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Labor-backed alliance to push bold agenda in Salem

2015 could be a breakthrough year for pro-worker legislation

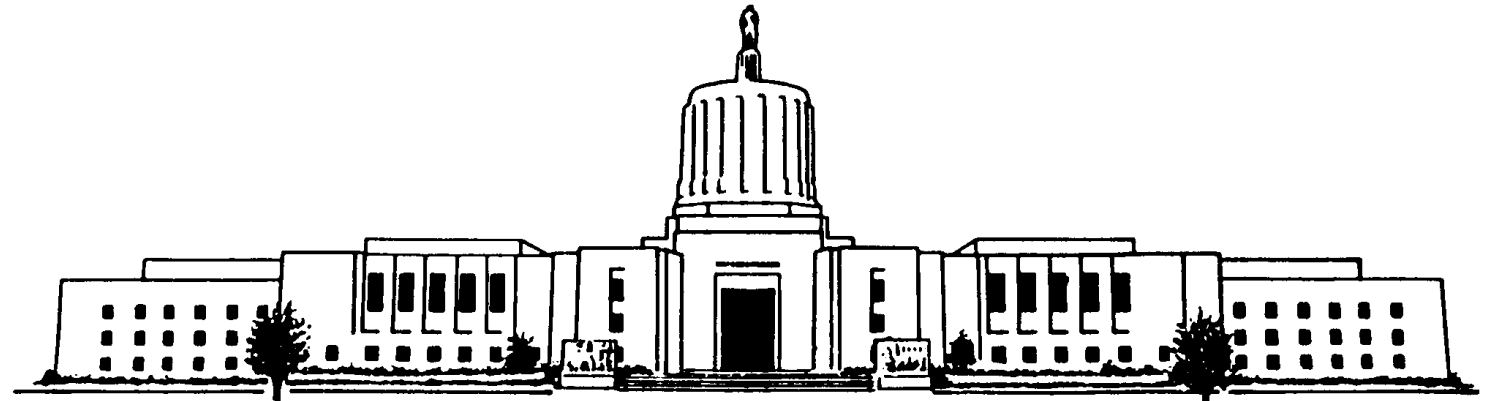
By DON McINTOSH
Associate Editor

Oregon's five biggest labor organizations have united with civil rights and community groups in a new formal coalition to back a bold agenda in this year's session of the Oregon Legislature. The coalition, known as Fair Shot for All, will campaign for a big minimum wage increase, a paid sick leave law, "ban the box" and racial profiling laws, and legislation to create a publicly-sponsored retirement plan for workers.

The package is an attempt to make the most of November 2014 electoral gains: Democrats now have 18 of 30 seats in the state senate and 35 of 60 in the state house, so they're in a position to do something about worsening economic inequality.

The groups in Fair Shot for All laid out their agenda publicly at a press conference Jan. 10, the same day University of Oregon released a report that shows a rapid increase in the number of low-wage jobs in Oregon. The report, "The High Cost of Low Wages in Oregon," found that one fourth of Oregon's workforce — 412,000 workers — are in "low-wage" occupations with a median annual income of under \$12 an hour. The report also found that 197,000 working adults were receiving food stamps as of January 2014.

The Fair Shot for All coalition consists of Ore-



gon AFL-CIO, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (Oregon AF-SCME), United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555, Oregon Education Association, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), PCUN, Urban League of Portland, Family Forward Oregon, Center for Intercultural Organizing, CAUSA, Basic Rights Oregon, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Oregon Action, and the Rural Organizing Project. And each member of the coalition is committing to helping pass all parts of a package of five proposals that are intended to counter growing inequality:

MINIMUM WAGE. Oregon AFL-CIO is playing the role of lead convener in efforts to get a big raise for low-wage Oregonians. Lawmakers

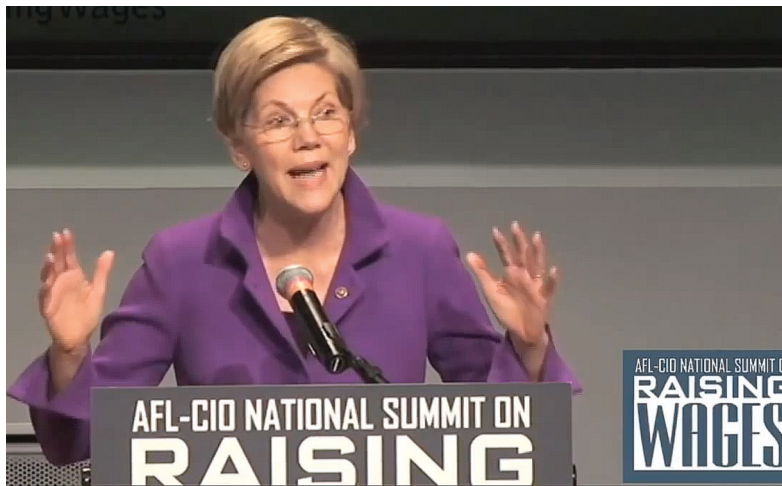
may consider at least two proposals to increase Oregon's minimum wage, which is currently \$9.25 an hour. One would raise it to \$15 over three years. Another would raise it to around \$12. Either way, it would represent a big increase for more than a quarter of Oregon workers. Advocates also want to repeal a state law that prevents local jurisdictions from setting a minimum wage higher than the statewide minimum. To show support for the campaign, the group 15 Now is organizing a rally at the Capitol Jan. 24 at noon, co-sponsored by the Oregon AFL-CIO and over a dozen unions. The rally will be followed by a statewide gathering of minimum wage advocates.

PAID SICK DAYS. Family Forward Oregon will spearhead a campaign for a statewide paid sick days law. As introduced, the proposal would

go farther than the ordinances passed in Portland and Eugene in that it would apply to all employers, and would allow workers to take up to seven paid sick days per year. Workers would accrue the paid sick leave at the rate of one hour for every 30 hours worked, and could use it to recover at home from a contagious illness, for a doctor's appointment, or care for a sick child. Union construction firms would be exempt from the mandate, because they employ workers through a hiring hall for typically short periods, and because their paid leave benefits are administered by a labor-management trust, not by the employers themselves.

RETIREMENT SAVINGS. Employer-provided pensions are in steep decline, and around the country SEIU is taking the lead on a proposal

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"These families are working harder than ever, but they can't get ahead. Many feel that the game is rigged against them, and they are right. The game is rigged against them."

U.S. Sen. Warren tells union crowd: 'The game is rigged' against workers

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) told a large union audience that despite working harder than ever, U.S. workers aren't seeing the fruits of their labor.

"I see evidence everywhere of the pounding working people are taking," said Warren, the keynote speaker at the national AFL-CIO's Raising Wages Summit Jan. 7 in Washington, D.C. "These families are working harder than ever, but they can't get ahead. Many feel that the game is rigged against them, and they are right. The game is rigged against them."

Warren blamed supply side — or trickle down — economics for the downside of the American middle class.

"When all the varnish is removed, trickle-down just means helping the biggest corporations and the richest people in this country, and claiming that those big corporations and rich people could be counted to create an economy that would work for everyone else," Warren said.

That didn't happen.

Warren said that over the last 32 years, literally 100 percent of the growth in the U.S. Gross Domestic Product has gone to the top 10 percent. "All of it," she said.

Prior to that — from 1935 to 1980 — 90 percent of all workers — middle class, working class, the poor — shared 70 percent of all the new income growth, while the other 30 percent went

to the wealthiest 10 percent.

"Overall, as the economic pie got bigger, pretty much everyone was getting a little more," Warren said. "As our economy got richer, our families got richer, and as our families got richer, our country got richer. That is how we built a great middle class in America."

But by the early 1980s, wages had flattened out, while expenses kept going up. The squeeze was terrible, she said. By the early 2000s, families were spending twice as much, adjusted for inflation, on mortgages than they had a generation earlier. They were spending more on health insurance, more to send their kids to college, and both parents had to work, creating new expenses.

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Willy Myers re-elected to lead Columbia Pacific BCTC

Willy Myers was re-elected executive secretary-treasurer of the Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council. The CPBCTC represents approximately 20,000 construction workers employed by more than 2,000 signatory employers, representing 25 crafts.



WILLY MYERS

Myers was first elected to head the council in December 2013 to finish out the term of Jodi Guetzloe Parker, who stepped down. A former business agent for Sheet Metal Workers Local 16, Myers, 45, served as president of the Building Trades Council from 2010 until his election as executive secretary.

In other election results, Robert Camarillo, a business rep for Iron Workers Local 29, was re-elected president; Matt Eleazer of Bricklayers Local 1 was tapped for vice president; and Steven Purdy of Sprinkler Fitters Local 669 was newly elected sergeant-at-arms.

Brett Hinsley, business manager of Cement Masons Local 555, Russ Garnett, business manager of Roofers Local 49, and Gary Moore, business agent for Laborers Local 296, were elected trustees. Garnett and Moore are serving for the first time.

All candidates ran unopposed. Terms are for three years.

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Local Motion

December 2014

A list of Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces deciding whether to be union-represented – as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Voting in union elections

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Yes	No	
12/11	Sweed Machinery (Gold Hill) Machinists District Lodge W24	21	3	👍
12/18	Stelcor Energy (Wilsonville) IBEW Local 48	5	6	👎

Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union Number of workers in unit

There were no requests for union elections in Oregon or SW Washington in December 2014.

LEGEND

👍 : workers will be union-represented 👎 : workers will be on their own

Quote of the Month

“That someone who labors all year to gross \$80,000 bears the same federal income tax burden as someone making \$5 million per week illustrates how much the tax cuts signed into law by Presidents Bill Clinton, a Democrat, and George W. Bush, a Republican, benefited investors rather than workers.”

DAVID CAY JOHNSTON, PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING TAX JOURNALIST
ON AN IRS ANALYSIS OF AMERICA'S 400 HIGHEST-INCOME TAX RETURNS

...Labor-backed alliance to push bold agenda in Salem

(From Page 1)

for states to set up a kind of “public option” retirement plan. All employers that don’t offer a retirement plan would be required to give employees the option of contributing by payroll deduction to a state-sponsored retirement savings plan. To encourage saving, a default contribution rate would be set at maybe 3 or 6 percent, but employees could also set their own contribution rate or opt out entirely. To minimize administrative costs and thereby maximize returns, funds would be pooled, and investment decisions would be made by a state board along the lines of the Oregon Investment Board, with the goal of assuring workers a lifetime stream of income when they retire. The plan would have lower fees than an IRA, and unlike a 401(k), wouldn’t be tied to a particular employer. The proposal has passed in several states thus far, and is backed by AARP and a variety of other groups. In Oregon, the Fair Shot for All coalition will campaign for the bill, with SEIU Local 503 taking point.

BAN THE BOX. Crime knows no class or color, but prisons and jails overwhelmingly house the poor and minorities. Upon release, they face a

big barrier to going straight — the “have you ever been convicted” box on so many housing and employment applications. The box is blind to circumstances, takes no account of reform, and because it makes it harder to get a job, it makes re-offending more likely. Urban League of Portland will lead a campaign for a law to ban the box from initial applications. Employers and landlords could still do criminal background checks and discriminate based on convictions that are relevant to the job being applied for. But ex-offenders would at least get an opportunity to explain their record, and make a case for giving them a second chance.

RACIAL PROFILING. Data from Portland and Eugene show something disturbing: African-Americans and Latinos are as much as three times as likely as Whites to be stopped and searched by police while driving or walking, but they’re no more likely to be found with contraband. The Center for Intercultural Organizing, an immigrant civil rights group, will head up a campaign for legislation to address that, first by defining racial profiling and beginning to collect more comprehensive data on it, and then by giving the state attorney general the ability to analyze the data.

Carpenters, Electricians, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floorcoverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Millwrights, Painters, Elevators, Plasterers, Family



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Labor gets ready for an action-packed session of the Oregon Legislature

The five proposals from the new Fair Shot for All coalition [see related story on Page 1] may end up being some of the marquee issues considered by Oregon lawmakers this year, but labor and workers' rights organizations will be campaigning for dozens of other important bills when the Legislature convenes Feb. 2.

With increased Democratic majorities in both legislative chambers — and key committees led by lawmaker who are actually union members — the mood is optimistic.

"There were some clear messages that came out of the November election," says State Sen. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland). "Voters are concerned about economic inequality, and they see that the fruits of the recovery are not being shared."

Dembrow — a community college instructor who's also a longtime union leader in American Federation of Teachers-Oregon — is now chair of the newly formed Senate Workforce Committee, where many of the labor-related bills will go to be worked on. And its counterpart House Business and Labor Committee will also be led by a trade unionist: state representative Paul Holvey (D-Eugene), a union rep at the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Car-

penters.

Here are some of the labor-related proposals lawmakers will consider:

APPRENTICE UTILIZATION. A bill supported by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters would require large public construction projects to meet certain minimum targets for utilizing apprentices. Not only would it open up pathways for more young, women and minority workers to gain entry into high-skill, high-wage building trades, but it could also mean more business for "high-road" construction employers — those that are already making investments in apprenticeship training, as union contractors do.

WAGE THEFT. Oregon Coalition to Stop Wage Theft, a broad labor-community alliance initiated by the nonprofit Northwest Workers' Justice Project, will be backing a bill to crack down on wage theft. Wage theft is a catch-all term for when employers cheat workers out of wages or benefits they're lawfully entitled to. Besides outright non-payment or under-payment of wages, wage theft includes cases where employees don't get paid rest breaks, don't get time-and-a-half for overtime, or work off-the-clock before or after shifts. It also includes cases where employers falsely classify

employees as "independent contractors," because the employees don't get workers compensation or unemployment insurance, and must pay the employers and their own Social Security and Medicare taxes.

MAKING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS STICK. To combat a growing tendency by public employers to push through changes outside of normal contract bargaining, Oregon AFSCME will back a bill to require mediation and binding arbitration before management can impose new changes during the life of a collective bargaining agreement — when those changes are mandatory subjects of bargaining.

INFRASTRUCTURE JOBS. For the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council, the number one priority will be robust infrastructure funding, including roads and bridges. State gas taxes fund roads, but haven't kept up with increased costs. The Building Trades Council — in a coalition with three dozen other stakeholders called the Oregon Transportation Forum — is calling for the state gas tax to be increased and then indexed to offset the loss of road repair funds as cars become more fuel efficient. And they'll support plans for lot-

tery bonds to fund a new round of investment in "multimodal" transportation infrastructure, including air, rail, marine, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Building Trades Council will also support increasing bond authority for the Oregon University System, both for new construction and for needed energy and seismic retrofits of existing buildings.

CONTRACTING OUT. Oregon AFSCME, together with other public sector unions, will also be promoting bills to bring greater transparency and accountability — and fairness — to public contracting. One bill would require that contract negotiations be open to the public, and that contracts be posted on a state transparency web site. Another bill would make it harder for governments to outsource if that involves chopping worker pay and benefits.

SINGLE PAYER HEALTH CARE. Last year, advocates of creating a universal public health insurance system were able to pass a law authorizing a study of how such a thing could be set up in Oregon. But the study was to be funded with private money, and supporters so far have raised only about \$50,000 of the \$200,000 needed. This year, the union-backed coalition Health Care for All Oregon will seek to extend authorization for the study, and seek a state match for private dollars raised.

PAY IT FORWARD. Oregon Working Families Party will advocate further development of a plan that was conceived by students in former party co-chair Barb Dudley's Portland State University class. Under the "Pay it Forward" proposal, students at public colleges and universities in Oregon could opt to attend tuition-free in return for an agreement to pay 2 to 4 percent of their income for the next 20 years, after graduation. In 2013, legislators authorized a work group which met in 2014 to design a pilot program. Its pilot program proposal — starting with 1,000 students a year — would need at least \$56 million in funds by the time the

first group graduated in four years.

FUSION VOTING. Oregon Working Families Party will also push a proposal for full-fledged fusion voting, along the lines of the system that prevails in New York, where the union-backed minor party is strongest. Under fusion voting, candidates can be endorsed by more than one political party. Oregon Working Families Party was able to pass "partial fusion" in 2009, so Oregon candidates today can run with the endorsement of more than one political party, but all the endorsements are listed together next to the candidate's name. Under "full fusion," each party can list the candidate's name on their own ballot line. As a result, candidates know how many votes each party delivered, giving minor parties more potential influence. The Oregon Working Families Party sees fusion voting as key to its strategy of delivering votes to candidates who commit to and deliver on a pro-worker agenda.

CANNABIS WORKERS RISING. Last November, Oregon voters legalized recreational marijuana effective next January, but many of the regulatory details about retail sales will be worked out this year by the Oregon Legislature. UFCW Local 555, which backed Ballot Measure 91, will be paying close attention. If lawmakers place limits on the number of retailers, the union will advocate that the state issue permits not by lottery but with a merit-based system that would favor responsible applicants, giving credit for good labor practices, for example. UFCW represents the workers at medical marijuana dispensaries and other legal cannabis operations in several other states.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION. Career and Technical Education — which includes things like shop classes and computerized drafting — has atrophied during Oregon's perennial budget crises, and is in need of reinvestment. Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian, with labor support, will call for further restoration of CTE in high schools and middle schools. The governor is asking for a \$25 million increase, and trades unions would like to see even more.

"Working people did a lot of work during this election cycle to make sure candidates were running on issues that matter, and it paid off," says Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO political and legislative director. "Now the Legislature has an incredible opportunity to move the ball forward for working Oregonians."



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Official Notices

AUTO MECHANICS 1005

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 17. Executive Board meets Wednesday, Feb. 18, at 4:30 p.m. All members are invited to attend Executive Board meetings.

All meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone. PLEASE NOTE: Rochelle Conrad will be available from 8 a.m. to noon during the regular lodge meeting to answer any questions you have concerning health, welfare and pension plans.

BAKERY, CONFECTIONERY, TOBACCO WORKERS AND GRAIN MILLERS 114

Executive Board meets 9 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27, in the meeting room at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 300, Portland. PLEASE NOTE: Swearing in of officers will take place at this meeting.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at the Social Justice Center, 155 NE Irving, Bend.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

The Jan. 20 meeting has been canceled. Delegates meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27, at 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vancouver.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Bylaws Committee meets 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, in the Executive Boardroom.

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 21, in the Executive Boardroom. Marine Unit meets 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27, in the Dispatch Lobby.

General Membership Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, in the Meeting Hall. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

RENEW meets 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, in the Executive Boardroom.

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, in the Executive Boardroom.

Coast Unit meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Wasco Unit meets 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at Northern Wasco County PUD, 2345 River Road, The Dalles. *Please note that the Wasco Unit meetings have changed from the 2nd Wednesday of the month to the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Meetings are at 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland, unless otherwise noted

DEATH ASSESSMENT: No. 2418, Glendon Bane. The Jan. 2015 assessment is \$1.50.

IBEW 280

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 32969 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

Bend Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, at the IBEW/UA Training Center, 2161 SW First St., Redmond.

Joint Union meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, at 33309 Hwy 99E, Tangent.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 12779 NE Whitaker Way, Portland.

FIRE FIGHTERS 452

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Executive Board members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5 at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 9, at Best Western Grand Manor Inn, 971 Kruse Way,

Springfield.

Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, at Best Western Plus, Mill Creek Inn, 3125 Ryan Drive SE, Salem.

INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11. Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 13. Meetings are at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Members meet 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 5, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #200, Portland.

IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN 516

SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE: Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22. Purpose of meeting: in the event a quorum is not present, to conduct local union business and first reading of proposed changes to by-laws.

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12.

Meeting are at 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle #200, Portland.

LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave., Portland.

LABORERS 483

Members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2, preceded by a 6:15 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at the Vancouver Labor Center, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vanc.

LANE COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BTC

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 28, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Pkwy., Springfield.

LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, preceded by a 6:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 1400 Salem Ave., Albany.

LINOLEUM LAYERS 1236

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22.

Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2. Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26.

Meeting are at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

MACHINISTS 63

Executive Board meets 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11. Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 14. Meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

MACHINISTS 1432

Swing and graveyard shift members meet at 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 9.

Regular membership meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11.

Meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

MARION-POLK-YAMHILL LABOR COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, followed by a 7 p.m. general meeting at 4735 Liberty Rd., S, Salem. PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION.

METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27.

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 12. Meetings are at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

MOLDERS 139B

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, preceded by a 6 p.m. Executive Board meeting at the Carpenters Hall, 2205 N. Lombard, Portland.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY EMPLOYEES 88

General membership and stewards meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 21. Meeting agendas may be viewed on the AFSCME Local 88 webpage on the Monday prior to the Wednesday meeting.

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4. Any member in good standing may attend as a non-voting visitor.

Meetings are held at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan.26, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

OFFICE & PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION LOCAL 11

Nominations to be accepted 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, at the OPEIU LOCAL 11 meeting hall, 3815 Columbia Street, Vancouver, Washington,

98665 for the following positions: President (3 year term); Vice President (2 year term);

Recording Secretary (2 year term); Sergeant-at-Arms (2 year term);

Utilities (2 year term); Public Employees (2 year term); At Large (2 year term);

At Large (2 year term); and Trustee (3 year term). Nominees must be present to accept, or have written acceptance of nomination submitted at this meeting.

Nominations will be held in accordance with Article VII, Sections 1-4 of the Constitution of the Office & Professional Employees International Union, Local No. 11 which states the following:

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nomination of officers shall take place on the second Tuesday in March at the General Membership meeting of each year. No person may be nominated, appointed or elected, or in any way represent the members of this Union unless he or she has been a member of this Union in continuous good standing for at least twelve (12) months preceding the election.

Section 2. No member shall be a candidate for more than one (1) office.

Section 3. Members need not be present to be nominated for any union office. Those members, who by virtue of geography are unable to either attend or have other members from their area attend to place their name in nomination, may notify the Union office of their desire to be nominated. The Executive Secretary Treasurer shall nominate or cause to be nominated those same members. The members, who are not present at the nomination meeting to accept the nomination, must have their acceptance of the nomination in writing, available at the nomination meeting. Only those candidates who accept the nomination shall be considered valid candidates.

Section 4. Except as provided for in Section 3 above, write-in nominations or nominations by proxy shall not be allowed.

**only members that reside outside of Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington may utilize the geographical exception in Section 3.

OPERATING ENGINEERS 701

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3, at Pheasant Café, 149 E Main St. Hermiston.

District 1 & 5 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at 555 E. First St., Gladstone.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, at North Bend/Coos Bay Labor Center, 3427 Ash St., North Bend.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Holiday Inn Express, 285 Peninger Rd., Central Point.

District 2 members meet 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, at the Comfort Suites, 969 Kruse Way, Springfield.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. Website: www.iu-patlocal10.org.

PLASTERERS 82

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 12812

NE Marx St., Portland.

PORTLAND CITY & METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES 189

General membership meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27.

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10. Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5. Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12.

Meetings are at 5032 SE 26th Ave, Portland. (Phone: 503 232-4807)

SALEM BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at the IBEW 280 Training Center, 33309 Hwy 99E, Tangent.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Portland area VOC meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Portland members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N. Pacific Hwy., Medford.

Eugene area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, at 1887 Laura St., Springfield.

Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

Women of Sheet Metal meet 4:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20, at Beulahland, 118 NE 28th Ave., Portland. Children are welcome.

SIGN PAINTERS & PAINT MAKERS 1094

Members meet 3:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, in the District Office, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

SOUTHEASTERN OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, at the Woodworkers Hall, 3836 Altamont Drive, Klamath Falls.

SOUTHERN OREGON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy. #3, Central Point.

SOUTHWESTERN OREGON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 2, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, preceded by an Executive Board meeting, at Laborers Hall, 2212 NE Andresen, Vancouver.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 16, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin. The following locations will be able to participate remotely in the Regular Business Meeting at 7:30 on the 3rd Friday of every month: Bend, Eugene/Springfield, Eureka, Medford, and Salem.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20. Please contact agent Craig Spjut at 707-496-1767 for location confirmation.

Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at 4816 S., 6th St., Klamath Falls.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles.

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Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, followed by an 11 a.m. General Membership meeting, in the Labor Services board room, at AFL-CIO Boardroom, 3642 SE 32nd, Portland. All retirees are welcome to attend.

PLEASE NOTE: The 2015 State Convention will be held 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, March 14, at the Madison Banquet Room, 1125 SE Madison, Portland. Registration is \$12.50, which includes lunch. For additional information, please call 503-675-7764 or go to orara.org.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Retired Electricians of Local 48, wives and friends meet 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, at Kings Omelets, 10711 NE Weidler, Portland. For reservations and more information,

please contact Glenn Hodgkinson at 503-656-0028.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Retirees meet between 11:45 a.m. and noon Monday, Feb. 9, at Hometown Buffet on Lancaster in Salem, in Lancaster Mall. If you have any questions, please give Don Ball a call at 541-327-3388.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Hometown Buffet, 10542 SE Washington St., Portland.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave, Portland.

INSULATORS 36

Retiree breakfast 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at the Dockside Restaurant,

2047 NW Front Ave., Portland.

MACHINISTS

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, at the AFSCME office, 6025 E. Burnside, Portland. Call Michael Arken for information at 1-800-521-5954 ext. 226.

TRANSIT 757

Retirees meet 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd, Portland.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

Business groups sue to stop new NLRB rule that streamlines union elections

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Several business groups are suing the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) over a new rule it finalized in December that modernizes and streamlines union certification elections. The five-member NLRB — an independent government agency charged with conducting elections for labor union representation and with investigating and remedying unfair labor practices — adopted the rule Dec. 12 on a 3-2 vote.

On Jan. 5, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Retail Federation, and others filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The plaintiffs argue that the NLRB illegally imposed the rules be-

cause they “impermissibly limit the right of all parties to engage in protected speech at precisely the time when their free speech rights are most important.”

These same business groups in 2011 went to court to overturn the union election rule. They won on the grounds that the Board didn’t have a proper quorum to pass the rule. In 2012 the business groups also successfully sued to block an NLRB rule that simply required employers to post a notice telling workers that they have a legal right to form a union.

“Union avoidance” consulting is a billion-dollar business in the U.S. Delaying elections and challenging bargaining units are common tactics used

by employers to undermine employee choice. It gives them time to hold meetings to intimidate workers and denounce the union.

Research shows that during organizing campaigns, more than one-third of companies fire pro-union workers. Studies also show that the longer a company draws out the election process, the better chance they have of defeating a union organizing campaign.

Data from the NLRB’s own case files show instances of employer intimidation, spying, firings, harassment, and threats to close or move, among other methods of labor law-breaking.

The new NLRB rule seeks to reduce unnecessary litigation and delay in the union certification process, and to ensure that workers, employers and unions receive timely information via electronic filing of election petitions and other documents.

“While the NLRB’s new rules will address the most egregious delaying practices, they will not prevent employers from communicating their anti-union message to workers and will likely make scant difference to the balance of power in certification campaigns,” John Logan, professor and director of labor and employment studies at San Francisco State University, wrote in *The Hill* newspaper.

The new union election rule is scheduled to go into effect on April 14, 2015.

BULL Session delivers \$330k to 8 charities

Eight children’s charities in Oregon were recently presented with the perfect holiday gift — cash donations totaling \$330,000. Checks were distributed during a ceremony at the Benson Hotel on Dec. 4. The gift was from the BULL Session, a coalition of business, union, and labor leaders who gather annually for a golf tournament and auction to raise money for local charities.

Since its inception in 1991, the BULL Session has grown into one of Oregon’s largest charity events, having raised more than \$5.2 million to help provide support services for children.

Last year’s activities were held Sept. 8-9 at the Oregon Convention Center and The Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club in Aloha. More than 400 golfers participated.

Organizations that received a donation included Albertina Kerr’s Children’s Developmental Health Services, Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, Gales Creek Camp, March of Dimes, Swindells Resource Center of Providence Child Center, Randall Children’s Hospital at Legacy Emanuel, Shriners Hospitals for Children-Portland, and the Wheel to Walk Foundation.



Miss Oregon Teen USA has union ties

Kenna Sloy (center), the daughter of Ken (right) and Leslie (left) Sloy, will represent Oregon at the Miss Teen USA pageant to be held this August in the Bahamas. Leslie is president of Teamsters Local 223 in Portland, and a 35-year member of the union. Kenna, 17, is a senior at Barlow High School in Gresham, where she is active in volleyball and cross country running. She wants to study criminal justice in college and work as a forensic scientist. Kenna was one of 16 girls competing for the 2015 Miss Oregon Teen USA crown last November in Portland. She was 1st runner-up in 2014 and 3rd runner-up in 2013. The competition is judged on personal interview, evening wear and swimwear. Oregon has produced three Miss Teen USA title winners, the most in the nation. Mindy Duncan won the crown in 1988; Bridgette Wilson won in 1990; and Tami Farrell won in 2003. The labor community can support Kenna’s pursuit of the crown by following her on either Facebook: *Miss Oregon Teen USA*, or Instagram: *missorteenusa*.

Charges dropped against ‘postal defenders’ — again

For the fifth time in two years, self-described “postal defenders” have won a reprieve. The latest came on Jan. 7 when Multnomah County Circuit Judge Eric Bergstrom dismissed charges of second-degree criminal trespass against seven people protesting the privatization of the United States Post Office (USPS). The judge said the defendants’ constitutional right to a speedy trial had been violated. The case, which was scheduled to go to trial Jan. 14, was over a year old.

The trespass charges involved an

Oct. 29, 2013 action where 15 activists had gathered in the third floor lobby of the Main Post Office in downtown Portland, holding signs and carrying a petition with over a thousand signatures of people opposed to the cutbacks at the post office. The protesters wanted to meet with the USPS district manager and hand-deliver the signatures. When that didn’t happen, seven protesters refused to leave. Michael Meo, Bennett Poe, Kent Spring, Michael Colvin, Jamie Partridge, John H. Herbert and Rev. John T. Schwiebert were subse-

quently arrested.

Despite the arrests, “postal defenders” continued their attempts throughout 2014 to meet with postal managers, including a visit to the home of the district manager last June.

Portland Communities and Postal Workers United (PCPWU), organizers of the action, have been fighting cuts and closures to the postal service for the past several years. In May of 2012, 10 activists were arrested occupying Portland’s University Station post office, which has since been closed. In April,

2013, five protesters went to jail for a civil disobedience action at the Salem mail plant, which has since been dismantled, with mail processing machines moving to Portland. The same group was arrested in July after occupying the private Matheson mail handling plant. They also have blockaded Dill Star Route, Inc. trucks multiple times, demanding those companies stop taking family-wage union postal jobs. In December of 2013, the postal defenders occupied the Eugene/Springfield mail processing facility, which had been slated for closure the following month.

None of the cases went to trial, and all charges eventually were dropped.

The USPS has slashed hours at half the nation’s post offices — mostly rural — putting retail postal services out of reach for most working people. And as public post offices are being cut and closed, postal retail counters are being set up in Staples and Walmart, run by low-paid, poorly trained store clerks.

Eighty-two mail processing plants, including three in Oregon, are due for closure this year. In anticipation of the closures, USPS changed its service standards starting in 2015, delaying every class of mail and virtually eliminating overnight First Class delivery.

All the USPS cuts, closures, and contracting out have been done in the

name of a “financial emergency.” Since 2006 the USPS has been forced to spend nearly 10 percent of its budget pre-funding retiree health benefits 75 years in advance. No other U.S. agency or private business faces such a crushing financial burden. Not only would the postal service have been profitable without the mandate, but the USPS has also overpaid tens of billions into two pension funds.

Union officials and PCPWU maintain the postal service isn’t broke. PCPWU says the agenda of corporate America and their friends in Congress is to cripple the USPS, to soften it up for union busting and privatization. The USPS is a \$65 billion annual business with over \$100 billion surplus in its pension and retiree health benefit funds, over 30,000 post offices and 200,000 vehicles. Postal activists claim that America is being confronted with a huge transfer of public wealth to for-profit, private corporations.

CLARIFICATION:

A photo in the Jan. 2, 2015 issue of the *Labor Press* of a large postcard being mailed to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to notify him that he had been named “Scrooge of the Year” was taken by Jamie Partridge, a retired member of the National Association of Letter Carrier Branch 82.



‘Postal defenders’ protest Oct. 29, 2013, in the 3rd floor lobby of the Main Post Office in Northwest Portland. Shortly after this photo was taken, seven people — Michael Meo, Bennett Poe, Kent Spring, Michael Colvin, Jamie Partridge, John Herbert and Rev. John T. Schwiebert — were arrested for trespassing. (Photo by Michael Hastie)

The high cost of low wages

In Oregon, an estimated 412,000 workers (25 percent of the workforce) make \$12 an hour or less, and 9 percent make minimum wage (which is currently \$9.10 an hour), according to a study released Jan. 8 by the University of Oregon's Labor Education and Research Center (LERC), "The High Cost of Low Wages in Oregon."

The figures are worse for women and minorities: 45 percent of Latino workers and 50 percent of African-American workers are in low-wage industries. And those at the bottom of the barrel for hourly wages are also more likely to have little or no health or retirement benefit, less predictable work schedules, more volatile paychecks,

and to work part-time.

Low-wage jobs are concentrated in a handful of occupations, including retail, restaurant, janitorial and landscaping, personal care, and health care support.

The report argues that many low-wage workers rely on publicly-funded safety net programs to meet basic needs — particularly food stamps, Medicaid, and employment-related day care assistance — and thus that those programs are being taken advantage of by big corporations.

The report was funded by six labor organizations and authored by LERC faculty members Raahi Reddy and Bob Bussell, along with UO sociology professor Ellen Scott and Ph.D. student Shauna Dyer, and Daniel Morris, research director Our Oregon.

The full report is available online at <http://bit.ly/1xVK6r7>.

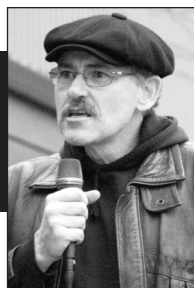
Illinois to sponsor public retirement for private sector

Illinois governor Pat Quinn signed a bill into law Jan. 4 that's predicted to help around two million workers save for retirement. Starting in 2017, employers with at least 25 employees will have to start deducting 3 percent of workers' paychecks into the program. Workers can opt out manually, or may choose to deduct more than 3 percent. The program, known as Secure Choice,

is intended to address inadequate retirement savings by workers. Many employers don't offer retirement plans because of the administrative and cost burden. In this case, the employer burden will be limited to administering a payroll deduction, which they're already doing for taxes. President Obama has advocated a similar program at the federal level.

Who's On Our Side?

By Tom Chamberlain



Oregon ended 2014 by bucking the national trend in the November general election, giving progressive, pro-worker candidates a decisive win. This was due to the coordination, determination and dogged dedication of like-minded people and organizations.

While Oregon workers look forward to a 2015 legislative session that could increase the minimum wage, implement paid sick leave and move toward universal retirement security, one thing is clear: we are not immune to what happens in Washington, D.C.

For the first time in eight years, Republicans hold majorities in the United States Senate and House of Representatives. We are beginning to see, in bits and pieces, the formation of their agenda.

On the first day of the 2015 Congress, House Republicans passed legislation establishing parliamentary rules for the year. The rules include a little-noticed provision that blocks Congress from shifting funds to prevent a 2016 shortfall in Social Security's disability insurance programs. The Social Security Administration has projected that, without a transfer of funds from other Social Security accounts, 11 million Americans will see their disability benefits reduced by 20 percent. Keep in mind that the maximum month disability benefit is just under \$1,300 per month.

The second day of the 114th Congress, the U.S. House passed legislation that would increase the number of hours necessary to qualify for healthcare under the Affordable Care Act (ACA); from 30 to

40 hours per week. This is the first step in the attempt to systematically dismantle the ACA. Never mind the fact that almost 10 million Americans, including 240,000 in Oregon, now have healthcare coverage under ObamaCare. Never mind that the ranks of the uninsured have dropped by almost 14 percent, or that the Congressional Budget Office predicts over the next four years Americans will see \$500 billion in health care savings.

The Affordable Care Act is working. After voting 50 times for an outright appeal of the ACA in the House and failing to get rid of it, Republican leadership is now rolling out a strategy to kill Obama Care by a thousand small cuts.

Also in the crosshairs of the Right are overturning President Obama's Executive Order to ease the threat of deportation of millions of undocumented workers, as well as easing regulations on Wall Street and large financial institutions. These financial regulations were put in place to end racketeering banking practices that resulted in the worst financial meltdown since the Great Depression, and the subsequent bailout of financial profiteers.

Thinly veiled in the cloak of job creation, Republican leadership will attempt to roll back environmental standards, along with worker and consumer protections, and reduce the power of the National Labor Relations Board, as well as to repeal the Davis-Bacon Act, which requires contractors to pay prevailing construction wages for federally-funded projects.

Finally, the outspoken anti-

worker Newt Gingrich is advocating for passage of the Employee Rights Act, a sweeping piece of legislation that, if passed, would upend labor law in the United States. The Employee Rights Act would impose greater barriers to workers who are trying to form a union and make it more difficult for unions to participate in the political process — and that's just two components of this proposed law.

Elections have ramifications, and the result of the 2014 election is a frontal assault on the men, women and children who are not a part of the privileged class. We live in a nation where the 1% controls both the Congress and the Supreme Court. The 99 percent has but one check in this unbalanced system: a presidential veto stamp.

But we can't just sit back and wait for that to happen. We have to organize and take action.

Our challenge will be to push back against anti-worker, pro-corporate bills in Congress and understand that defeating bad legislation may very well be our greatest victories over these next 24 months. We must take every opportunity to expose the corporate agenda of the 1%, and hold accountable those elected leaders who advocate it, regardless of what political party they belong to.

We must prepare for 2016 and take back America for working Americans.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

Job Vacancies in Oregon, 2013

	Vacancies	< \$10 /hour	Part-time	Temporary
Statewide	32,441	29%	33%	24%
Portland Tri-County	16,057	22%	31%	17%
Northwest Oregon / Willamette Valley	7,808	41%	36%	29%
Central Oregon	3,003	30%	38%	36%
Southwest Oregon	2,853	25%	38%	21%
Eastern Oregon	1,262	50%	38%	41%

Oregon Employment Department

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The 'last war' rages on against same-old trade agreements

By STAN SORSCHER

The other day, President Obama spoke to 100 top CEOs from the Business Roundtable. He was asked about two huge new trade deals favored by global companies, known as TPP and TTIP. The President taunted critics of our failing trade policy, telling them, "Stop fighting the last war."

That sounds patronizing. Is it true that companies trying to manufacture in America, workers, communities and environmentalists need the President to explain their interests to them, as if 25 years of lived experience with NAFTA-style trade deals haven't been sufficiently clear?

Another interpretation is that the President believes his huge new trade deals really are different — that they are the 21st century agreements he has been promising. In this interpretation, his message is, "Trust me! These deals will be great."

Let's consider that. He is negotiating these deals in secret. He spoke in a room of 100 top CEOs, defending their interests. The precise language is being written under the guidance of legions of corporate lobbyists, who advise the U.S. Trade Representative. Congress and a few non-business specialists have very limited access, but almost no influence, and they are sworn not to reveal what they see.

If a deal is finished, advocates for these failing trade policies want an expedited Congressional approval process, with no time to explain the terms of the deal, no realistic public hearings or political engagement to educate the public and no opportunity to modify the deal. Putting the deal on a "Fast Track" to railroad it through doesn't inspire trust.

Leaks to date show that these new deals follow the NAFTA template in their basic features — expanded corporate rights; special corporate-friendly tribunals to settle disputes without accountability to any national government; the interests of global investors will take priority over public interests; and global businesses will be free to seek the lowest wages and weakest civil society protections around the world. These provisions are opposed by the libertarian Cato Institute, the governor of Washington — arguably the most pro-trade state in the union — five key members of the House Ways and Means Committee that deals with trade, and hundreds of civil society organizations in America and Europe.

Multinational companies have other interests in play. The deals say nothing about currency manipulation, which is great for global companies already producing in China. However, currency manipulation hurts American produc-

ers and encourages offshoring. Bipartisan letters signed by 230 House members and 60 Senators sought action on currency manipulation.

These deals will have illusory and ineffective options for environmental and labor protections and human rights. Another letter from 153 House Democrats asked for stronger labor rights.

The deals will restrict access to medicines for millions in developing countries and will limit prudent financial regulation. Patent rights could be expanded to include surgical procedures.

In the American legal tradition, our threshold for regulation is that it must serve a public good and have a rational basis. Multinational companies prefer a "necessity" test, where national and state governments would need to prove to a corporate-friendly trade tribunal that no other option is possible.

Opposition has been raised on many issues important to regular people. Those objections have been brushed aside.

Clearly, these aren't "trade" deals. They are really about global governance. Corporate lawyers will sit on shadowy tribunals and hear cases about

the environment, labor rights, human rights, public health, food security, internet freedom and financial regulation. But they will base their decisions on the corporate values and corporate-friendly language in the trade deals. They will take no account of the Constitutions or legal traditions of the U.S., Canada, Australia, Japan or any other country. Language in these "trade" deals becomes the new governance standard for the world.

These deals consolidate power relationships that favor global investors. The values and priorities in these deals bring more wealth and power to those who already have plenty.

These deals will determine how life is organized in 2050.

Every President since Gerald Ford has promised prosperity from each new trade deal. In our lived experience, we've lost millions of jobs, de-industrialized our economy, weakened bargaining power for every worker in America, run a cumulative trade debt approaching \$10 trillion and we've lost our strategic advantage in manufacturing to Korea, Japan, Singapore, Germany, Denmark and China.

When President Obama pleads with

us to trust him, I hear Chico Marx' joke from Duck Soup; "Who are you going to believe, me or your own eyes?" My eyes see the lived experience from every deal since NAFTA.

I'm not sure what the 21st Century looks like to President Obama. Maybe he has wonderful new 21st Century language in the deals that everyone will love. If so, he should show it! He should publish it tomorrow and boast about it. Repeatedly.

I'm 100 percent in favor of trade. My job depends on trade. We should have a good trade policy, which would be very different from our current failing trade policy.

It's completely appropriate to fight the last war on trade policy. Thea Lee at the AFL-CIO put it this way in the Washington Post, "We promise not to fight the last war, if he promises not to put the last [flawed] version of the trade deal on the table."

It is ironic that President Obama, speaking to CEOs from the Business Roundtable, tells the rest of America to trust him. It makes much more sense for him to speak to environmentalists, workers, communities and companies trying to manufacture in the U.S. Show us why these deals will be good for us, when the opposite has been true up to now.

(Editor's Note: Stan Sorscher is labor representative at the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace, IFPTE 2001. This column originally appeared in Huffington Post, and was reprinted in the Washington State Labor Council's The Stand.)

AFL-CIO to take 'Raising Wages' campaign to key states, cities

At the AFL-CIO's National Summit on Raising Wages Jan. 7, President Richard Trumka announced new campaigns to expand the raising wages agenda.

This spring, the federation will sponsor Raising Wages summits in four states. Additionally, the AFL-CIO will organize projects in seven cities to focus on raising wages in those locales.

AFL-CIO state labor federations in the first four presidential primary states — Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire and South Carolina — will take place in the spring. These summits will bring together diverse voices to lay out the

entire raising wages platform and establish state-based standards of accountability.

The AFL-CIO identified the seven cities for raising wages campaigns where they could have the most impact. The cities are Atlanta, Columbus, District of Columbia (Metro), St. Louis, Philadelphia, Minneapolis and San Diego.

"Raising wages is the single standard by which leadership will be judged," Trumka said. "That means accountability, and it starts with something we all understand — presidential politics."

...Warren tells unionists, 'the game is rigged'

(From Page 1)

"Instead of building an economy for all Americans, this country has grown an economy that works for some Americans," Warren said.

"That is a huge structural change in this country," she continued.

Warren told union members, "If we're ever going to un-rig the system, then we need to make some important political changes."

She said the best place to start is the Wall Street banks, and those responsible for causing the crash of 2008.

"We know that democracy doesn't work when congressmen and regulators bow down to Wall Street's political power — and that means it's time to break up the Wall Street banks and remind politicians that they don't work for the big banks, they work for us!" she said.

"Changes like this aren't easy," she continued. "But we know they are possible. We know they are possible because we have seen David beat Goliath before ... Change is difficult, but it is possible."



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ROGUE UBER CAB STEAMROLLS INTO PORTLAND

... After law-abiding Union Cab waited 22 months for permits

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

Those pro-union cabbies were so polite and law-abiding. They asked the City of Portland for permission to form a new driver-owned co-op, Union Cab, and then waited 22 months for the City to say yes.

Uber, by contrast, didn't bother applying for permits. The app-based ride company launched operations in Portland on Dec. 5 in flagrant violation of City code. Thirteen days later, Mayor Charlie Hales announced that the City will develop a completely new regulatory framework by April 9, 2015, to allow companies like Uber to operate legally. Uber — facing a City lawsuit and \$67,750 in fines — graciously suspended its illegal operation while the City works to make it legal.

To develop the new rules, the City snubbed its existing advisory board — the Private for-Hire Transportation Board of Review — and instead appointed a task force chaired by Mike Greenfield, former director of the State of Oregon Department of Administrative Services. The City needed a “fresh look,” explained Brian Hockaday, aide to Commissioner Steve Novick, at the Private for-Hire Board's Jan. 7 meeting.

Taxi drivers and company representatives grilled Hockaday at the two-hour meeting, but got few answers as to how the rules will be changed.

“I'm really not trying to be evasive,” Hockaday said. “I have no idea what it's going to look like.”

Broadway Cab general manager Raye Miles voiced frustration that the City had a backlog of over 100 new permit requests, and yet promised an illegal operator to change the rules in 90 days.

“Would that have worked for Broadway?” Miles asked Hockaday. “If we just started operating more vehicles, would we be getting the attention?”

“I want to make it really clear,” Hockaday replied. “We have not made any sort of commitment with Uber or any other company on any specific obligations.”

The new task force held its first

meeting Jan. 14 (after this issue went to press). But every feature of existing regulations will be up for reconsideration: whether the City should regulate fares or limit the number of taxi permits, whether it should require insurance, inspections and background checks, whether it should require companies to be accessible to the handicapped.

“I don't know what the City's going to do,” said Union Cab president Kedir Wako, a member of Communications Workers of America Local 7901. “We're watching it closely. It's going to be a big issue in our life.”

Mass rally Jan. 24: Oregon Needs a Raise

The union-endorsed group 15 Now will hold a rally Saturday, Jan. 24, on the steps of the Oregon Capitol in Salem to call for an increase in the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. The noon rally will be followed by a statewide gathering at the IKE Box meeting space, 299 Cottage Street Northeast at 1 p.m.

Free bus transportation is being provided from locations all over the state, but riders are asked to sign up at <http://bit.ly/1w4naC3>. From Portland, buses will leave at 10:30 a.m. from the parking lot of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49, 3536 SE 26th Ave., departing from

Salem at 3 p.m.

Rally cosponsors include Oregon AFL-CIO, Jobs with Justice, Oregon School Employees Association, American Federation of Teachers-Oregon, SEIU Locals 49 and 503, AFSCME Locals 328 and 88, Laborers Local 483, Oregon Education Association, Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Portland Association of Teachers, Oregon State Association of Letter Carriers, Communications Workers of America Local 7901, and Musicians Local 99.

Rally for universal health care

Health Care for All Oregon is organizing a rally on the Capitol steps in Salem Wednesday, Feb. 11, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., to call on state legislators to create a universal health care system for Oregon.

State Sen. Michael Dembrow was able to pass legislation in 2013 authorizing a privately-funded study of how to best fund a universal health care system in Oregon, but it would take \$200,000 to fund the study, and the group has raised just \$50,000 so far. Another bill will be submitted in 2015 to fund the remainder.

Dembrow — the Legislature's lead-

ing supporter of universal health care — will headline the Feb. 11 rally, which will also feature jazz musician Norm Sylvester, the Raging Grannies, and “Mad As Hell Minutes,” an opportunity for participants to share their own health care stories.

Health Care for All-Oregon is a grassroots coalition of over 100 organizations, including unions, businesses, non-profits and church groups. The group is organizing bus transportation and car pools from Portland, Corvallis, Eugene, Ashland, LaGrande and the Oregon Coast. Visit hcao.org to register.



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