



NORTHWEST

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Portland

Fast-track fight: Tea Party and Harry Reid join labor's allies

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The old saying “politics makes strange bedfellows” rang true in the nation’s capital in early February when some Tea Party group leaders joined organized labor and other foes of President Barack Obama’s “fast-track” trade treaty scheme. Fast-track, formally called Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), would bind Congress to an up-or-down vote on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) “free trade” deal. Debate would be limited and amendments prohibited, thus undermining Congress’ ability to have a meaningful role in shaping the contents of the trade agreement, which has been in secret negotiations for several years between the United States, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

“The widespread interest in ‘fast-track’ from across the political spectrum is no surprise,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka after fast-track foes continued their e-mail, petition and phone call campaign against it earlier this month.

The anti-fast-track coalition was organized by the Communications Workers of America and the Steelworkers Union. It has grown to 120 groups, whose members have held 50 rallies, sent 600,000-plus e-mails and petitions, and made at least 40,000 phone calls to lawmakers.

Trumka said rising fast-track opposition is only more evidence of what workers have known for a long time: “America’s workforce deserves better than warmed-over trade deals, which will do nothing to raise wages or reduce our \$540 billion trade deficit.”

Trumka said the United States is long overdue for an overhaul of its trade priorities and trade practices. “That can only happen with an inclusive process that includes all our voices, not just the



Portland activists rallied Jan 31 against the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership at Portland State University.

disproportionate influence of the 1 percent,” he said.

Labor’s alternative trade law sets worker rights and environmental protection as pre-conditions, and tells Congress to pick

which nations to bargain with, among other provisions.

Worker rights and jobs weren’t the issues that prompted the Tea Party to oppose fast track. It opposes giving foreign corporations equal standing to sue to overturn any federal, state or local law, rule or regulation that could impact present or future profits from trade. The lawsuits would go before secret trade tribunals, not U.S. courts, and there would be no appeals from their decisions. All that together violates U.S. sovereignty, Tea Party leaders say.

“The last thing the Congress needs to do is to cede more power that constitutionally belongs to the legislative branch to President Obama,” Todd Cefaratti, president of TheTeaParty.net, told The Hill newspaper.

Earlier this month, the Oregon AFL-CIO helped coordinate a massive letter-writing campaign to Congress asking for transparency in trade negotiations, and thanking those lawmakers who have stood up to a fast-tracked TPP.

“After the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO, the international body that controls and regulates trade between nations), we’ve had enough of these empty promises of jobs and economic prosperity. They don’t happen with big trade deals,” said Tom Chamberlain, president of the state labor federation. “Putting people to work in family-wage jobs, giving students the best training possible and bringing sectors like manufacturing back to this country — that is what will put the American worker and our economy ahead.”

In a press release, Chamberlain thanked U.S. Reps. Earl Blumenauer, Suzanne Bonamici and Peter DeFazio for their leader-

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City of Portland workers reject contract

Members of the District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU) voted down a tentative contract agreement with the City of Portland 462 to 635. Ballots were counted Feb. 10, three days later than scheduled, due to a snow storm that shut down the city and put many DCTU members to work clearing streets of snow and repairing water mains.

DCTU is a coalition of seven unions that represent nearly 1,600 city workers. The largest units are members of AFSCME Local 189 and Laborers Local 483. Others are Machinists District Lodge 24, Operating Engineers Local 701, Painters and Allied Trades District Council 5, Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, and IBEW Local 48.

Contentious bargaining had been ongoing for nearly a year when a tentative four-year deal was reached in January — just as union representatives and city managers prepared to submit their final offers. Members of the bargaining team recommended ratification, saying it was the best deal likely to be achieved without a strike. But members who opposed its terms mounted a grassroots effort to get coworkers to vote no. The rejected deal would have provided modest cost-of-living increases and continued health insurance and retirement benefits, but it also would have made it easier to contract out members’ work, and it would have changed rules on accruing comp time — a change that drew fire from many members, particularly in maintenance and repair jobs.

With each union voting separately, majorities in four

of the seven rejected the deal. After the vote, City HR manager Julia Getchell told DCTU chief negotiator Rob Wheaton in a text message that the City would move to declare impasse a second time, but that had not yet happened as of press time.

Local 483 organizer Erica Askin, sworn in as interim business manager Feb. 18, said it’s still possible the two sides could reopen negotiations.

If the City does declare impasse, that would trigger a seven-day timeline for the two sides to exchange final offers. DCTU members would then have an opportunity to vote on the City’s final offer, but Local 189 President Mark Gipson said the next contract vote would likely be paired with a vote on whether to authorize a strike.

Gipson said the City would have three options in putting together a final offer.

“If they’re interested in driving a work stoppage,” Gipson said, “all they have to do is put together an offer worse than the tentative agreement.”

A second option would be for the City to submit a final offer identical to the one members rejected. It’s possible that could pass on a second vote, if members understood that rejecting the deal would mean a strike.

“[The rejected agreement] was far from a great offer,” Gipson said. “The question is, ‘Is it bad enough to strike over?’”

The smart move, Gipson said, would be a third option — an improved offer that would win support from some who voted “no” last time.

Teachers strike in Medford



MEDFORD — About 600 teachers struck Medford School District Feb. 6, and remained on strike as of Feb. 18, when this edition went to press. The two sides differ over wages, working conditions, pension benefits, and even the length of the contract, with the district seeking several changes and the union largely seeking to preserve the status quo. The district

wants a three-year contract with cost-of-living raises of 1.9, 2, and 2 percent; the union proposes a two-year contract with raises of 2.2 and 2.5 percent. The district also wants to increase teachers’ share of health insurance premiums to 17 percent, up from the current 5 percent. The district also wants to reduce an early retirement incentive, while the union wants the district to reduce high school teacher workload to 180 students or less.

Medford School District is Southern Oregon’s largest, with over 13,000 students. Schools closed the first three days of the strike, then were reopened by the district using several hundred substitute teachers. But they’re open only half the school day, and less than half of students are attending.

Since the strike began, the two sides have met three times, without reaching agreement. A fourth bargaining session was scheduled Feb. 18.

It was the first-ever teachers’ strike in the district. A Feb. 15 rally drew an estimated 600 teachers and community supporters.

Labor-environmental group calls Merkley a 'green jobs' champion

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley received a Green Jobs Champion award Feb. 11 from the labor-environmental group BlueGreen Alliance. The award is given to elected leaders who have contributed greatly to creating good jobs that help the economy and the environment.

The award was presented to Merkley and to U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) in Washington D.C., where hundreds of labor, environmental, business, non-profit and civic leaders were gathered for a three-day "Good Jobs, Green Jobs" conference.

"Sen. Merkley's unwavering championship of American manufacturing

and dedication to fighting climate change and protecting our environment is an inspiration to the blue-green movement," said David Foster, president of the BlueGreen Alliance.

The Alliance was co-founded by the United Steelworkers Union and the Sierra Club.

Participants at the conference launched "Repair America," a campaign to fix the country's more than 2.5 million miles of deficient pipelines and crumbling infrastructure in a sustainable way to create family-wage, green jobs. Their goal is to convince citizens and Congress to back funding to make it happen.

The centerpiece of the plan is cre-

ation of a National Infrastructure Bank to use public dollars to leverage private investment in such repair and replacement projects.

"We have a D+ infrastructure," said Steelworkers President Leo Gerard, referring to a recent report card put out by the American Society of Civil Engineers. ASCE estimates it will take an investment of \$3.6 trillion by 2020 to get the country's infrastructure to a "state of good repair," or a 'B' grade.

Gerard said if Congress invested enough money to attain a 'B' grade, "we'd have 11 million more jobs and put those Americans back to work."

A bill written by Merkley — the Job Creation through Energy Efficient Manufacturing Act — would provide grants to states to establish or expand programs to finance energy efficiency retrofit, onsite clean and renewable energy, smart grid, and alternative vehicle fleet projects for industrial businesses.

Oregon AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Byrd and Washington State Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Lynne Dodson headed a workshop on climate policy and labor in the Western region. And Alan Hickenbottom of Christenson Electric participated in a roundtable discussion, where he talked about how green jobs have benefited NECA/IBEW Local 48 members and the Oregon economy.



Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, a keynote speaker at the Good Jobs, Green Jobs national conference of the BlueGreen Alliance, received a Green Jobs Champion award from the labor-environmental group Feb. 11 in Washington, D.C. (Photo courtesy of Keith Mellnick.)

IAM reform slate clears second hurdle

A slate of reform candidates vying for the national leadership of 577,000-member International Association of Machinists (IAM) has cleared a second electoral hurdle. Because the slate headed by Connecticut railroad mechanic Jay Cronk received the required endorsement of at least 25 local lodges at special endorsement meetings held Feb. 8, it will face off against a slate of incumbents led by international president R. Thomas Buffenbarger on nationwide ballots.

Both sets of candidates will appear on the ballots that members will receive at the first regularly scheduled meeting in April of each local lodge in

the United States.

Cronk's slate includes two Boeing workers: Gresham plant worker Pat Maloney of Lodge 63, and union business representative Jason Redrup of District 751 in the Puget Sound.

The contest is a do-over, conducted under the terms of a voluntary compliance agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor. DOL investigated complaints filed after national IAM officer elections in January 2013, and concluded that the election rules outlined in the IAM constitution violate a federal law governing union elections.

Unionists to bowl for Muscular Dystrophy Association on April 13

The 25th annual Labor Bowl Challenge for the Muscular Dystrophy Association will be held Sunday, April 13, at Sunset Lanes in Beaverton.

The Labor Bowl Challenge consists of four-person teams that compete for prizes. Money is raised through pledges and from a silent auction, and goes to buy wheelchairs and braces for children, as well as for research and summer camps.

Muscular dystrophy is a hereditary condition marked by a progressive weakening and wasting of the muscles over time.

Since its inception in 1989, union members have donated \$351,025.75 to MDA.

The event is coordinated by the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Branch 82 and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

For more information, or to sign up and receive fundraising packets and instructions, call Jim Falvey, president of Letter Carriers Branch 82 at 503-493-5903. To donate silent auction items, call NALC's MDA Coordinator Debby Burbank at 971-404-5384.

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NLRB to try again to streamline unionization elections

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — By a 3-2 vote on Feb. 4, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) reintroduced a proposed rule to ensure a more streamlined and fairer union election process for workers.

The proposals will let the board more effectively administer labor law, said NLRB Chairman Mark Gaston Pearce.

“The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking presents a number of changes to representation case procedures aimed at modernizing processes, enhancing transparency and eliminating unnecessary litigation and delay,” he said.

The NLRB passed similar rules in 2011, but the D.C. Circuit Court of Ap-

peals tossed them out after business groups sued. The judges (a majority appointed by Republican presidents) said the board lacked a quorum at the time the new rules were made. Since then, five members have been confirmed to the board, giving it a quorum.

“Unnecessary delay and inefficiencies hurt both employees and employers,” Pearce said. “These proposals are intended to improve the process for all parties, in all cases, whether nonunion employees are seeking a union to represent them or unionized employees are

seeking to decertify a union. We look forward to further exchange of ideas to improve the processes” to benefit work-

‘Unnecessary delay and inefficiencies hurt both employees and employers.’

NLRB CHAIR MARK GATSON PEARCE

ers, firms and the U.S.

The NLRB wants to let unions and businesses send documents, including recognition election petitions, electronically, streamline pre- and post-election procedures to facilitate agreement and eliminate unnecessary litigation. It wants to add phone numbers and e-mail addresses to eligible voter lists, called Excelsior lists, that firms must turn over, via the board, to unions filing the required number of signatures.

The NLRB also wants to “consolidate all election-related appeals to the board into a single post-election appeals process.” Right now, firms delay union recognition elections by filing challenges to who can vote, when the vote can occur and other details. They then take their complaints to the board and the federal courts.

Meantime, employers can stall the elections and get months — even years — to conduct anti-union campaigns. The NLRB’s proposal would reduce that time.

Union leaders applauded the NLRB’s proposal.

“The rules were needed then (in 2011), and they are still needed now,”

said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. “When workers petition for an NLRB election, they should receive a timely opportunity to vote. But the current NLRB election process is riddled with delay and provides too many opportunities for employers to manipulate and drag out the process through costly and unnecessary litigation and deny workers a vote. These rules are an important step in the right direction.”

The Republican majority on the House Education and the Workforce Committee denounced the ruling, calling it “ambush elections.” It said it would haul the NLRB before the committee on March 5.

Meanwhile, the NLRB set an April 7 deadline for written comments on the new rules. Additionally, the board will hold public hearings on its proposals that week.

Teachers strike averted at Portland Public Schools

Two days before a strike was set to begin, the Portland Association of Teachers announced Feb. 18 (as this edition was going to press) that a “conceptual agreement” was reached with Portland Public Schools on a new union contract.

The deal was reached after more than 23 straight hours of bargaining with a state mediator — and 10 months after bargaining began. The two sides reconvened later in the day to iron out details and put it in writing as a tentative agreement that will go to the union’s 2,900 members for ratification.

Details of the agreement won’t be released before teachers vote on the contract.



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Official Notices

AUTO MECHANICS 1005

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 12.

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, March 15, preceded by a 9 a.m. shop stewards' training session.

ALL MEMBERS are invited to shop stewards' training. Stewards must attend steward meeting to be compensated.

All meetings and elections are held at our Union Hall, 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, Feb. 25, followed by a 9:30 a.m. General Membership Meeting, in the meeting room at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 205, Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** Two Executive Board positions will be filled at this meeting. If interested, please contact Local 114.

BOILERMAKERS 242 (FORMERLY 500)

Members meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, at the Training Center, 2515 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** This is an Informational Meeting.

BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS 1

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 20, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24, at the Social Justice Center, 155 NE Irving Ave., Bend.

COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Monday, Feb. 24, at the Vancouver Labor Center, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vanc., Wash.

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Monday, March 3, in Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Marine Unit meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24, in the Meeting Hall.

General Membership Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26, in the Meeting Hall. Doors open at 5:00 p.m.

Business Manager's Open House Saturday, March 1, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Meeting Hall, contact Nancy Reames 503-256-4848 ext 240 for an appointment.

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, March 5 and 19, in the Executive Boardroom.

Coast Unit meets 7 p.m. Thursday, March 6, at Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

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

DEATH ASSESSMENTS: No. 2375, John A. Yeager; No. 2376, Andrew A. Delgado; No. 2377, Travis J. Olsen; and No. 2378, Vincent S. Bennett. The February 2014 assessment is \$1.50.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, at 32969 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

Bend Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at the IBEW/UA Training Center, 2161 SW First St., Redmond.

Eugene Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, at the LU 290 Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

Salem Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 20, at Salem Heights Community Center, 3505 Liberty Rd. S., Salem.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 12779 NE Whitaker Way, Portland.

FIRE FIGHTERS 452

Members meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Thursday, March 13, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego.

GLASS WORKERS 740

Executive Board members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 6, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Portland area members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 6, at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Monday, March 10, at 1174 Gateway Loop, Springfield.

Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at Candalaria Terrace, Suite 204, 2659 Commercial St. SE, Salem.

INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 12. Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, March 14.

Meetings are at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 6, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle #200, Portland.

IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN 516

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27. Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13. Meetings are at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #300.

LABORERS 483

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. stewards' meeting, at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, March 3, preceded by a 6:15 p.m. Executive Board meeting, at the Vancouver Labor Center, 2212 NE Andresen Rd., Vanc., Wash.

LANE COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BCTC

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Feb. 26, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway.

LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26, 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, Feb. 27, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, March 3. Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 27. **PLEASE NOTE:** Special Call to vote on a contract proposal.

Meeting are at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

MACHINISTS 63

Executive Board meets 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 5. Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, March 8, preceded by a 9 a.m. stewards' meeting.

Meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

MACHINISTS 1432

Swing and graveyard shift members meet at 11 a.m. Monday, March 10.

Regular membership meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 12.

Shop stewards' training session 9 a.m. March 15. Meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

MARION-POLK-YAMHILL LABOR COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 26, followed by a 7 p.m. general meeting at 1400 Tandem Ave. SE, Salem.

METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, March 13. Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 25. Meetings are at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

MID-COLUMBIA LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at 3313 W. 2nd, The Dalles.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY EMPLOYEES 88

General membership meets 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, preceded by a 6 p.m. stewards' meeting, at the AFSCME Union Office, 6025 E Burnside, Portland.

NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES 11

Members meet 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at 3815 Columbia St., Vancouver. **PLEASE NOTE:** Nominations will be accepted for the following positions: Executive Secretary-Treasurer (3 year term); Utilities (2 year term); Public Employees (2 year term); Labor Organi-

zations (2 year term), At-Large (2 year term); Trustee (3 year term); and Trustee (2 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.

PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland. **PLEASE NOTE:** Special called vote on MASH fund and Returning Shipyard dues. Website: www.iupatlocal10.org

PLASTERERS 82

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

PORTLAND CITY & METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES 189

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, March 11. General membership meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, March 25.

Meetings are at 6025 E Burnside, Portland.

ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, March 6. Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, March 13. Meetings are at 2725 SE 21st, Portland.

SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Portland area VOC members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379

NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland

Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 12, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N Pacific Hwy.

Eugene area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at the Local 16 Hall, 1887 Laura St., Springfield.

Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, March 20, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

Women of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 (WOSM) meet 4:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21, at Beulahland, 118 NE 28th Ave., Portland. Children are welcome.

SIGN PAINTERS & PAINT MAKERS 1094

Members meet 3:30 p.m. Monday, March 17, in the District Office, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

SOUTHEASTERN OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at the Woodworkers Hall, 3836 Altamont Drive, Klamath Falls.

SOUTHERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy.#3, Central Point.

SOUTHWESTERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, March 3, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, preceded by an Executive Board meeting, at a location to be determined.

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21, 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 third Friday of every month: Bend, Eugene/Springfield, Eureka, Medford, and Salem.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane, Astoria.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25. Please contact Craig Spjut at 707-496-1767 for location information.

Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 4816 S 6th St., Klamath Falls.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall.

Barbara Roberts to keynote retirees' club convention March 8

Former governor Barbara Roberts and progressive radio talk show host Carl Wolfson will be guest speakers at the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans 2014 state convention Saturday, March 8.

The daylong convention will be held at the Madison Grill banquet room, 1125 SE Madison, Portland. It starts at 10 a.m. Registration is \$10, which includes lunch.

For more information, call 503-675-7764.

Credit union to celebrate 60th anniversary at annual meeting April 15

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, April 15, to attend the IBEW & United Workers Federal Credit Union's 60th anniversary annual meeting.

The meeting will be held at the IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland, starting at 7 p.m.

For more information, call the credit union at 503-253-8193.

Retiree Meeting Notices

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED

AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Annual State Convention, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, March 8, at the Madison Grill banquet room, 1125 SE Madison St., Portland. All retirees are welcome to attend.

ASBESTOS WORKERS 36

Retiree breakfast 9:30 a.m. Thursday, March 6, at the Dockside Restaurant, 2047 NW Front Ave., Portland.

BAKERS 114

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

BOILERMAKER 242 (FORMERLY 500)

Retirees meet 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 28, at Broadmoor Golf Course, 3509 NE Columbia Blvd, Portland.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Retirees meet between 11:45 a.m. and noon Monday, March 10, at Hometown Buffet on Lancaster in Salem. 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, March 12, at Home Town Buffet, 10542 SE Washington St., Portland.

IRON WORKERS 29

Retirees meet 12 noon Wednesday, March 12, at the Iron Workers 29 Hall, 11620 NE Ainsworth Circle, Portland for a catered lunch.

MACHINISTS

Retired Machinists meet 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 5, at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 18, at the AFSCME office, 6025 E Burnside, Portland. Call Michael Arken for information 1-800-521-5954 ext. 226.

TRANSIT 757

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

UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Rusty Pipe retirees meet 2 p.m. Thursday, March 6, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

Salem area retirees meet 12 noon Wednesday, March 5, at Almost Home Restaurant, 3310 Market St. SE, Salem.

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, March 20, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

Women in Oregon make 79 cents for every dollar men make

By ALINA HARWAY

The Oregon Council on Civil Rights recently released its report exploring the wage gap between men and women in Oregon.

Its findings show that while Oregon's current workplace policies and practices have helped lower the wage gap below the national average (where women earn 77 cents for every \$1.00 earned by men), Oregon women still make more than 20 percent less than Oregon men, on average. For women of color, the wage gap is more than 40 cents per dollar.

How is it that Oregon — and the nation at large — still have such a long way to go? From the report:

"The 'second shift' of housework and family care falls more frequently to women than men. Women are less likely than men to have access to paid sick time and paid family leave and are more likely to need that time to take care of a child or other family member. Women take home less income, are less likely to earn raises and promotions at the same pace, earn fewer retirement benefits, and accumulate lower lifetime

wealth. [Yet...] two thirds of working women are the primary or co-breadwinners in their families. Pay inequality impacts adults and children who depend on women's incomes."

While the social injustice is more than alarming enough, the economic impacts should cause concern for everyone across the broad spectrum of political beliefs. When women are paid less for equal or comparable work, it brings overall household wages down. And for single working mothers, that's a deep impact: About one-third of single working mothers are living below the poverty line.

The Oregon Council on Civil Rights' report points to several policy changes Oregon could undertake to address this issue, including:

Paid Leave: Expanding paid sick leave, creating a statewide paid family leave insurance program, and supporting leave time for child-related activities;

Safe, affordable childcare: Expanding employment-related day care and extending tax credits for childcare;

Oregon Paycheck Fairness Act: Providing protections against discrimination and retaliation;

And others, including increasing minimum wage.

Further, the council recommends, Oregon should increase outreach, public awareness, and partnerships with employers and private sector leaders; provide more educational and occupational opportunities; and provide employer incentives and workplace best practices for women.

These recommendations have been sent to Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) Commissioner Brad Avakian, who is tasked with developing proposals to address the issues identified in the report. Avakian told the Statesman Journal that no proposals will be submitted in time for the 2014 legislative session, but that BOLI will

begin working to develop "a set of recommendations that works for the business community and the labor force."

(Editor's Note: Alina Harway is the communications and research manager for Our Oregon, a labor-backed non-

profit organization that promotes economic and social fairness for all Oregonians.)

Texas Hold'em poker tournament March 15 for Doernbecher kids

The third annual Unions for Kids Texas Hold 'em Poker Tournament will be held Saturday, March 15, from 4 to 10 p.m. at Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 Hall, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Buy-in is \$50. Top three winners will receive Visa gift cards of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250.

All proceeds from the tournament, which is in association with the Union for Kids Motorcycle Poker Run held in June, go to Doernbecher Children's Hospital.

For more information or to register, call Emmy at 503-254-0123.



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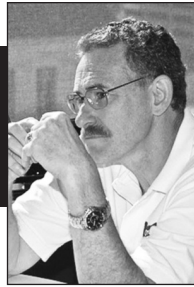
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Who's On Our Side?

By Tom Chamberlain



The Oregon AFL-CIO is putting up a new "Help Wanted" sign this week.

WANTED: Elected leaders that put the needs of all Oregonians above patrician politics, above corporate interests, above what is politically expedient, and above dodging issues because they may threaten your re-election.

On Feb. 28, union leaders from across the state will meet and discuss who to endorse for legislative, statewide and federal positions for the May primary election. It will be a lively debate.

The stakes are high for Oregon workers — for our state's middle class. Whether it is the development of West Hayden Island or construction of the Columbia River Crossing (projects that will create thousands of jobs, update decaying transportation infrastructure that enable farmers and manufacturers from Ashland to Baker to get their goods to markets) we need politicians who commit to expanding our economy.

Whether it is trade agreements that have wiped out tens of thousands of Oregon jobs, or the most recent federal Farm Bill that cuts billions of dollars from food assistance for the poor, or turning a blind eye to the plight of millions of undocumented workers who are exploited daily, or standing by and watching a widening wealth gulf where the vast majority of Ameri-

cans play a high stakes poker game against a stacked deck where hand after hand is won by the 1 percent, we need politicians who put people before companies, who put those in need before those whose needs are already met.

These are tough issues, to be sure. They are issues that require strong political leadership and courage.

I have been following Oregon politics for over 30 years, and for 30 years — whether at the local, state, or federal level — I have watched elected leaders bob and weave to avoid taking a position on controversial issues.

Oftentimes endorsements are based on the lesser of two evils, not whether a candidate is really a champion for working Oregonians. But, occasionally, we experience a positive change in the caliber of candidates.

Leaders like U.S. Sens. Jeff Merkley and Elizabeth Warren are focused on doing the right thing for all Americans, not just the 1%. They take courageous positions on trade, financial regulations and job creation.

They remind me of my friend and past Oregon Treasurer Ben Westlund, who made a philosophical transition during his battle with cancer that ultimately claimed his life. Ben's transformation from a partisan Republican to a champion for Oregon's children, workers, the

poor, the sick and aged changed the people around him. His dedication and leadership established a model of statesmanship that focused on the 99%, and constantly returned to the way jobs contribute to our Oregon quality of life.

During the last election cycle we endorsed a freshman class of Oregon legislators such as Oregon AFL-CIO Freshman of the Year Jennifer Williamson, who joined strong worker advocates like Legislator of the Year winners Michael Dembrow, Val Hoyle, and Tina Kotek, and their colleagues who stand up for Oregon workers day after day.

Yes, we have a "Help Wanted" sign up. We know these champions are few and far between, and we know they need more help.

The application is a questionnaire that more and more candidates refuse to fill out because they don't want to go on the record and they don't want to be held accountable. The application doesn't ask if you are Republican, Democrat, Working Families Party member, or a Libertarian. It only asks about your past and future support of Oregonians.

It asks if you're ready to be on our side. We hope more strong candidates apply.

Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

Public Employment Relations Conference March 20 in Salem

The University of Oregon Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) will host its 28th Public Employment Relations Conference (PERC) Thursday, March 20, at the Salem Conference Center. PERC is a gathering of public sector labor relations professionals from across Oregon, including attorneys, neutrals, and representatives from both unions and management.

A morning plenary session will cover recent cases before the Oregon Employment Relations Board. That will be followed by workshops dealing with labor lawyer ethics, Obamacare's impact on public employee health insurance, and mediation, arbitration, and family and medical leave.

For more information go to lerc.uoregon.edu or contact Helen Moss at hmoss@uoregon.edu.

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Campaign to weaken labor standards at the state level is coordinated nationally

Last Oct. 31, political scientist Gordon Lafer released a quiet bombshell. In a 79-page paper, Lafer made a case that there's a nationally coordinated corporate-backed campaign to lower wages and weaken labor standards — at the state level. Lafer, associate professor at University of Oregon's Labor Education and Research Service (LERC), spent months studying attempts to pass bills and laws in state legislatures all around the country. In his report, entitled "The Legislative Attack on American Wages and Labor Standards," he says the campaigns go far beyond attacks on public employee union rights in Wisconsin and Ohio, or Michigan's newly passed right-to-work law. Lafer found near-identical efforts in state after state to weaken the minimum wage, make it easier for employers to steal wages or misclassify workers as "independent contractors," undermine unemployment insurance, reduce public services, bar project labor agreements in public construction, even lessen restrictions on child labor. The Northwest Labor Press interviewed Lafer by phone about the report, which can be read in its entirety at epi.org/publication/attack-on-american-labor-standards.

You write that state legislators aren't responding to local conditions with these laws. They're fol-

lowing an economic and policy agenda fueled by national corporate lobbies?

I think what we get taught in school turns out to be far from the truth, especially since the Citizens United Supreme Court decision opened the door to corporate spending. In areas of legislation that are important to the big corporate lobbies (which tend to be important to everybody trying to make a living), increasingly what we see is national model legislation backed by national money being spent in a smart, coordinated way. They draft the law, fund legislators' campaigns, and also fund state-level think tanks like the Cascade Policy Institute here in Oregon that produce white papers and talking heads for the news. And ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) is where the players come together. It's not just the place where they write the laws; it's also the nexus where those relationships are made.

We really have in many cases lost popular control of the legislative process at the state level. I wouldn't say that's true in Oregon, because the politics don't quite work that way. I would guess that the vast majority of Americans can't name who their state legislator is. That means it's relatively cheap for corporate lobbies to buy state legislative races, much cheaper than

buying a Congressional race. So for that reason and because the federal government has been stuck, the action has shifted to the states.

Most of your examples of extreme rollback on workers rights are in states in the deep South that were always hostile to workers rights, or places where Republicans had a political opportunity, like controlling both legislative chambers plus the governors office. Should workers in other states, like Oregon, be worried too?

Oregon is pretty closely balanced between the political parties. Right now the Democrats have an edge, but it's gone back and forth. A couple years ago one of the chambers was exactly evenly split. If you have one legislative cycle in which a party gets control of all three branches of government and abolishes the state's minimum wage, it can be very hard to roll back. In 2010, Republicans newly got control of all three branches of the government in what were traditionally strong union states — Wisconsin and Michigan. And I think they acted like, "We have to do these things now because we might only have power for two or four years." Both states made it illegal for union dues to be deducted by the electronic payroll system for public employees, regardless of whether you



GORDON LAFER

voluntarily chose to pay dues. It's very hard to recover from things like that, because they do what they're designed to do: They undercut the organizational feasibility of unions and workers organizations.

Your study looked at developments in 2011 and 2012. What would change if you updated it for 2013?

I'd have no life. It made sense to start with the legislators elected in the fall of 2010, because they were the first elected under the Citizens United rules. It was an exhaustive process to collect all that stuff. There's no other comprehensive list like the one I put together.

What would America look like if these attacks succeed?

Very dark. The result of their legislation would be to make life harder and worse for the vast majority of the people in the country. It wouldn't happen all at once, but living standards for most people would move gradually toward Mexico or a country like it.

The Koch brothers and the Waltons [heirs to the Walmart fortune], the real 1 percenters, their political challenge is to pursue a political agenda that makes the country ever more unequal without producing a political backlash. And part of that is having all the rest of us scale back what we think we have a right to expect, either from our jobs or the government. You lower people's expectations, make people feel lucky to have for what they've got. Like, "Okay, my kid is in a class with 30 kids, but at least she's not in a class with 40 kids. Or, "I only have catastrophic health insurance,

but at least I have that."

Your focus isn't on bills that specifically weaken unions; in fact the title of your report is the legislative attack on American wages and labor standards. You write that "the agenda to undermine wages and working conditions is aimed primarily at non-union, private-sector employees." This is fundamentally about an employing class trying to change laws to tilt the labor market further in the employers' favor. What are some examples?

Almost everything I write about in that report is things that affect nonunion workers. These are not "one-off" things, like make your pension 4 percent instead of 5 percent. They're things that structurally change the underlying balance of power between workers and employers in ways that are designed to make workers more afraid. For instance, cut off and eliminate unemployment insurance. If you know that when you're out of work, you have nothing, it's potentially life threatening. It's horrifying for most people who don't have any cushion to fall back on. Restricting unemployment benefits doesn't just mean employers will save more money because they won't be paying as much in unemployment tax. It means that everybody who is employed will be more cowed, and more scared, whether it's to organize a union, or ask for a pay raise, or complain about working overtime or unsafe conditions. What we're seeing is more and more trying to change the structural terms of the ways working people as a whole have any kind of leverage in the labor market. That includes undercutting unions, trying to ban wage theft ordinances trying to lower and get rid of the minimum wage, and cutting unemployment insurance and

(Turn to Page 8)

ATU-TriMet talks move to mediation

Negotiations between Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 and TriMet will move to mediation April 8. Conciliator Janet Gillman of the Oregon Employment Relations Board will mediate the talks.

The sides completed the state-mandated 150 days of bargaining on Feb. 4, and TriMet immediately requested mediation. Sticking points are active and retiree health care costs, and wages.

The previous contract expired Nov. 30, 2012, and by law union members cannot strike. If a settlement cannot be reached via negotiations, an arbitrator selects one of the party's proposals in its entirety through binding interest arbitration for the contract period.



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What does the minimum wage mean for Oregon's workers?

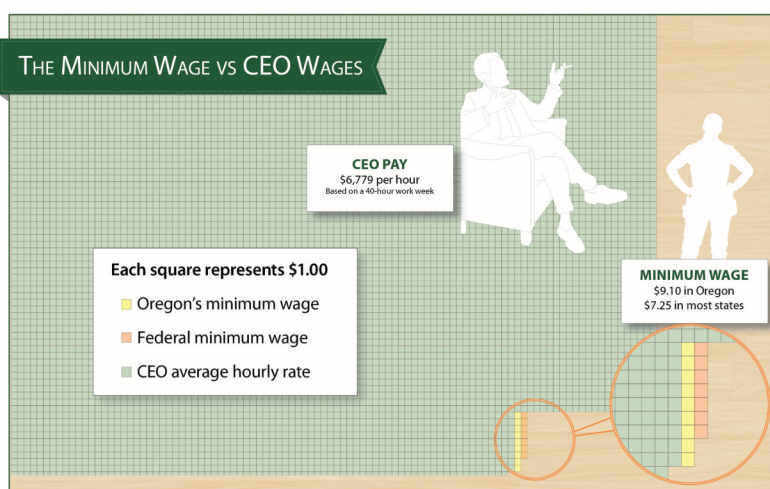
Oregon is one of 13 states that annually increases its minimum wage to keep pace with rising costs of inflation. Despite this, many Oregonians are still struggling to make ends meet and are actually living below the poverty line even while working a 40-hour week for minimum wage.

The Oregon AFL-CIO released a series of informational graphics to call attention to three compelling reasons for a higher minimum wage: poverty, positive impact on other wages and a comparison of the minimum wage to the average pay of a CEO.

"For me, it's very simple" said Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain. "We've seen more people moving to Oregon in the past year than any other state. We have exceptionally high rates of hunger and

poverty in parts of the state. Minimum wage jobs are not just the summer jobs we picture from when we were in high school. It's become abundantly clear that Oregon's workers need more than inflation adjustment; we need a minimum wage that can support a family. Otherwise, we're going to see more folks continue to struggle and need more and more assistance to make ends meet even as the economy improves."

The graphics show that raising the minimum wage has a direct impact on increasing the number of jobs higher on the income scale too, that the poverty level is higher than the expected income of a minimum wage worker, and that CEOs are seeing a staggering level of profit by keeping the minimum wage low.



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Senate GOP blocks three month UI extension

59 senators support the effort, but it's one shy of the 60 needed to break a GOP filibuster

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senate Republicans for the third time blocked labor-backed legislation to extend unemployment insurance (UI) benefits for three months. More than 1.7 million out-of-work Americans have missed out on benefits since the federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation program expired at the end of 2013. The program provided extra weeks of benefits to laid-off workers who used up the standard six months of state benefits. The program was introduced in 2008 during the Great Recession.

Fifty-nine senators, including four Republicans, voted to extend the UI insurance benefits. That was one vote short of the 60 needed to end a Republican-led "silent" filibuster. A silent filibuster allows a senator to block a bill without actually talking for hours on the Senate floor.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) initially voted to halt debate, but had to switch his vote to "no," so he could bring the measure up again in the future. That made the official vote count 58-40.

"This isn't how it's supposed to work. In a democracy, that should be enough," said U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon).

The GOP's action prompted renewed calls for more filibuster reform.

Last year, pressure from a wide mix of voters and lawmakers (such as Merkley) led to a change in Senate rules that ended silent filibusters for all presidential nominations and judges, except for Supreme Court justices. However, it kept the 60-vote filibuster threshold for legislation.

Merkley said more filibuster reform is needed to alleviate gridlock in the U.S. Senate.

"The way the Senate does business is fundamentally broken," he said. "Debate on the issues is healthy, but a 'silent' filibuster that allows Republicans to stop everything in its tracks without even coming to the floor of the Senate is just wrong. It needs to end."

The labor-backed coalition, Fix The Senate Now, said it will continue to push for further filibuster reforms throughout 2014.

If nothing else, union officials say Reid should at least implement the "talking filibuster," which would require a lawmaker to actively hold the floor in order to block legislation.

... Lafer report: Legislative attack on American labor standards

(From Page 7)

other kinds of public benefits.

You didn't address this is the report, but is there a counter-agenda that's also national, an pro-worker ALEC counterpart?

In the biggest sense, no. Labor is playing a different hand than the other side. Business has vastly more resources. Labor is never going to win by outspending the other side. One of the strengths labor has is people, but it only has that if it uses it. The first "paycheck protection" campaign (barring public sector union dues collection) was in 1998, California's Proposition 226. When it started, polls showed majority support not only among the public as a whole but among union members. The AFL-CIO put a ton of resources into beating it back, and after they beat it, they did a poll of people who'd started off supporting and ended up opposing, and where they got information. It turned out talking to a coworker at work was 20 points more effective than anything else.

To use that, you'd have to not

treat union members the same as other volunteers who get plugged into a phone bank script. Instead, you'd need to have hundreds of union members who are trained and feel confident to have five- to 20-minute conversations with people at work, or in their neighborhoods or churches. That's a big commitment. But it's an example of how the labor movement could play to a strength that its opponents do not have.

What about the labor caucus of the National Conference of State Legislatures? They share model "pro-worker" legislation.

They share ideas. But they don't have the money to bring people together at meetings, to run campaigns, to threaten politicians who do the wrong thing with being primaried, to run endless TV and radio ads, to fund think tanks in every state. Sharing model legislation is just one small part of the ALEC formula. Labor needs to have ideas that are dramatic enough that they galvanize the public imagination. That's what you have with the minimum wage. You don't need a mes-

saging consultant to talk about the minimum wage. I think that's true about K-12 class size too. There are other issues like that. If you said, "tax the rich and create jobs," I would guess that phrase by itself would poll enormously high. On the other hand, if it's, "increase the excise tax 0.75 percent and devote it these five funding streams," it may be the right policy, but it's kind of an inside game.

If the labor movement's only competitive advantage is people, then it needs something that's going to galvanize people. It has to be something dramatic that captures people's imagination. Figure out what is workable, winnable, even in a couple of states. In the same way that people in Oregon volunteered to phone bank Wisconsin, or donated money to support people occupying the capitol in Madison, I think people in lots of parts of the country would rally around a fight, even if it was in one state, that really captured their idea of what a fair economy is.

But there's not a national legislative agenda. I think the national unions are struggling to turn a cor-

ner from defensive to offensive, ever since being caught by surprise by Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker in 2011. SO much resources have been spent keeping their head above water that the effort to get on offense has been slow in coming.

I think many people in the country can say what the labor movement is against, which is everything — "stop kicking us in the head." But many fewer people can say what is the labor movement's vision of how the economy should work in a fair or just or humane economy. I think nothing forces you to crystallize that vision more than a ballot initiative. If the labor movement in even one state said, "Here's our plan: We want to tax the rich and create jobs, or guarantee everyone a decent retirement, or universal preschool . . .," the lessons from polling data suggest that there are a bunch of issues where there's grounds to go on offense. I would think the national labor movement should be looking at that, and Oregon might be one of the places they look to, because it's one of the places the labor movement has the competence to carry something out.