions and their cause, and in Peoria at the Workers' Memorial near City Hall, Jackie Watkins led the crowd in singing "Amazing Grace."

On Wednesday rallies were held in Bloomington and Collinsville, where the IBEW Hall was packed to the maximum. On Thursday, more rallies in Gurnee, Peoria and Springfield, where Nancy Guyott, president of the Indiana AFL-CIO spoke to the crowd and thanked Illinois Labor for taking care of the 39 Indiana Democrats who fled the state to stop a vote on Right to Work for Less legislation. Indiana State Representative Dennis Tyler (D-34) also made the trip to Springfield to say thank you for the outpouring of support from Illinois union members – in particular his own union brothers the Associated Fire Fighters.

The final two rallies are scheduled for tonight at 6 pm in Carbondale at the SIU Arena and for Saturday, April 9 in downtown Chicago at Daley Plaza at 1 pm.

"This week has brought thousands of workers together across this state for a common cause," said Illinois AFL-CIO President Michael T. Carrigan. "Our fight is to protect workers' rights on the job. Just as Dr. King did in Memphis 43 years ago, we are marching and standing in solidarity to give workers a voice against injustice and corporate greed. Our message to all lawmakers is clear; 'Don't tread on our rights. Don't bust our unions. Don't take us for granted.'"



Governor Quinn Unveils \$11.5 Billion Multi-Year Construction Program Continued Infrastructure Investment will Create 155,000 Jobs

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn unveiled the state's new \$11.5 billion multi-year construction program. The program will create 155,000 jobs and spark economic development throughout the state while improving safety and reducing congestion. Driven by the Illinois Jobs Now! capital program, the statewide multi-year plan for fiscal years 2012 through 2017 will improve 3,248 miles of road and replace or rehabilitate 611 bridges. In the upcoming fiscal year, the state is expected to improve 490 miles of road and 105 bridges.

Of the \$11.5 billion program, \$7.2 billion is from federal funds and \$3.6 billion from state funds, including \$2 billion through the six-year, \$31 billion Illinois Jobs Now! capital program passed by Governor Quinn and the General Assembly in 2009.

State highways will see \$8.3 billion in improvements over the life of the program, with \$3.2 billion available for the local highway system. In the state portion of the multi-year program, \$3.5 billion will be for reconstructions, resurfacings, widenings and other safety projects; \$1.9 billion for bridge needs; \$2.1 billion for congestion mitigation and \$774 million for new roads and increased access for economic development. The entire multi-year program is available online at www.dot.il.gov.

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N A T I O N A L

Government Workers Protest Shutdown

In Chicago on Thursday, AFGE members held a protest at the Federal Building in downtown Chicago to call attention to the devastating impact proposed federal budget cuts or a government shutdown would have on US citizens.

The proposed cuts, estimated at \$30 billion, would mark the largest-ever federal budget cut in social spending in a single year. "These cuts would starve states, municipalities, tribal authorities and local communities of vital resources," said Dorothy James, National Vice President for District 7 AFGE and Illinois AFL-CIO Vice President. "Assistance to local communities for public housing, day care and after-school programs, meals for the elderly and programs that create and retain jobs are all risk. These cuts are not in the best interest of the American public."

AFGE represents employees from the Bureau of Prisons, Department of Agriculture, Department of Education and Commerce, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Labor, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency, Railroad Retirement Board, Social Security Administration and Veterans Affairs.

Columbia Trade Deal to Move Forward

It appears that a deal between President Obama and Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos will free the way for the US-Columbia trade agreement to move through Congress. The presidents agreed on Wednesday to an "action plan" for labor rights in Columbia that will supposedly provide protections for union organizers and workers. But AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka called the plan "deeply disappointing" saying it "doesn't go far enough in laying out concrete benchmarks for progress in the areas of violence and impunity, nor does it address many of the ways in which Colombian labor law falls short of international standards."

According to the AFL-CIO, Colombia is the most deadly nation in the world for trade unionists. In the past 25 years, more than 2,850 trade unionists have been murdered there. Last year, 51 trade unionists were murdered, an increase over 2009. Six trade unionists have been murdered so far this year, including two in the past week.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HB 582 – CTA Employees

Rep. Arroyo (D – Chicago)
Monitor

Amends the Metropolitan Transit Authority Act. Provides that the Chicago Transit Authority may not have a sick leave, vacation leave, or personal leave policy unless the Chicago Transit Board adopts the policy by ordinance or resolution. Requires that any sick leave, vacation leave, or personal leave policy adopted by the Chicago Transit Board apply uniformly to all employees of the Chicago Transit Authority.

4/7/11 – Passed House Mass Transit 13-6-1. Second Reading.

HB 1503 – Higher Education

Rep. Rose (R – Charleston)/Sen. Maloney (D – Chicago)

Monitor

Amends the Board of Higher Education Act. Directs the Board of Higher Education to form a broad-based group of individuals representing the Office of the Governor, the General Assembly, public institutions of higher education, State agencies, business and industry, Statewide organizations representing faculty and staff, and others as the Board shall deem appropriate to devise a

system for allocating State resources to public institutions of higher education based upon performance in achieving State goals related to student success and certificate and degree completion. Provides that, beginning in Fiscal Year 2013, the Board of Higher Education budget recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly shall include allocations to public institutions of higher education based upon performance metrics designed to promote and measure student success in degree and certificate completion. Provides that these metrics must be adopted by the Board by rule. Requires the metrics to be developed and promulgated in accordance with specified principles. Provides that in devising performance metrics, the Board may be guided by the report of the Higher Education Finance Study Commission.

4/5/11 – Passed House 102-0-0.

4/7/11 – Referred to Senate Assignments

HB 1513 – Garnish Wages

Rep. Dugan (D – Kankakee)/
Sen. Holmes (D – Aurora)

NEUTRAL

Amends the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act. Provides that municipalities with populations of less than 500,000 may

make deductions from employee wages or final compensation for an excess payment made by the municipality or to collect a debt owed to a municipality after notice to the employee and an opportunity to be heard. Provides that prior to any such deduction to pay a debt owed to the municipality, the municipality shall certify that (i) the employee has been afforded a hearing, conducted by the municipality, to dispute the debt, and (ii) the employee has received notice of a wage deduction and opportunity for a hearing.

4/6/11 – Passed House 110-0-0.

4/7/11 – Referred to Senate Assignments.

HB 1573 – First Aid Kits

Rep. Holbrook (D – Belleville)/
Sen. Wilhelmi (D – Crest Hill)

SUPPORT

Amends the Illinois Vehicle Code. Provides that all passenger trains, engines, and vehicles operated by a contract carrier transporting railroad employees in the course of their employment shall contain a first aid kit that contains, at a minimum, those articles those articles prescribed by the Illinois Commerce

G E N E R A L A S S E M B L Y

Commission, for first aid to persons who may be injured.

4/6/11 – Passed House 111-0-0.

4/7/11 – Referred to Senate Assignments.

HB 1966 – High Speed Rail Public Private Partnership

Rep. Burke (D – Chicago)/

Sen. Sandoval (D – Cicero)

Monitor

Creates the Illinois and Midwest High-Speed Rail Commission Act. Contains provisions concerning the composition of the Illinois and Midwest High-Speed Rail Commission. Provides that by November 20, 2011, the Commission must prepare and issue a report recommending the best governmental structure for a public-private partnership to design, build, operate, maintain, and finance a high-speed rail system for the State. Provides that a follow-up report shall be issued by October 1, 2012. Repeals the Act on January 1, 2015. Adds the chairman of the ICC to the commission. Effective immediately.

4/5/11 – Passed House 74-28-0.

4/7/11 – Referred to Senate Assignments

HB 2927 – Emergency Employment Development Act

Rep. Mathias (R – Arlington Heights)

Monitor

Amends the Illinois Emergency Employment Development Act. Provides that the Department of Employment Security shall publicize the program and that the Board of Higher Education and Community College Board shall review their policies to ensure that specified programs serve the needs of the economically disadvantaged. Provides that an eligible employer may not terminate, lay off, or reduce the working hours of an employee for the purpose of hiring an individual with funds available under the Act. Adds certain small businesses and businesses that produce energy conserving materials or services or are involved in development of renewable sources of energy to the list of businesses that may be given preference under the Act. Makes numerous other changes. Amends the Corporate Accountability for Tax Expenditures Act to include assistance given under the Illinois Emergency Employment Development Act from the definition of “development assistance”. Amends the 21st Century Workforce Development Fund Act to provide that the Fund is subject to

appropriation. Effective July 1, 2011.

4/6/11 – Passed House 111-0-0.

4/7/11 – First Reading in Senate.

HB 3591 – CTA

Rep. Mussman (D – Schaumburg)

Monitor

Amends the Illinois Pension Code. In provisions concerning the retirement plan for employees of the Chicago Transit Authority and the pension plan for employees of the Regional Transportation Authority, the Suburban Bus Division, and the Commuter Rail Division, prohibits an individual from being paid any benefits provided under the Code if (i) he or she first becomes a participant on or after the effective date of the amendatory Act and (ii) he or she is convicted of a felony relating to, arising out of, or in connection with his or her service as a participant. Effective immediately.

4/6/11 – Passed House 103-5-2.

First Reading in Senate.

SB 398 – Film Tax Credit

Sen. Martinez (D – Chicago)/

Rep. Harris (D – Chicago)

NEUTRAL

SB 4 (Forby/Bradley) contains a sunset provision for the film services tax credit five years after the effective date of the bill. Senator Forby filed a motion this week to concur with House Amendment #3 to SB 4. SB 398 was filed in the Senate. The language will only take effect “if and only if” SB 4 becomes law. SB 398 would extend the sunset of the film production services tax credit by ten years, and allow future General Assemblies to extend it further by five year increments.

3/30/11 – Passed Senate 53-0-3.

4/8/11 – Passed House 110-0-0.

To Governor’s Desk.

SB 1932 - Vouchers

Sen. Murphy (D – Palatine)

OPPOSE

Senator Murphy filed an amendment on this bill this week. He indicates he would still like to pass it. The Illinois Federation of Teachers and AFL-CIO remain steadfastly opposed to such attacks on public schools and their teachers. The legislation creates the Illinois School Choice Program, which shall be administered by the State Board of

Education. The bill establishes a Chicago-only voucher plan, with the potential to expand elsewhere in Illinois. Provides that any State-certified, non-public school may enroll eligible students and be reimbursed with vouchers paid by state tax dollars. The bill’s stated goal is to take vouchers statewide, skimming state tax dollars for public schools in suburban and downstate communities. The Illinois State Constitution clearly outlaws state dollars supporting or sustaining any school or academy controlled by any church or sectarian denomination (Article X, Section 3)

3/9/11 – Passed Senate Education 7-3-0.

Second Reading.

SB 2014 – Public Safety Employees

Sen. Haine (D – Alton)

OPPOSE

Amends the Public Safety Employee Benefits Act. Provides that if a full time law enforcement, correctional or correctional probation officer, or firefighter suffers a catastrophic injury or is killed in the line of duty, and, as a result of that injury or death, the employee, or his or her beneficiary, is awarded a benefit, other than an interim benefit, under the federal Public Safety Officers’ Death Benefits Act, then the employer shall pay the entire premium of the employer’s health insurance plan for the injured employee, the injured employee’s spouse, and for each dependent child of the injured employee until the child reaches the age of majority or until the end of the calendar year in which the child reaches the age of 25 if the child continues to be dependent for support or the child is a full-time or part-time student and is dependent for support. Effective immediately.

4/6/11 – HELD in Senate Pensions 2:45pm Rm 400 Capitol

AM 51 – Director Joe Costigan

Sen. Munoz (D – Chicago)

Nominates Joseph Costigan to be Director of the Department of Labor.

4/7/11 – Confirmed by Senate 44-6-2.

HR 252 – Worker Memorial Day

Rep. Williams (D – Chicago)

SUPPORT

Declares April 28, 2011 as Workers’ Memorial Day in the State of Illinois.

4/6/11 – Introduced and Referred to House Rules.