



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

PUBLISHED FOR LABOR ACTIVISTS BY THE ILLINOIS AFL-CIO

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The Illinois Senate concluded its business early on Thursday this week. Prior to leaving town the chamber passed the marriage equality bill (SB 10). Today is the deadline to introduce new Senate bills for this session. The House is scheduled to return next Tuesday, February 19 through Thursday. The Senate will not return until Wednesday, February 27, allowing time for the Municipal Primary Election Day on February 26.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

We Are One Coalition Holds Pension Summit

Quinn, State Legislators Attend Meeting in Burr Ridge

We Are One Coalition organizations met with legislators and Gov. Pat Quinn on Monday at a summit geared toward a collaborative solution to the pension issue.

Following the meeting the coalition released the following statement:

“Our summit’s purpose was to move cooperatively toward an agreed pension funding solution. We had a discussion with Governor Pat Quinn, representatives from all legislative caucuses, and key stakeholders. In doing so, our union coalition demonstrated our ability to work together constructively with all parties.

“The governor and legislative leaders should seize this opportunity and use the momentum from today’s summit to finally, seriously, negotiate a fair and constitutional solution that all parties can support.

“Our push for such a pension agreement will continue in the days and weeks to come.”

Senate Moves Key Legislation This Week:

SB 9 (Cullerton) - Provides clarity and explicit statutory guidance to the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) to bring it into compliance with Public Act 97-616 and Public Act 97-646 which enacted the Energy Infrastructure Modernization Act (EIMA), otherwise known as the Smart Grid

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UAW leaflets Chicago Auto Show

Support Sought for Informational Campaign on Plight of Mississippi Workers

The UAW is engaged in a leafletting campaign at the Chicago Auto show on behalf of the Nissan workers in Mississippi. Union members and activists will at the doors educating the public about the anti-worker intimidation tactics at Nissan. Please join us in standing up for the basic right to collective bargaining.

When: February 9 through Monday February 18

Hours: Monday through Friday 2 PM through 6 PM. Saturday and Sunday 10 AM through 7 PM

Where: Meet at the NALC headquarters at 3850 S. Wabash Chicago

“With Nissan, you have to look beneath the shine.

Nissan builds great vehicles, but the company should respect the rights and dignity of its Mississippi workforce.” – Rev. Dr. Isiac Jackson Jr., chair of the Mississippi Alliance for Fairness at Nissan and president of the General Missionary Baptist State Convention.

Clergy members, activists, politicians, students, and concerned citizens from across Mississippi created the Mississippi Alliance for Fairness at Nissan (MAFFAN) to protest Nissan’s intimidation and suppression of union activity and to advocate for a fair union election process at Nissan’s Canton, Mississippi plant.

The organization was founded after Congressman Bennie Thompson called on Mississippi leaders to form a committee to stand up for Nissan workers. MAFFAN members ask you to look further, beneath the shine, to understand the issues in Mississippi.

Learn more about how Nissan can Do Better by its Mississippi employees: www.dobetternissan.org

From the Front Page

Bill. Passed Senate Executive Committee 14-0-0, Third Reading. AFL-CIO Supports.

SB 20 (Harmon/Madigan) – Under SB 1556 (97th GA) thousands of employees are set to lose their collective bargaining rights, SB 20 would make clear that of those employees, those represented by the Laborers #2002, Operating Engineers #399, and Teamsters #916 would not lose their collective bargaining rights. Passed Senate 48-0-0. AFL-CIO Supports.

SB 622 (Cullerton/Madigan) – The Illinois Senate approved legislation that will more than double the cost of a three-year physicians' license fees to \$700 (currently \$300). The fee hadn't been increased since 1987. It authorizes the Department of Financial and Professional Regulations to borrow \$6.6 million to immediately hire additional staff. Passed Senate 38-19-0. AFL-CIO Supports.

SB 1224 (Murphy) – Would create a "third tier" for new hires in IMRF, Cook County, SERS, SURS, Downstate Teachers, and Chicago Teacher Pension codes. Any person hired after the effective date would be prohibited from using unused sick or vacation time to calculate pensionable earnings, salary, or service credit. Passed Senate Executive 10-0-5. Second Reading. AFL-CIO Opposes.

HB 156 (Currie/Kotowski) – Authorizes the Governor to deliver his budget proposal to the General Assembly on March 6 (was Feb. 22 last year). Passed both chambers, awaits Governor's signature. AFL-CIO No Position.

HB 3636 (K Burke/Mulroe) - On Feb. 25, 2011 the Illinois Supreme Court disregarded 170 years of precedent under Section 16 of the Mechanics Lien Act and held that lenders have priority in a property foreclosure both on the value of the land and on the value of improvements erected on the property. The Governor signed HB 3636 (97th GA) this week to restore the Act to its historical status which will make sure contractors receive priority over banks in obtaining payments for their construction projects and putting our members to work. PA 97-1165. AFL-CIO Supports

SR 54 (Cullerton) - The Senate amended its rules by which it will operate during the 98th General Assembly. Of particular interest is a new provision that the general public may lobby the General Assembly. The Senate will now entertain "Legislative Petitions" signed by at least 10 individuals. The petition must lay out the issue/problem and what the petitioners view as the remedy. The Legislative Petitions will be assigned a number (like a bill number) and assigned to the newly created "Legislative Petitions Committee". If the committee approves a petition, then a bill will be drafted on the issue. Passed Senate 57-0-0. AFL-CIO No position

Obama State of Union Address Focuses On Jobs, Wages

President Barack Obama pushed for rising wages and good jobs as his top priorities in his State of the Union Address this week.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said in a statement:

"President Obama rightly put rising wages and good jobs as his top priority, and we fully support him. We applaud the President for expressing support for raising the minimum wage and tying it to the cost of living, ensuring the right to vote and promoting early childhood education. President Obama – and the Congress – need to end the destructive obstructionism and wrong-headed austerity that weaken our economic recovery. As the President said tonight, creating good jobs requires a deep commitment to building our economy for the next generation, including investments in infrastructure, manufacturing and high-quality education and public services."

Schneider Holds Labor Meeting At District Office

Newly elected Congressman Brad Schneider recently held a meeting of Labor leaders in his district office to discuss issues facing Congress this year. Schneider (D-Deerfield) was endorsed by the Illinois AFL-CIO and elected to represent the 10th Congressional District, which includes most of Lake County and parts of northern Cook County.

Labor Management Reporting Seminars Scheduled for Feb. 19, Feb. 26

The Illinois AFL-CIO is sponsoring a one-day seminar for local union officials and their accountants on preparing financial reports and conducting union officer elections.

The seminar features speakers from the U.S. Department of Labor, Illinois State Board of Elections and Legacy Professionals, LLP. The registration fee is \$60 per person.

The seminar will be held in Springfield on Tuesday, Feb. 19 at the Hilton Garden Inn (3100 S. Dirksen Parkway) and in Burr Ridge Tuesday, Feb. 26 at the Illinois AFL-CIO (999 McClintock Drive).

Contact Amy Rueff at 217-544-4014 for more information.

