



NORTHWEST

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## The time is now to reform filibuster rules in U.S. Senate

Filibuster reform will be first thing on the docket when the U.S. Senate convenes on Jan. 22.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon, along with Senators Tom Udall of New Mexico, and Tom Harkin of Iowa, are leading the charge for reform. They told reporters during a briefing on Capitol Hill on Jan. 3 that they have the votes needed to make change happen.

There are 55 Democrats in the Senate, and Udall says he has 51 votes.

Under the U.S. Constitution, a majority of each house have the power to change its rules on the first day of the legislative session by a simple majority vote. The Senate convened the first session of the 113th Congress on Jan. 3 — and the three Democratic senators introduced SR 4. Here's what it would do:

- **Clear the path to debate** —

Those objecting to legislation would only have one opportunity to filibuster legislation. Specifically, the ability to bring up a bill for simple debate (the motion to proceed) would not be subjected to a filibuster.

- **Restore the "talking filibuster"** —

Those wishing to filibuster legislation must actually hold the floor and be required to actually debate the legislation. It would end "silent" filibusters



**U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon is leading the charge for filibuster reform that would require senators to actually stand and speak on the floor if they are opposed to a piece of legislation or presidential appointment. The Senate will debate the issue Jan. 22.**

where one senator quietly objects and is not required to take the Senate floor.

- **Put filibuster supporters on record** — 41 senators would have to affirmatively vote to continue debate, rather than forcing 60 senators to vote

to end debate.

- **Expedite nominations** — The process for approving nominations would be streamlined, shortening the amount of time required for debate once a nomination is brought to the

Senate floor.

Historically, the filibuster was intended to protect the minority party's interests on extraordinary issues, and it was rarely invoked. But in today's contentious political climate the filibuster has been used in record numbers (nearly 400 times in the 112th Congress) to block votes and debate, and the requirement for 60 votes to end a filibuster has proved virtually insurmountable. For example, much of the legislation organized labor has fought for to restore collective bargaining rights and to create jobs — from the Employee Free Choice Act, to the Bring Jobs Home Act, the American Jobs Act, and many more — never received a Senate floor vote because of the filibuster threat, even though the legislation had majority support from senators.

For these reasons, SR 4 is endorsed by the AFL-CIO and some 50 progressive groups — in a coalition called Fix the Senate Now.

Action on the resolution was postponed, however, because another filibuster reform proposal was introduced — this one by Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.), and Carl Levin (D-Mich.). It is backed by six other senators.

Merkley said the counterproposal "does nothing to take on the secret, silent filibuster that is haunting this body."

The AFL-CIO and Fix the Senate Now say the alternative proposal is a recipe for continued gridlock. "It lacks transparency and accountability; it allows continued minority veto of all legislative matters; it continues to provide multiple chances to filibuster legislation; and it keeps the obstructionist status quo for many executive branch and judicial nominees.

"We will be pressing Sen. Reid [Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada] to stand firm in support of real reform, including the 'talking filibuster,'" the coalition said in a press release.

Sen. Reid employed a parliamentary procedure that allowed him to hold off making any rule changes on opening day. Under the procedure (he called for a recess at the close of the first day's proceedings), each day is still considered as the "first day" of the new Congress, under which the Senate can change its rules by a simple majority.

While in "recess" Reid is meeting with Minority Leader Mitch Mc-

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## Transit Union Local 757-TriMet conflict accelerates

By DON MCINTOSH  
Associate Editor

Every time you think the relationship can't get any worse between TriMet and Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 757, it does. Oregon's largest transit agency and the union that represents 2,000 of its workers and 1,200 retirees have been in continuous combat since 2009 — in the workplace, in the Oregon Legislature, in the legal arena, and in the court of public opinion.

The issues of contention range from petty and personal to serious and substantive: Management has stripped away perks that had been added over the years — from the profits from the employee break room vending machines which paid for an annual picnic, to the right of union staff to purchase the agency's group life insurance at their own expense. TriMet gave bus supervisors a quota of high-risk fare enforcement confrontations, without the training or backup that fare inspectors

receive. But by far the biggest source of contention has been TriMet's effort to shift health insurance costs to workers.

TriMet bus and train operators and mechanics earn wages that top out at about \$22 an hour, plus pension and health benefits. (Until 2009, TriMet workers had fully-paid insurance for themselves and their families, with minimal co-pays.) But in 2009, TriMet insisted on reducing benefits to a "90/10" plan, in which employees pay 10 percent of health care costs. When the union didn't agree, the two sides reached impasse in bargaining for a new contract, which led to binding arbitration. In the end, the arbitrator picked TriMet's proposal. But the union is challenging the arbitrator's decision.

Administrative law judge Wendy Greenwald heard arguments from both sides Jan. 8 and 9. Under an expedited process, her conclusions will go directly to the three-member Oregon Employment Relations Board (ERB), which ad-

judicates public-sector labor disputes in Oregon.

But TriMet isn't stopping there. In December, the agency announced that it will push in the next round of bargaining for an 80/20 plan, in which employees pay 20 percent of health costs.

Both sides are gearing up for battle on multiple fronts. To fund their fight, Local 757 members at TriMet voted to approve a special dues assessment beginning this month that will raise upwards of \$40,000 a month.

It may seem strange, but when the Oregon Legislature meets next month, TriMet plans to ask legislators to make it legal again for transit workers to strike. In Oregon, most public employees have the right to strike, but some, like police and firefighters, are barred from striking; their contracts are settled by binding arbitration when labor and management can't agree. In 2007, lawmakers added transit workers to the category of barred-from-striking employ-

ees, at Local 757's request. The union expected that members would achieve better results by having a neutral arbitrator pick the most reasonable of the two proposals. Washington has a similar provision for transit workers.

But in practice, binding arbitration was much messier than expected. TriMet didn't bargain seriously before it declared impasse, ERB ruled: Management waited until the very end to detail its most important proposals, including its wage offer, and then sent to arbitrator David Gaba a "final offer" that it had never shown the union in actual bargaining. Not once but twice, ERB ordered TriMet to play fair and submit a proper final offer to the arbitrator. The legal back-and-forth took so long that the arbitrator's decision was issued 32 months into the 36-month contract.

And the arbitrator's decision, which might have been expected to be final, opened up a new can of worms. Gaba

felt that the employer's health care costs were too high to justify picking ATU's offer. But he also identified items in TriMet's offer that could be illegal and possibly unenforceable, including the need to bill workers for years of retroactive health premiums — and provisions that broke promises to retirees.

Local 757 urged members not to cooperate with attempts to collect the back premiums, and TriMet called that illegal in charges that were added to the union's appeal of the arbitrator's ruling, creating the consolidated case that Greenwald heard.

Since the dispute began, ERB has repeatedly ruled that TriMet violated the law, even ordering TriMet to pay union attorney fees on two occasions.

Meanwhile, the arbitrator-imposed contract has now expired, but bargaining over a new agreement has yet to begin. Local 757 says it wants bargaining

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# KKR-controlled Sealy to close North Portland factory

Despite offers of across-the-board wage cuts by union officials and “incentives” by an elected official, Sealy Mattress Company is going forward with plans to shutter its North Portland manufacturing plant, eliminating 128 family-wage jobs.

Portland has been home to the mattress factory since the 1940s, though not always under the name Sealy, said Scott Reeves, vice president of Steelworkers Local 330, which represents 78 workers there. Reeves has worked at the factory for 29 years. Teamsters Local 206 represents 14 warehouse workers, and Teamsters Local 162 represents 14 truck drivers. The other 22 jobs are management and non-bargaining unit positions. Wages range from \$15.50 to \$34 an hour, plus benefits.

Sealy operates 25 factories in North America. More than half are unionized, including eight by locals of the Steelworkers Union. Other unions are the Laborers; United Food and Commercial Workers; the Seafarers Union; Teamsters; and the International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine and Furniture Workers, a division of Communications Workers of America. Those unions are not impacted.

The private equity investment firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts (KKR) owns controlling interest in Sealy. “Private equity” is somewhat of a reinvented name for “leveraged buyout (LBO),” of which KKR is king. The playbook for this type of investment is borrowing large sums of money to buy, restructure and resell companies. Much of the time the restructuring involves selling assets and laying off workers. Private equity firms make money from management fees they charge investors and the companies, plus huge dividends.

Oregon’s Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) has invested more than \$7 billion with KKR since

1981.

According to a report in the New York Times, Sealy has been in private equity hands since 1989, when it was purchased by Gibbons, Green, van Amerongen, a New York-based buyout shop. Bain Capital acquired the company in 1997 on a \$40 million investment — shutting down Sealy’s corporate headquarters in Ohio and shifting all of those jobs to North Carolina. It sold the company to KKR in 2004 for \$1.5 billion. Two years later, KKR took the mattress-maker public, but maintained a sizable stake and influence in the company.

Workers at the North Portland plant were notified in August 2012 that the factory was relocating to Lacey, Washington, where it would operate non-union.

A month later, Sealy announced that it was being acquired by rival mattress-maker Tempur-Pedic International Inc., of Lexington, Ky. The transaction is valued at \$1.3 billion and is expected to close this spring.

Bob Tackett, president of Steelworkers Local 330 (Tackett also is executive secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council), said that after hearing the news the union offered to take a 20 percent across-the-board cut in wages — as

long as management did, too.

“They balked at the management cuts right away and then answered with a ‘thanks, but corporate has decided to make the move to Lacey.’ ” Tackett told the Labor Press last week.

The Steelworkers then asked what it would take to keep the factory in North Portland. “We told them whatever it was, we would try to meet those concessions,” Tackett said. “They told us they didn’t think the people here doing the same work for less money would be productive.”

In a November 2012 press release officially announcing the closure, Sealy wrote: “Ultimately the parties were not able to sufficiently address the service and cost issues in order to remain in Portland.”

Tom Leedham, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 206, said the Steelworkers “went the extra mile” to try to keep the factory in Portland. “KKR clearly had no interest in reaching an agreement,” he said.

The Teamsters then turned their attention to Oregon Treasurer Ted Wheeler and the Oregon Investment Council, which oversees the state pension fund. Last year PERS invested an additional \$700 million with KKR (including \$225 million in a Asian private equity fund), pushing its current in-

vestments with KKR to \$3.5 billion.

“It’s outrageous that the State of Oregon gives KKR billions of dollars to invest, and in return for that we get the closure of one of its factories that has been providing family-wage jobs for many, many years. What kind of return on investment is that?” Leedham said.

Wheeler, a former Democratic chair of the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners in Portland, responded with a letter to KKR’s co-chief executive officer George Roberts, asking what the state could do to keep the factory in Portland.

“While I understand that KKR is selling its ownership stake in Sealy this spring, I believe you still control operations in the company until the transaction is finalized,” Wheeler wrote. “I request that you ask the management team at Sealy to meet with Business Oregon, our public economic development agency, and labor leaders to explore the options for keeping this plant operating in North Portland. From what my team and I have heard, leaders from all of these organizations are standing by to see what changes or incentives may help retain these important jobs.”

In the letter, dated Dec. 31, Wheeler referenced the state’s long relationship

with KKR, including the recent \$225 million investment.

Meantime, the Oregon Working Families Party launched an online petition to KKR urging Roberts not to close the factory.

“As the leader of an investment firm that receives billions of dollars of Oregon’s investment money, we call on you to not take the state’s money and run,” the petition read.

Despite the effort, in a letter dated Jan. 4, 2013, Sealy wrote to Portland Mayor Charlie Hales, Multnomah County Board of Commission Chair Jeff Cogen, and Laura Roberts of Workforce Development, notifying them that the “workforce reduction process will begin on or near March 4, after the WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) period expired.”

Tackett said the Steelworkers have entered into effects bargaining with the company. The union is hoping to get some extended pension and health insurance contributions for its members.

*(Editor’s Note: KKR in 2008, owned or co-owned companies that employed 855,000 people, making it effectively America’s second biggest employer behind Walmart.)*



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# Labor unions put together agenda for 2013 Oregon Legislature

By **DON McINTOSH**  
Associate Editor

SALEM — When the newly-installed Oregon Legislature opens Feb. 4 for its 2013 session, organized labor will be in the building.

The Oregon AFL-CIO will press lawmakers to fund the Columbia River Crossing, ban public sector union-busting, and preserve industrially-zoned land. Building trades unions will seek to close loopholes in the state prevailing wage law. And public-sector unions will try to minimize the harm to members' interests from a set of reforms Gov. John Kitzhaber is proposing to the Oregon Public Employee Retirement System (PERS).

As always, the Legislature's biggest task will be to approve a state budget, deciding how much the state will spend on education, public safety, and social safety net programs. But since voter-approved legislation bars any legislative revenue increase without a hard-to-achieve three-fifths supermajority, Capitol budget battles tend to be about how to prioritize existing revenues.

The governor made PERS savings a major element of this year's budget proposal. PERS covers approximately 120,000 retirees and 140,000 non-retired current and former public employees. Over 900 Oregon public employers participate in the system, including state and local government employers and school districts. Kitzhaber is proposing three changes: capping retirees' cost-of-living increases at \$480 a year; excluding PERS

recipients who don't pay Oregon income tax from a program of income tax reimbursements; and allowing unionized public employers to negotiate partial reductions in the employer "pickup" of employee retirement contributions. The governor's office says the first two changes would save state and local governments and school districts \$865 million over two years. The third proposal, says Oregon AFSCME political director Joe Baessler, would "make it easier to slowly bleed folks" in contract bargaining. All three proposals would achieve savings at the expense of public employee retirees.

"We are disappointed," wrote Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503 President Rob Sisk in a letter to members, "because the governor's main path to more revenue is to go after the earned benefits of front-line workers and retirees." Sisk said the governor's budget relies on PERS cutbacks to fund essential services, and it doesn't address tax fairness.

The cost-of-living cap would affect the 47 percent of PERS recipients who receive over \$24,000 in annual benefits. But Baessler said judging by past court decisions, such a measure could be struck down in court, since it changes what workers were promised after they retire.

Elana Guiney, legislative and communications director of the Oregon AFL-CIO, said the state labor federation will support the legislative efforts of affiliated unions like Oregon AFSCME Council 75.

The Oregon AFL-CIO itself will be pursuing a "not-just-jobs, but good jobs" agenda, Guiney said. In other words, for any bill that lawmakers justify as a job-creator, the labor federation will ask for guarantees and minimum standards for the jobs created.

The Oregon AFL-CIO will also promote an expanded crackdown on employers that falsely mischaracterize employees as "independent contractors." In recent years, a multi-agency task



**Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber met Jan. 7 with 12 officials from Oregon building trades locals and councils for a wide-ranging discussion about jobs, public works projects, and measures to defend the state prevailing wage. Kitzhaber was supportive of efforts to seek a project labor agreement with Nike on a planned expansion, said Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council Executive Secretary John Mohlis.**

force has improved enforcement, but it only acts when there's a complaint. The Oregon AFL-CIO wants the state to hire an investigator to conduct proactive employer audits and levy fines on repeat offenders.

The Oregon AFL-CIO will also back a bill to maintain Oregon's supply of industrial land by making it harder to rezone land that's slated for industrial use.

And it will push a bill to bar taxpayer-funded union-busting by public employers. The bill would require public employers to remain neutral in any union organize drive. A bill in a previous legislative session would have required such neutrality of contractors doing government business as well, but the one to be introduced this year applies only to public employers. Guiney

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## Unions prepare to play defense in Washington Legislature

OLYMPIA — Following the November election, Washington state union leaders had high hopes for pro-worker legislation in the state capitol. Now — thanks to a pair of Democratic turncoats in the state Senate — labor is preparing for defensive fights.

On Dec. 10, Senate Democrats Rodney Tom of Bellevue and Tim

Sheldon of Mason County announced they would join with 23 Senate Republicans to form a "Senate Majority Coalition Caucus."

In effect, the two Democrats are colluding with the Senate Republican minority to deprive the 26-member majority Democrats of Senate leadership. The way it works, Tom gets to be Sen-

ate majority leader, Sheldon becomes president pro tempore, and Republicans get to chair the most important committees. For example, Eastern Washington Republican Janéa Holmquist Newbry — who has sponsored past bills to weaken the prevailing wage — will now chair the Labor, Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee (which she prefers to call the "Commerce and Labor Committee").

Washington, like Oregon, is becoming a solidly "blue" state, with Democrats now occupying eight of the nine statewide elected offices, and holding 55-43 and 26-23 majorities in the state House and Senate, respectively. But this legislative coup makes it possible for Senate Republicans to block Democratic proposals.

"We expect the Senate majority to be hostile to labor's interests," says David Groves, publications director at the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC), the state-level AFL-CIO body.

Nonetheless, WSLC plans to push a proactive agenda — "legislation that puts us on a high road to recovery by investing in jobs, increasing revenue and protecting families through strengthening our social and workplace safety nets."

The agenda starts with a call for major reinvestment in transportation and transit. Groves says the labor federation hopes to rally the business and environmental communities behind a 10-year, \$20 billion funding package to maintain and operate the state road and ferry system, improve freight mobility, and restore public mass transit. [Ferries are considered an extension of the state highway system under the Washington

state constitution, but service has been reduced in recent years as the state has faced budget crises.]

Other proposals include:

- Cracking down on misclassification of employees as independent contractors, as well as violations of the requirement to pay minimum wage, prevailing wage, and overtime.

- Mandating a preference for in-state goods and services in the state procurement process.

- Establishing a Washington Investment Trust, modeled after the Bank of North Dakota: State bank balances would be withdrawn from big Wall Street banks and instead lent to local governments for public infrastructure projects — at lower interest rates than the private bond market. The Trust would also fund student loans.

- Reforming the state workers' compensation system, giving injured workers information about how their benefits are calculated, and providing for attorneys fee awards in medical claims appeals, to give injured workers a more usable right to appeal.

WSLC will also be ready to oppose any bills to repeal Washington's annual minimum wage increase, make it harder to get unemployment benefits, or expand a new program of lump-sum injured worker payouts. [The lump sum option was sold to legislators as a cost-saving alternative to long-term workers compensation payments for injured workers over the age of 55, but it can result in reduced compensation over time.]

The 2013 legislative session runs from Jan. 14 to April 28. WSLC will hold its annual legislative conference March 7 at the Olympia Red Lion.



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# Official Notices

## AUTO MECHANIC 1005

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 19, preceded by a 9 a.m. shop steward training class. Shop stewards must attend training class and regular meeting to be compensated. **ELECTION RESULTS:** President: Ray Simonis; Vice President: Jose Canul; Recording Secretary: Shelia Dedmon; Secretary Treasurer: Chris Taylor; 3-Trustees: Mike Housley, Gilbert Jimenez, Jason Oyalte; Conductor-Sentinel: Mohammed Abdallah; 3-Auditors: Gene McGlothlin, Bryan Dickson, Sean Tompkin; 4-OMC Delegates: Ray Simonis, Chris Taylor, Britt Cornman, Frank Rouse; 6-NOLC Delegates: Joe Kear, Gilbert Jimenez, Jose Canul, Rick Brandt, Mike Housley, Shelia Dedmon; 2-SWCLC Delegates: Gene McGlothlin, Joe Kear.

Winner of Raffle: (shotgun) Jason Low  
Executive Board meets Wednesday, Feb. 13, at 4:30 p.m.  
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, Jan. 22, at 7931 NE Halsey, Suite 201, Portland.

## BOILERMAKERS 500

General membership meets 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, at 2515 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland.

## BRICKLAYERS AND ALLIED CRAFTWORKERS 1

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

## CEMENT MASONS 555

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

## CENTRAL OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 28, at the Social Justice Center, 155 NE Irving Ave., Bend. **NOTE NEW LOCATION.**

## COLUMBIA-PACIFIC BUILDING TRADES

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 22 and Jan. 29, in Kirkland Union Manor II, 3535 SE 86th, Portland.

## ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Women of 48 meets 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 18, Cornelius Pass Roadhouse, 4045 NW Cornelius Pass Road, Hillsboro, Oregon.

Bylaws Committee meets 5:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 21, in the Executive Boardroom.

General Membership Meeting meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 23, in the Meeting Hall. Doors open at 5:00 p.m.

Your Business Manager Meeting, Saturday, Jan. 26, in the Meeting Hall. Call Nancy Reames at 503.251.9681 for an appointment.

Marine Unit meets 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 28, in the Meeting Hall.

Executive Board meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 6 and 20, in the Executive Boardroom.

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

**DEATH ASSESSMENTS:** The following deaths have been declared, No. 2334, Leslie Brummund; No. 2335, Lee E. Schrom; No. 2336, Eldon Kellas; and No. 2337, Thomas B. Teafattler. The Jan. 2013 assessment is \$1.50.

## ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Executive Board meets 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 32969 Hwy. 99E, Tangent.

Bend Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14, at the IBEW/UA Training Center, 2161 SW First St., Redmond.

Joint Unit meets 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, at 33309 Hwy 99E, Tangent.

## ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS 23

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14, 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. 6, at 2807 NW Fruit Valley Rd., Vancouver, Wash.

## FIRE FIGHTERS 1660

Members meet 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 14, at 4411 SW Sunset Dr., Lake Oswego.

## GLASS WORKERS 740

Executive Board members meet 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

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

Eugene area members meet 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 11, at Best Western Manor Inn, 971 Kruse Way, Springfield. Salem area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12, at Candalaria Terrace, Suite 204, 2659 Commercial St. SE, Salem.

## INSULATORS 36

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6.

Members meet 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 8.

Meetings are at 11145 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

## IRON WORKERS 29

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

## IRON WORKERS SHOPMEN 516

Members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24.

Executive Board meets 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14.

Meetings are at 11620 NE Ainsworth Cir., #300, Portland.

## LABORERS 320

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14, at Joe Edgar Hall, Teamsters' Complex, 1850 NE 162nd Ave., Portland.

## LABORERS 483

### MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 19 at the Musicians Hall, 325 NE 20th Ave., Portland.

## LABORERS/VANCOUVER 335

Members meet 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4, 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, Jan. 23, at 1116 South A St., Springfield.

## LANE, COOS, CURRY & DOUGLAS BCTC

Delegates meet at noon Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

## LINN-BENTON-LINCOLN LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, 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. 24, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Executive Board meets 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

Portland area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 28, at 11105 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland.

## MACHINISTS 63

Executive Board meets 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6.

Members meet 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, preceded by a 9 a.m. stewards' meeting. **PLEASE NOTE:** Election of Recording Secretary and Examining Board will be held at this meeting.

Meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

## MACHINISTS 1432

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

Regular membership meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 13.

Meetings are at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

## METAL TRADES COUNCIL

Delegates meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22.

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 14

Meetings are held at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

## MOLDERS 139B

Members meet 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, preceded by a 6 p.m. Executive Board meeting at the Carpenters Hall, 2205 N. Lombard, Portland.

## MULTNOMAH COUNTY EMPLOYEES 88

Executive Board meets 6:15 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6.

General membership meets 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20, preceded by a 6 p.m. stewards' meeting.

Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

## NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 28, at IBEW Local 48 Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland.

## OPERATING ENGINEERS 701

**PLEASE NOTE:** Election Committee will be elected at the following meetings:

District 1 & 5 members meet 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 1, at 555 E. First St., Gladstone.

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4, at Cousin's Restaurant, 2114 W. 6th St., The Dalles.

District 4 members meet 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 5, at the Hermiston DTC Office, 148 Main St., Hermiston.

District 3 members meet 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, at North Bend/Coos Bay Labor Center, 3427 Ash St., North Bend.

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

District 2 members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 8, at the Comfort Suites, 969 Kruse Way, Springfield.

## PAINTERS & DRYWALL FINISHERS 10

Members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20, at the Asbestos Hall, 11145 NE Sandy Blvd. 2nd Floor, Portland.

Website: [www.iupatlocal10.org](http://www.iupatlocal10.org).

## PLASTERERS 82

Members meet 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 12812 NE Marx St., Portland.

## PORTLAND CITY & METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEES 189

General membership meets 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22.

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

Meetings are at 6025 E. Burnside, Portland.

## ROOFERS & WATERPROOFERS 49

Executive Board meets 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7.

Members meet 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14.

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

## SALEM BCTC

Delegates meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, at the IBEW 280 Training Center, 33309 Hwy 99E, Tangent.

## SHEET METAL WORKERS 16

Women of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 (WOSM) meets 4:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 18, at Beulahland, 118 NE

29th Ave., Portland. Children are welcome.

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

Portland members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12, at the Sheet Metal Training Center, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland.

Medford area members meet 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 13, at Wild River Pizza, 2684 N. Pacific Hwy., Medford. Eugene area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14, at Sheet Metal Local 16 Hall, 1887 Laura St., Springfield.

Coos Bay area members meet 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, at Abby's Pizza, 997 First St., Coos Bay.

## SOUTHERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12, at the Labor Temple, 4480 Rogue Valley Hwy.#3, Central Point.

## SOUTHWESTERN OREGON CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4, at the Bay Area Labor Center, 3427 Ash, North Bend.

## SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON LABOR COUNCIL

Delegates meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24, preceded by an Executive Board meeting, at the ILWU Local 4 Hall, 1205 Ingalls St., Vancouver, Wash.

## UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Portland area members meet 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 18, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

Astoria area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24, at the Astoria Labor Temple, 926 Duane St., Astoria.

Bend area members meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22, at the Local 290 Training Center, 2161 SW First, Redmond.

Brookings area members meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 29, at Curry County Search and Rescue, 517 Railroad St., Brookings.

Coos Bay area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22, at the Coos Bay Training Center, 2nd & Kruse, Coos Bay.

Eugene area members meet 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 21, at the Springfield Training Center, 2861 Pierce Parkway, Springfield.

Klamath Falls area members meet 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22, at 4816 S. 6th St., Klamath Falls.

Medford area members meet 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 24, at 950 Industrial Circle, White City.

Salem area members meet 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 21, at 1810 Hawthorne Ave. NE, Salem.

The Dalles area members meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22, at the United Steelworkers Local 9170 Union Hall, The Dalles.

Humboldt-Del Norte Co. area members meet 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Eureka Training Center, 634 California St. Eureka, CA.

## UNITED STEELWORKERS 1097

Members meet 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, preceded by a 5:45 p.m. Executive Board meeting, in the union office building, Westport.

## LERA breakfast scheduled Feb. 5

“Can’t We All Just Get Along? Managing and Reducing Workplace Conflict” will be the topic at a breakfast presentation Feb. 5 sponsored by the Oregon chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA). The panel will include Julie Kettler of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Todd Lyon of the management law firm Barran Liebman LLP, and Scott Lucy, a union representative for Machinists District W24.

The breakfast will be held at Clackamas Community College, 29353 Town Center Loop East, Wilsonville, from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Cost is \$25 for LERA members and \$35 for non-LERA members. Annual membership dues to LERA are \$40 for the year.

For more information, contact Anna Roberts at [annar@seiu49.org](mailto:annar@seiu49.org).

# Retiree Meeting Notices

### ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED

#### AMERICANS OREGON CHAPTER

Executive Board meets 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 14, followed by an 11 a.m. General Membership meeting, in the Labor Community Service board room, at 1125 SE Madison, #103B, Portland. All retirees are welcome to attend.

### BAKERS 114

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 28, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

### INSULATORS 36

Retiree meet for breakfast 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, at the Dockside Restaurant, 2047 NW Front Ave., Portland.

### ELECTRICAL WORKERS 48

Retirees, wives and friends meet 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12, at Heidi's Restaurant, 1230 NE Cleveland (& Burnside), Gresham. For more information, please call Glenn Hodgkinson at 503-656-0028.

### ELECTRICAL WORKERS 280

Retirees meet between 11:45 a.m. and noon Monday, Feb. 11, at Home-town 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, Feb. 6, at Denny's Restaurant, 12101 SE 82nd, Happy Valley.

### GLASS WORKERS 740

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

### FLOOR COVERING 1236

Retirees meet 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, at Izzy's Pizza, 1307 NE 102nd Ave., Portland.

### MACHINISTS

Rose City Machinists Retirees Club meets 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, at 25 Cornell, Gladstone.

### NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR

#### RETIREES COUNCIL

Business meeting from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Monday, Feb. 11, in the Labors' Community Service conference room, 1125 SE Madison, Portland.

### OREGON AFSCME

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 19, at the AFSCME office, 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. Wednesday, Feb. 6, at Westmoreland Union Manor, 6404 SE 23rd, Portland.

### UNITED ASSOCIATION 290

Retirees meet 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, at 20210 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin.

# ...Report links GOP filibusters to McConnell campaign cash

(From Page 1)

Connell (R-KY), to discuss the resolutions.

Jan. 22 will be the new first day.

Some of the most vocal opponents of filibuster reform are lobbyists who profit from the Senate dysfunction.

The Nation magazine reported how Republican-led filibusters and “silent holds” on nominations have resulted in some Big Business windfalls for corporations that just happened to be large contributors to the senators’ campaigns.

“Sort of an ‘everybody wins’ situation for lobbyists, lawmakers, and corporations, but pretty much a losing proposition for the rest of us,” writes Mike Hall of the AFL-CIO NOW blog.

The Nation pointed to Steven Duffield, vice president for policy for Karl Rove’s group Crossroads GPS, as one of the most vigorous rules reform opponents, who has touted his ability to get Republican lawmakers to unleash filibusters and holds and who, “literally sold filibusters, anonymous holds and the other forms of obstruction” during his 2011 lobbying work.

Sen. McConnell himself launched at least eight successful filibusters in the 112th Congress — including the jobs creation bill — at virtually the same time he was collecting campaign cash from special interests opposed to those measures, the Kentucky AFL-CIO pointed out during a press conference Jan. 4.

The state labor federation unveiled a new study by the non-profit non-partisan Public Campaign Action Fund il-

lustrating the success of the Republican filibusters in killing legislation that would have hurt those special interests.

Some of the highlights from the report, “Cashing In On Obstruction”:

- On the very day debate began on a bill to repeal subsidies to Big Oil, an astonishing \$131,500 in campaign contributions passed from the hands of oil donors in Midland, Texas into McConnell’s re-election war chest. Three days later the bill failed by filibuster.

- Companies that lobbied against bringing jobs back to America and ending tax breaks for offshoring have given McConnell \$1 million to win his elections and look out for their interests. Big McConnell donors such as GE, Microsoft, and Exxon Mobil also have billions in untaxed profits stashed overseas.

- Despite once supporting transparency, McConnell has led the effort to block the DISCLOSE Act and keep Americans in the dark about the money flowing into elections. Wealthy individuals and companies spending millions in secret money have overwhelmingly helped elect Republicans, an essential step in McConnell’s ambition to become majority leader of the Senate.

- Sen. McConnell took the unusual step of filibustering a district court nominee, former trial lawyer Jack McConnell, who was vehemently opposed by the insurance industry and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce after Jack McConnell won a multi-billion dollar case against lead paint companies. Sen. McConnell has received

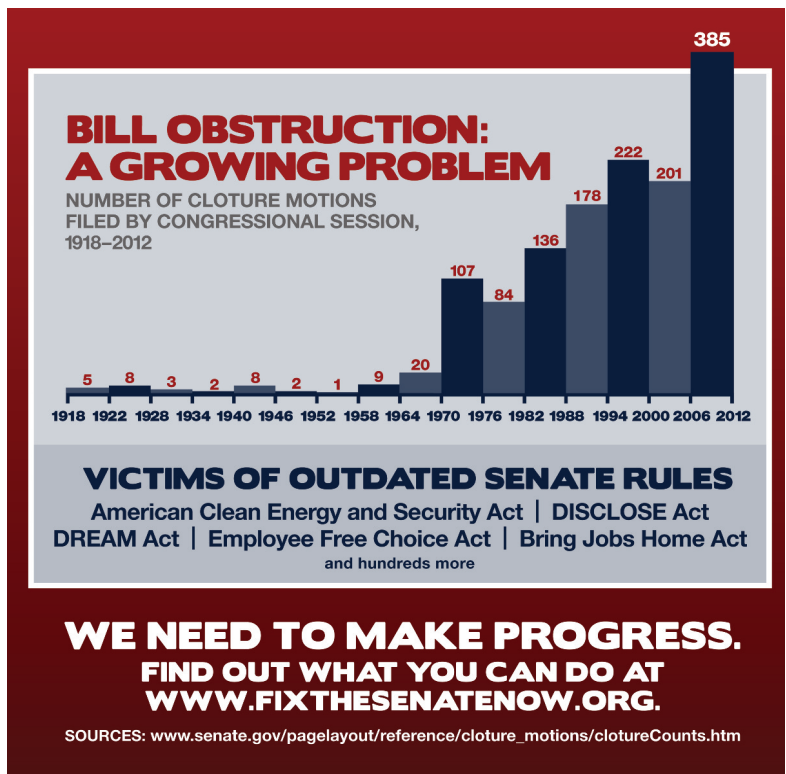
\$1.7 million from insurance interests, and has taken tens of thousands of dollars from one of the lead paint companies in the case and its parent company.

The report further states that McConnell gets 84 percent of his campaign cash from PACs and large donors and only 16 percent from individuals in Kentucky. He has raised some \$45 million for his elections in his career, not counting funds he is already stockpiling for his 2014 race. The largest donor in the group of 37 is General Electric, giving at least \$174,812 to McConnell over the years. It’s followed by Microsoft (\$100,750), Koch Industries (\$85,450), and Exxon-Mobil (\$74,300).

“These 37 companies have collectively stashed \$445 billion in untaxed profits overseas instead of using those funds to create jobs in America. GE, Microsoft and ExxonMobil also stand out, with offshore profits of \$102 billion, \$61 billion, and \$74 billion, respectively,” the report says.

“Congress isn’t working for Kentuckians, but it is working for lobbyists and corporate interests,” Kentucky AFL-CIO President Bill Londrigan said at the Louisville press conference. “McConnell has always put his donors’ interests before the needs of middle class families, but now he’s helped to grind Washington to a halt when we need someone on our side.”

(Editor’s Note: David Groves, editor of *The Stand*, a blog of the Washington State Labor Council, and Press Associates Inc., contributed to this report.)



## Boeing push for pension changes may lead to strike

Bargaining between the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA) Local 2001 and The Boeing Co. ended Jan. 11 with the union reporting little progress on key issues. A key sticking point is Boeing’s demand to switch new hires to a defined contribution pension plan, i.e., a 401(k).

In an memo following the talks, SPEEA said “the company indicated that they still intend medical cost increases, elimination of the pension for future hires, and reduction of growth in retirement benefits” for the existing engineers and technical workers.

An affiliate of the International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE), the union represents 22,950 engineers and technical workers at Boeing. About 200 members work at the Boeing plant in Gresham.

The sides have been in bargaining since April 2012. In October, engineers rejected Boeing’s initial offer by 95.5 percent, while technical workers turned it down by 97 percent. Existing contracts expired Nov. 25.

After taking a month-long holiday break, bargaining resumed Jan. 9 with assistance from a federal mediator.

On Jan. 9 thousands of SPEEA members took part in “Day of Action” events throughout the Northwest in support of negotiations. Members marched through Boeing factories and offices or attended updates with negotiation team members in lunchtime meetings.

International President Greg Junemann attended a Jan. 10 SPEEA Council meeting to reiterate IFPTE’s support, and to remind workers that

Boeing tried to push them to accept cuts and takeaways in 2000.


Boeing currently is enjoying record profits, a completely funded pension, 4,200 airplanes on backorder, and \$20 billion cash on hand, the union said.

“Your negotiating teams’ focus is negotiating a contract that respects your contributions without going out on strike,” Junemann said. “But the folks in Chicago need to hear this loud and clear: If they provoke a strike by SPEEA again, all of IFPTE, and a whole lot of the labor movement, is ready to show them again that engineers and technical workers deserve respect and their fair share of this company’s remarkable success.”

The union has filed two unfair labor practice (ULP) charges against Boeing since bargaining began. The most recent was Jan. 2. The specific charges relate to Boeing taking surveillance photographs of engineers and technical employees marching inside and outside the factory on Dec. 12 and after. The first ULP was filed in October and relates to Boeing seizing employee cameras and photographs of union marches. Both charges are currently before the National Labor Relations Board.


“After Boeing tried and failed to build the 787 on the cheap, SPEEA members stepped up and saved the program,” said SPEEA Executive Director Ray Goforth. “Everything has now turned around and the company has developed amnesia about how that happened.”


Negotiations were scheduled to resume Jan. 16, after this issue of the Labor Press went to press.



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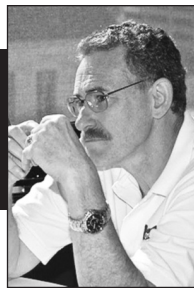
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# Who's On Our Side?

By Tom Chamberlain



Congratulation to all of you who responded to the alarm, calling your Congressional delegations to beat back an attack on America's safety net. Make no mistake, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs to help the disabled and poor were in the cross-hairs of the December lame-duck session.

Thanks to you, our Democratic Congressional members drew a line in the sand and just said "no."

Understand that special interests were counting on Americans to be off enjoying the holiday break. They didn't anticipate the rapid response of America's unions and our allies. The AFL-CIO and its affiliates, independent unions, and others worked together to implement a strategy that motivated tens of thousands of members to e-mail and phone members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House. Local union leaders were in Washington, D.C., the Monday after Thanksgiving holding face-to-face meetings with our elected leaders to remind them that it is high time that the rich and powerful pay their fair share and that continuing a practice that cuts spending at the expense of the middle class and poor is unacceptable.

The entire union movement has successes to celebrate from our

massive efforts in the 2012 election. Workers proved that people-power trumps an onslaught of cash from the 1 percent. But to turn around a week later and marshal an army of activists who were tired — and looking forward to a holiday break, reveals the true power of the American union movement and the dedication and perseverance of union members, their families, and union leaders.

I believe this is the template for the future of our movement at the national, state, and local levels.

It begins with union leaders being willing to develop strategies that push our members to get involved — including members who haven't always been active. Then it takes early education to make sure our co-workers and fellow union members understand how these issues affect our daily lives, and our economy as a whole. Then we have to be ready for rapid mobilizations that allow us to respond to issues as they break — no matter how busy we are or what time of year it is.

The December 2012 strategy worked because we worked it. We worked it in spite of election burnout. We worked it in spite of a much needed rest during the holiday break. We worked it because

Americans had too much to lose if we didn't.

I remember my first emergency as a rookie firefighter. I was 22, and a man close to my age had fallen into a machine and his leg was wrapped around an auger. It was horrific. I remember thinking for a split second: Who is coming to help this guy. Immediately, it dawned on me it was my responsibility. I had to be ready to do my job.

The lesson of the election and lame-duck Congress is the same one I learned over three decades ago: Help isn't on the way, help is you and I. It is our responsibility to act, to respond to the emergency, time and time again. We are the only advocates for the middle class and the working poor. We are up against massive wealth and power whose vision for America is the opposite of yours and mine.

Together we have proven that massive mobilization of people beats wealth and power. We must continue to prove that the power to win is on our side.

*Tom Chamberlain is president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.*

# Giant coal companies form spinoffs to dump health and pension debts

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Over the past decade, Peabody Energy and Arch Coal, the nation's largest coal companies, have off-loaded large amounts of retiree health care obligations to new companies that now face bankruptcy. In These Times magazine reported.

The United Mine Workers of America says the spin-offs were designed to fail in order to clean the companies' books of their retiree debts.

According to In These Times, in 2007, Peabody Energy spun off a new company, Patriot Coal, which inherited 10 unionized mines in Kentucky and West Virginia. Along with the mines, Patriot took on \$557 million in health care obligations to UMWA retirees. In 2008, Patriot bought Magnum Coal Company, which had been similarly spun off from Arch Coal three years earlier. From Magnum Coal Company, Patriot inherited another \$500 million in obligations to retired miners.

"Oddly, for a 5-year-old company, Patriot wound up with nearly three times as many retirees as active employees, more than 90 percent of whom never worked for the company. Overburdened by its debts, in July of 2012 Patriot declared bankruptcy," In These

Times reported.

In bankruptcy court, Patriot is seeking to be released from its pension and retirement obligations to some 10,000 retirees covering more than 20,000 beneficiaries, which total more than \$1.3 billion.

The union is suing Peabody and Arch Coal, which has been operating for nearly 130 years.

"You talk about a well-conceived plan to shed themselves of promises and commitments that they made over 60 years. This had to be done with a team of lawyers that studied this forever in order to make the value of Peabody go up, and the liabilities that they carry on their balance sheet when they are publicly traded be reduced dramatically," said union President Cecil Roberts. "I have never seen a situation like this, where every single liability that a company had ever committed to in any kind of negotiations with the union in the past 60 years now somehow gets handed to [a spin-off] company."

The union has mobilized to put public pressure on the bankruptcy court, with rallies of 3,000 and more retirees and Patriot miners attending meetings in Evansville, Ind., and Charleston, WV. The Charleston meeting was fol-

lowed by a 2,500-person demonstration to persuade the judge to move the bankruptcy trial from the New York court — which is considered more friendly to corporations in bankruptcy cases — to a more neutral venue closer to where the miners live. [Patriot Coal set up two New York subsidiaries with no employees one month before filing for bankruptcy, which allowed the company to file in New York, In These Times reported.]

After reading hundreds of letters from coal miners, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Shelley C. Chapman agreed to move the trial to St. Louis. She wrote in her decision: "The corporate headquarters of Peabody are also in St. Louis; this fact is significant in light of the issues that have been raised by the UMWA with respect to its spin-off of Patriot and its responsibility to provide promises cradle-to-grave health care benefits to Patriot employees and retirees who worked for Peabody prior to the spin-off."

Retired Patriot miner Bill Lemley said if Patriot is successful in shedding its obligations, "what's to say that coal companies and other companies won't get away with this? There will be a domino effect across industries."

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'68 HONDA 90 trail bike, high-low gears, \$1,095; Remming Model 12A 22 cal. pump, \$250. 503-307-3934

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\$300; Mossberg Model 935, 12 gauge 3.5", \$500. 503-901-1631

TAURUS JUDGE 45-410 revolver, .3 inch barrel, 2 tone finish, new in box w/ holster and ammo, \$595. 503-545-6520

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# ...Labor at Oregon Legislature

(From Page 3)

gives an example of why the legislation is needed: Last year, when University of Oregon faculty turned in union authorization cards, the administration hired a high-priced California attorney who specializes in union-avoidance; that reaction would have been a no-no under the proposed legislation.

Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council (OSBCTC) will be promoting several large public works projects that could result in employment for union members. The biggest is the proposed Columbia River Crossing project, which includes a replacement to the I-5 bridge over the Columbia River. Oregon would contribute \$450 million, with Washington matching that amount, and the federal government kicking in the rest. The funds could come from bonds backed by increases in gas taxes and license and vehicle registration fees. Also up for consideration is a \$60 million fifth phase of a multi-modal transportation investment program known as Connect Oregon. Connect Oregon pays for improvements to non-highway transportation infrastructure, including ports, airports, and railroads.

Another bill to be backed by the building trades would make it easier to

site utility-scale solar development in Eastern Oregon. Current land-use rules prohibit solar arrays larger than 100 acres on land zoned for farm use, but John Mohlis, executive secretary of OSBCTC, says solar projects need to be at least 250 acres to pan out economically. Mohlis, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 280 Business Manager Tim Frew, and IBEW Local 48 Political Director Joe Esmonde served alongside solar developers and environmental groups on an interim legislative task force that looked into the issue.

OSBCTC will also push to expand the state's prevailing wage law to construction projects on state university land that are paid for with private money, to private construction projects that receive more than \$750,000 in tax credits, and to projects over \$5 million that qualify for Enterprise Zone property tax abatements.

Oregon AFSCME will pursue several changes to Oregon's Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act. One bill would allow for binding arbitration after 60 days — for issues that arise outside of the normal collective bargaining timeline; it's designed to crack down on what the union sees as an abuse: public employers raising stand-alone issues after a contract is settled, and then imple-

menting their "expedited bargaining" proposals after a 90-day period, whether the union likes it or not. Another bill would put employees of the Oregon Department of Justice in the category of public employees who have binding arbitration instead of the right to strike; Baessler said attorneys can face ethics charges at the Oregon Bar if they strike.

Meanwhile, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 will have to contend with an attempt by TriMet to remove transit workers from that "non-striable" category. A bill to do that was filed pre-session by the House Transportation and Economic Development Committee.

Unions will also be paying attention as the state finalizes the workings of the new insurance exchange. In state "exchanges" — a key part of the national health insurance reform law known as Obamacare — individuals and small businesses will go to purchase insurance and receive federal subsidies. The exchanges have to be up and running for open enrollment in October 2013, for insurance coverage that begins January 2014.

AFSCME's Baessler said earnings by some members at non-profit contractors are low enough to qualify for the subsidies. Plus, in Oregon, there's been talk of letting various government employers buy insurance on the exchange.

Democrats have majorities over Republicans in both chambers, by 16-14 in the Senate and 34-26 in the House.

The Oregon AFL-CIO will hold a legislative conference for union members on Saturday, Feb. 2, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Sheet Metal Workers Local 16's union hall, 2379 NE 178th Ave., Portland. Participants will hear from union leaders and legislative leaders and will have a chance to talk directly with legislators in small group discussions.

For more information, call 503-412-3721

# Local Motion

## December 2012

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

No unionization elections were held in December 2012 for Oregon or SW Washington.

### Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
Tuality Community Hospital Cath Lab RNs (Hillsboro) Oregon Nurses Association	5
Garda Cash Logistics (Portland) Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America	70
Teamsters Local 162 office and clerical (Portland) CWA Local 7901	3

# ...ATU-TriMet conflict

(From Page 1)

to be open to the public. TriMet disagreed, and wants observers limited to certain pre-approved media, with all bargaining participants screened by security guards. Oregon law makes pretty plain that either side can choose to open public employee union negotiations to the public, but TriMet is seeking a court ruling that the law doesn't apply in this instance. Its legal argument to Multnomah County Circuit Court is that the bargaining isn't subject to Oregon's public meetings law because TriMet's bargaining team has no authority to reach agreement. But if that's true, the union says, then TriMet is in violation of its duty to bargain in good faith under Oregon's Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act. TriMet can't have it both ways.

Though Local 757 made clear it would not negotiate in secret, TriMet sought repeatedly to embarrass Local 757, calling out the union as a "no-

show" when it failed to attend bargaining sessions — sessions which were scheduled before the open meetings dispute erupted.

Those salvos were just the latest in a year-long public relations campaign TriMet has waged against its own employees and their union. In its press releases, the tax-supported public agency, its board appointed by the governor, has publicly declared union leaders unreasonable and labeled the benefits its workers have had for decades "unsustainable."

Now TriMet says it wants to bring benefits in line with "the market." And in its framing, it seeks to pit the public against its workers. Riders "face a future of continued service cuts in order for us to pay for these unsustainable health care benefits," said TriMet labor relations director Randy Stedman in a Jan. 2 press release, adding that "additional service cuts ... would be necessary to pay for these benefits for both active employees and retirees."

For their part, Local 757 leaders say if bargaining is brought into the daylight, their arguments will be vindicated, and the public will be witness to TriMet management's high-handed attitude and aggressive posture.

"The public needs to have a clearer picture of all the ways TriMet funds are spent," Local 757 President Bruce Hansen wrote in a Dec. 18 letter to Stedman. "This transparency is key to achieving fairness for the workforce as well as the sustainable public transportation system that the citizens of our region deserve."

"For far too long," Hansen wrote, "the labor agreement and the workforce have been made the scapegoats for TriMet's financial difficulties."



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# Nonunion Dave's Killer Bread contracts work to union baker

By **DON McINTOSH**  
Associate Editor

Dave's Killer Bread is now made by union workers ... just not at the company's own bakery. To meet rapidly rising demand, Milwaukie, Oregon-based Dave's Killer Bread now produces at least two varieties of its \$5-a-loaf organic bread under contract with unionized Safeway bakeries in Clackamas, Oregon, and Richmond, Calif.

Northwest Labor Press readers may remember the April 6, 2012, story about Dave's Killer Bread, which described how workplace changes — and as many as two dozen firings — led some workers to seek out Bakery Confectionery Tobacco Grain Millers Local 114. Local 114 had tried to unionize parent company Naturebake six years before that, but union President Georgene Barragan — who got a job there in order to promote the union — was fired on the spot by co-owner Glenn Dahl when her cover was blown the first day on the job.

This time, workers at Dave's Killer Bread were being fired at such a rate that Local 114 Secretary-Treasurer Terry Lansing tried an unusual strategy to protect union supporters: He outed them in letters to Glenn Dahl, so that the workers might have the feeble-but-better-than-nothing protection of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Though it's unlawful to fire workers for supporting a union, the NLRB dismisses most cases for lack of evidence. For Lansing to publicly re-

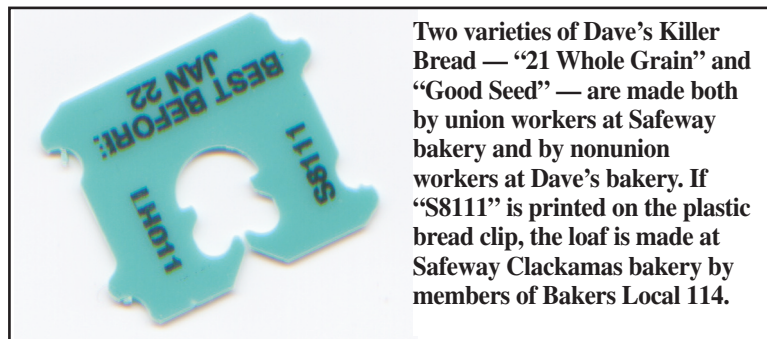
veal some union supporters meant Dave's Killer Bread couldn't say it didn't know those workers were pro-union.

But Lansing's plan didn't work. One of the union's most outspoken supporters, Dan Turner, was fired four weeks after Lansing's Feb. 2, 2012, letter identified him as a union supporter. Like the brand's founder, Dave Dahl, Turner was an ex-con. Company managers said Turner stole something from a loading dock, but never specified what, and didn't file charges with police over the alleged theft.

After the Labor Press article appeared, dozens of workers and customers commented online, and company owners Glenn, Dave, and Shobi Dahl e-mailed a response to the newspaper: "Recently," they wrote, "some of our employees have expressed interest in forming a union at our facility, as is their right. These employees remain highly valuable members of our team."

But when Lansing and several fired workers showed up outside the bakery the following week with union leaflets, Glenn Dahl confronted Lansing, telling him some of the workers he was helping were terrible people.

Dave's Killer Bread gets a lot of public good will for its employment of ex-cons (and up to \$2,400 per hire in federal tax credits). Ex-cons make up about a third of the company's workforce. Lansing says they're a uniquely vulnerable population, because they know their records make it harder to



Two varieties of Dave's Killer Bread — "21 Whole Grain" and "Good Seed" — are made both by union workers at Safeway bakery and by nonunion workers at Dave's bakery. If "S8111" is printed on the plastic bread clip, the loaf is made at Safeway Clackamas bakery by members of Bakers Local 114.

find employment if they're terminated. More than one ex-con fired by Dave's has returned to crime, and to jail.

Turner's loss of employment played a part in a downward spiral. When he filed for unemployment, Dave's Killer Bread employed one of the nation's most prominent employer-side labor law firms to oppose it. Defending Turner were Lansing and the union's legal counsel. Turner's claim was denied by a judge, but granted on appeal. But by then, Turner was behind bars.

Turner's marriage ended in May, and he returned to using drugs. On July 3, he was arrested in Clark County, Washington, on charges of harassment, possession of stolen property, check forgery, and being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Though Shobi Dahl had told the Labor Press he wouldn't comment on personnel issues with specific employees, he e-mailed the newspaper a week after Turner's arrest to divulge details of the police report.

After his sentencing, Turner wrote a letter to Lansing and agreed to share it with this newspaper. In it, he copped to

having made bad decisions, but said he continued to be grateful to the union for standing by him.

Meanwhile, at Dave's Killer Bread, the rapid growth which had produced so much upheaval continued. But firings slowed after workers were told at an employee meeting that Shobi Dahl would have to personally approve each termination. In November, the manager who workers said had begun the wave of firings, was himself terminated.

In December, the home-grown family-owned firm announced a deal with New York-based Goode Partners LLC, which will provide investment and help the company to expand outside the Western United States.

Local 114 filed six NLRB charges alleging that Turner and six other workers were fired unlawfully for union or "concerted" activity, but all of the charges were dismissed, and so was a seventh charge that when Dave's Killer Bread installed cameras in the employee lunch room, that constituted illegal surveillance.

But Dave's Killer Bread did settle one NLRB charge on May 31, 2012.

The company had told workers they couldn't talk about the union at work, and that they needed permission from Human Resources before posting documents on the employee bulletin board. In the settlement, the company agreed to post a notice pledging not to say those things. Lansing isn't allowed on the property, but believes the company kept its word: Union authorization cards remained up on the bulletin board after pro-union workers put them there.

Lansing said the union would like to represent workers at Dave's, but that's for the workers to decide. For now, there's not sufficient support. And that puts him in a Catch-22: On the one hand, he wants to help Dave's Killer Bread employees win better conditions; on the other, he also feels obliged to treat the company as a nonunion competitor that's fighting for market share against unionized companies that pay workers \$3 more an hour and offer better benefits and job security.

Dave's makes great bread, but consumers have a choice, Lansing said. Two varieties of Dave's Killer Bread — "21 Whole Grain" and "Good Seed" — are made both by union workers at Safeway bakery and by nonunion workers at Dave's bakery. If "S8111" is printed on the plastic bread clip, the loaf is made at Safeway Clackamas bakery by members of Local 114. In addition, unionized Franz Bakery has come out with "Great Seed," that's very similar to Dave's "Good Seed," but at a lower price point.

"We think the public needs to support the good employers," Lansing said.

## U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis resigns

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, who repeatedly declared herself "the new sheriff in town" on behalf of workers the last four years, resigned her position on Jan. 9, after talks with her family over the holiday break about her future.



lies at the center of everything she did. We hope her successor will continue to be a powerful voice both within the Obama Administration and across the country for all of America's workers," Trumka concluded.

"Leaving the department is one of the most difficult decisions I have ever made, because I have taken our mission to heart," said Solis. "As the daughter of parents who worked in factories, paid their union dues, and achieved their goal of a middle class life, and as the first Latina to head a major federal agency, it has been an incredible honor to serve."

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka praised Solis for standing up for workers' and for coming down hard on corporate violators, especially in the job safety and health field.

"Hilda Solis brought urgently needed change to the Department, putting the U.S. government firmly on the side of working families," he said. "Secretary Solis never lost sight of her own working-class roots, and she always put the values of working fami-

lies at the center of everything she did. We hope her successor will continue to be a powerful voice both within the Obama Administration and across the country for all of America's workers," Trumka concluded.

There was no immediate word on whom President Barack Obama would nominate to succeed Solis. The National Journal, a weekly newspaper covering the Executive Branch, said Steelworkers President Leo Gerard was labor's favorite for the job. Another story on the Solis resignation called veteran Rep. Rosa DeLauro, (D-Conn.) — the runner-up for the Labor Secretary's post when Solis got it four years ago. DeLauro is the top Democrat on the House appropriations subcommittee.

In her resignation message, Solis thanked the department's workers. She added that together they helped implement the Obama Administration's recovery from the Great Recession and stepped up job retraining and labor law enforcement in safety, health and wage and hour areas.

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