

FederationNews

Issue 4 | 2021



**Celebrating 125 Years
of Organizing
Chicago Workers**



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On the Cover

Labor Day Parade 1906

Photo: CFL

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Federation News is owned and controlled by the Chicago Federation of Labor for the education, protection and advancement of organized labor.

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President's Report

As 2021 comes to a close, I would like to take the opportunity to do a retrospective of some major moments over the past year. This year was marked with difficult times, as 2021 was our second year facing the COVID-19 pandemic, but it also came with new opportunities as we rebuild our economy.

Our year began with the inauguration of a new President, one who promised to put workers first. Those promises have proved themselves thus far, as President Biden has been a vocal supporter of many of the issues we championed over the past year, such as COVID relief packages, passing the People's Right to Organize (PRO) Act and tirelessly fighting for an infrastructure bill that will help keep union members employed for years to come.

In March and April, the CFL collaborated with the city of Chicago and the state of Illinois to host several mass vaccination clinics across the Chicagoland area for union essential workers who live and work in the city of Chicago, Cook County, and the broader Northeast Illinois region. We vaccinated nearly 5,000 union members as part of these efforts, the first in the nation to be run by the labor movement for union members.

By the end of Illinois' legislative session in May, labor protections for construction workers were passed in numerous state bills, including the affordable housing tax credit program, wind projects under the High Impact Business program, and casinos built under the state's gaming expansion. We were also able to ensure the Workers' Rights Amendment will appear as a referendum on the 2022 ballot, which will protect Illinois from ever becoming a so called "Right-To-Work" state or having public sector collective bargaining rights curtailed in our constitution.

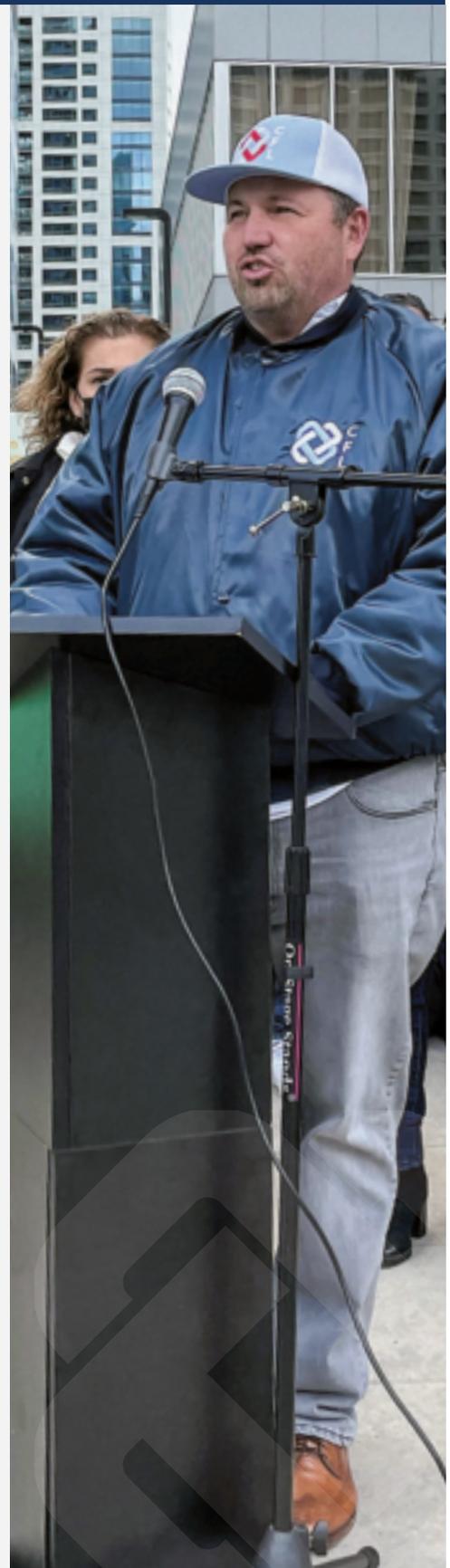
In August, the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act was signed into law. This legislation, which created the strongest labor standards in the country for wind and solar developments, would not have been possible without the advocacy of the entire Illinois labor movement. We have put Illinois on track to create a clean energy economy at the scale climate science demands, while creating good union jobs and supporting more equitable communities.

In November the Chicago Federation of Labor resumed its first in-person Executive Board meeting after meeting virtually and hybrid since March of 2020. It was both joyful and emotional to have the leaders of the Chicago labor movement all in one room again to discuss organizing campaigns, legislative goals, and other opportunities for our movement.

I would like to thank all our affiliates and delegates for your continued support of the Chicago Federation of Labor. These last two years have been quite a roller-coaster, but I'm excited for what 2022 has in store.



Bob Reiter, President



AffiliateNews

AFSCME grows ranks in pandemic

Seeking the union difference, more than 1,500 workers sought to form a union with AFSCME Council 31 since March 2020. These new members of the AFSCME family not only stood up to threats, harassment, and intimidation to form their union, they pushed through the isolation of the pandemic to fight for a voice at work. Together they are improving the lives of their co-workers and enhancing the quality of services they provide.

Despite the strong public support for unions in our country today, the obstacles facing workers in the United States who want to form a union in their workplace are formidable. The law is too often on the side of employers, who are determined to hold on to their power by remaining “union-free.”

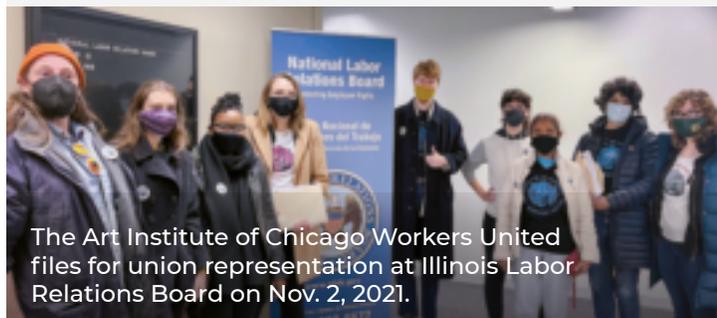
Instead of the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic keeping workers apart, in some instances, it actually brought workers together. Face-to-face discussions have always been the best way to build unity and win a union. AFSCME’s organizing committees pivoted, using Zoom, texting, and other technology to speak with one another.

One of the largest groups working to form a union with AFSCME is the Art Institute of Chicago Workers United (AICWU). It is made up of more than 600 employees of the museum and its affiliated school. Workers went public with their organizing campaign in August. On Nov. 2, they filed a representation petition with the National Labor Relations Board’s Chicago office, laying the groundwork for an election.

“I know it would be safer for my career to simply keep my head down and ignore the inequity around me,” said David Norris, an academic advisor at the School of the Art Institute. “But when I think about how the institution treats its staff, how they treat my colleagues, I can’t just stare at the ground. SAIC’s tools for working on inequity are dull, and it’s time we invest in a precision tool that saves us time, saves us energy, helps to right wrongs, and ensures that we’re heard. Our union will do this for us.”

Kevin Whiteneir, a librarian at the Art Institute of Chicago agrees. “Those of us on the organizing committee are certain that this union is our best chance at creating a better Art Institute for ourselves today, and for those of us to come tomorrow,” said Whiteneir.

AFSCME Council 31 contributing



The Art Institute of Chicago Workers United files for union representation at Illinois Labor Relations Board on Nov. 2, 2021.

Illinois Federation of Teachers Scores Organizing Victories

Organizing is always tough work. The pandemic made it more challenging. But it did not deter many unions, like the Illinois Federation of Teachers, from continuing to build worker power. IFT remained steadfast, stood tall, and faced the challenge of what it would take to get across the finish line to empower workers.

As COVID-19 began making headlines on the other side of the globe in December of 2019, IFT filed cards with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board for teachers, lab managers, and program assistants at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. The election ran through the early parts of the pandemic and shutdown. Due to IFT’s persistence and efforts, workers came out victorious on April 24, 2020.

Over the last year IFT has set the bar high for organizing. On April 15, 2021, nearly 400 comedy educators in Chicago, Toronto, and Los Angeles voted to unionize. The workplace solidarity was no laughing matter for the comedy writers. They won their union with more than 95% of the vote. Nearly 200 of the educators will be members of the IFT (Second City Teachers).

On June 3, 2021, the pandemic showed nearly 200 educators at the prestigious Latin School of Chicago that they lacked true power or agency. They chose to change that reality by organizing with the IFT.

In this day and age, IFT shows us just how powerful organizing is and the outcomes you can get when you put your best foot forward. We organize to change minds, hearts, and to change the paradigm of the workforce.

Illinois Federation of Teachers contributing

Dining Workers at DePaul and Northwestern Universities Ratify New Contracts

On Oct. 18, UNITE HERE Local 1 members at DePaul and Northwestern Universities ratified new contracts, avoiding a work stoppage while gaining new benefits and salary increases. Workers at Chartwells Higher Ed at DePaul and Compass Group at Northwestern have struggled both prior to and during the pandemic. Many Compass workers at Northwestern were laid off due to COVID-19, and others lost their healthcare coverage. According to a UNITE HERE Local 1 survey conducted this summer, 58% of Compass Group dining workers responded that they couldn’t afford to pay their bills, and 53% said they didn’t have enough money to buy healthy food for their families. The new agreement includes a \$19.88 minimum hourly wage and a permanent extension of health insurance benefits to all members. This will be their first raise since 2019 and more than a year and a half of contract negotiations.

Featured News

Aviation Unions Lead Fight for Sick Leave Rights

After an almost four-year fight, the Illinois General Assembly passed a law that eliminates the exemption that denied tens of thousands of Illinois aviation workers a sick leave right that all other Illinois workers enjoyed.

For Corliss King, Vice President TWU 556 and a Southwest Airlines Flight Attendant, the issue was a personal one. King learned that as a flight attendant, she could not use her accrued sick time to care for her husband who was suffering from kidney failure. Instead, she had to use unpaid leave. Sadly, her husband of 24 years, Terrance Hale, passed away last year.

"When I learned that I was denied a right every other worker in Illinois had, I wanted to know why," said King who posed the question to other union leaders, state lawmakers, and airline management. When King didn't get answer, she began to mobilize. Fellow TWU 556 member and Southwest Airlines flight attendant Roy Soria joined King to fix the exclusion. King found a champion in Illinois State Senator Michael Hastings who helped them write legislation to correct the issue.

Progress was initially slow, but in 2020, the proposed legislation started to move. King brought the issue to the CFL's Airport Labor Committee at its March 3, 2020, meeting as a coalition of union activists, including AFA-CWA, ALPA, and APFA, began taking more action. On March 6, 2020, King, Jaime Martinez, AFA-CWA LEC 3, Gilles Charriere, ALPA-United MEC, and other aviation union members converged on Springfield to make their case to state lawmakers. Despite successful meetings with elected leaders during the action day in Springfield, the pandemic shutdowns a week later would temporarily derail the effort.

In 2021, as the world slowly returned to normal, King led another attempt to change the law. With the help of AFA-CWA, ALPA, APFA, CWA, and the Illinois AFL-CIO, the legislation passed the State Senate and moved to the State House of Representatives. In the waning days of the Illinois General Assembly's October veto session, state lawmakers passed the provision.

"Aviation workers were only left out because corporations didn't want to implement new rules," said Scott Pejas, AFA-CWA UNITED ORD. "It's time for airlines and other employers to get on board and stop fighting against basic rights for the workers who make their companies profitable."

"The legislation is projected to impact over 30,000 Illinois aviation workers," said King. "It will also have implications nationwide as more states begin to adopt similar language that protects all workers."

The measure passed both chambers with a veto-proof super majority. It is now awaiting Governor J.B. Pritzker's signature.

Corliss King (TWU 556) contributing

ALICE Report Shows Impact of the Pandemic on the Working Poor

The United Way of Metro Chicago, a close partner of the Chicago Federation of Labor, released a new report entitled *The Pandemic Divide: An ALICE Analysis of National COVID Surveys*, shedding light on impact of COVID 19 on working families. ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed which accounts for more than a third of Illinois households. The report presents data to back up what became clear during the pandemic: the working poor have felt the greatest economic



Aviation workers met with Illinois State Senator Michael Hastings to discuss the sick leave exemption for aviation workers. Pictured from L to R: Roy Soria (TWU 556), Scott Pejas (AFA-CWA United ORD), Illinois State Senator Hastings, Corliss King (TWU 556) and Colleen Burns (AFA-CWA).

pain of the shutdowns. According to the report, low-income households lost employment income at a 60% rate during the pandemic, in comparison to a 40% rate for middle class and high-income households. ALICE households also reported decreased emergency savings, elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression, and higher rates of job loss relative to wealthier households. These inequities became more pronounced when broken down by race, as Black and Hispanic households described facing greater hardships. In Illinois, 35% of residents live at or below the ALICE threshold, the same rate or better than neighboring “right-to-work” states. As we enter new phases of pandemic response, it is clear that pro-worker policies and strong unions are crucial to crafting an equitable recovery that lifts all working families. You can learn more about ALICE and the COVID-19 data sets at www.unitedforalice.org/covid19.



Maria Ruiz (at podium) and Maria Teresa Hernandez (right) speak out against Swissotel for not recalling them and one other former worker.

CFL Supports former Swissotel Workers

On Oct. 26, the CFL attended a press conference to support three workers suing the Swissotel for violating Chicago’s Hotel Workers Right to Return to Work Ordinance. The women, Maria Ruiz, Maria Lourdie Pierre-Jacques, and Maria Teresa Hernandez, who each worked at the Swissotel for over 20 years, were three of thousands of hotels workers who were fired from their jobs at the beginning of the pandemic.

Earlier this year the CFL, along with UNITE HERE Local 1, led a campaign to pass the Hotel Workers Right to Return to Work Ordinance, which calls for Chicago hotels to prioritize seniority when deciding which former employees to rehire. Since the ordinance passed, the Swissotel has offered positions to banquet servers with less seniority than these three women. The lawsuit calls for the women to be reinstated and receive back pay from the date they should have been reinstated to their positions.

Chicago Federation of Labor President Bob Reiter joined the three women along with other supporters outside the hotel to show support for the lawsuit. “We believe that as guests return to Chicago and hotels increase staffing, hotels should recall the workers who have dedicated their lives to Chicago’s tourism industry,” Reiter said. “These women were fired by Swissotel Chicago during the pandemic, they’ve also been on the front line of advocating for Chicago’s hotel worker’s rights. We are here to support these workers who are seeking to enforce their rights.”

Stephen Yokich, an attorney for the women, said, “Our message to the court will be the same as our message today: Swissotel

should follow the law.” He added that “most responsible hotels in the city are following the law.”

The AFL-CIO Building Investment Trust Honors Chicago Construction Workers at Wolf Point South

On Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021, the AFL-CIO Building Investment Trust and the AFL-CIO Investment Trust Corporation hosted a worker appreciation luncheon at the Wolf Point South: Salesforce Tower development project. The event featured AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond and a who’s who of Chicago labor leaders recognizing the many contributions of Chicago’s building trades to the changing downtown skyline.

Located on the Chicago River and directly adjacent to Merchandise Mart, Wolf Point South is the third phase of a three-phase development at Wolf Point, the premier remaining riverfront site in downtown Chicago. The event luncheon honored the more than 225 union tradespeople currently on-site, building one of the largest construction projects in Illinois.

“The work of the AFL-CIO BIT, supporting projects like Wolf Point and others across the nation, is personal to me. I want every worker to have the same chance as my family, the chance to join a union, to work on projects like Wolf Point, and to succeed in achieving the dignity and respect all working people deserve. I want every worker to feel the power of the labor movement as a change agent for prosperity,” said Fred Redmond, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, at the event.

The BIT is the equity investor for all three phases of the development, investing union pension capital to generate over \$1.5 billion in total development in downtown Chicago. The BIT’s comprehensive labor policies will generate over 6 million hours of work for union constructions trades on the site.

“We are proud to stand here today with the BIT to support our workers, bolster the middle-class dream, and ensure that Chicago remains the most pro-worker city in the nation. Today we celebrate the hundreds of workers here at Wolf Point and the thousands of workers at other projects across this city as we build a stronger, resilient and more vibrant Chicago,” said Bob Reiter, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor.

In Chicago, over \$3.9 billion in total economic benefit has been created through construction investments made by the BIT. Like other BIT construction projects, after completion, the comprehensive labor policies will also create ongoing work hours related to the service, maintenance, and repairs of all three buildings.

“The impact of the BIT’s investments begins with you, the hard-working men and women of the building trades. However, please know that your hard work today will pay dividends to workers and our great city for years to come. The labor movement should be proud of the impact we have collectively in our backyard,” said Tim Drea, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO.

With over 250 pension funds invested in the BIT, this fund brings to life the meaning of solidarity in the labor movement. In Chicago alone, the BIT has made a significant impact on the

Chicago Building Trades, creating nearly 11 million hours of work for union members over the past 30 years.

“What I enjoy most about the labor movement is putting people to work, trying to give people the opportunity to have a middle-class life with benefits and retirement,” said Ralph Affrunti, President of the Chicago & Cook County Building & Construction Trades Council. “Through vehicles like the Building Investment Trust, we get to do just that, while also supporting a great fund for the labor movement.”

“Wolf Point South, along with the other BIT construction projects, are a testament to what we can achieve together as a movement,” said Randy Kinder, President of the AFL-CIO Investment Trust Corporation at the close of the event. “The hours of work generated on projects like Wolf Point with our pension dollars are of critical importance towards the growth of the labor movement.”

Peggy Browning Fund Honors PEOPLE Committed to Workers’ Rights

In the fight for workers’ rights, labor side attorneys are vital. One organization that makes sure labor side attorneys are ready to take on that fight is the Peggy Browning Fund.

The Peggy Browning Fund celebrated its 25th anniversary at the 2021 Chicago Awards Reception. The reception at the Sheraton Grand Chicago on November 9 honored CFL President Robert G. Reiter, Jr., CFL Delegate and CTU member Bea Lumpkin, and Barry M. Bennet and Stephen Yokich, partners at Dowd, Block Bennett, Cervone, Auerbach & Yokich law.

“When workers are on the streets fighting for their rights, when they’re at the bargaining table demanding better wages and working conditions, they do so with labor and employment laws on their side,” said CFL President Robert G. Reiter, Jr. “But you know, at every turn, management side lawyers are throwing up roadblocks to workers’ actions. Workers needs legal advocates on their side. That’s the great work of the Peggy Browning Fund.”

“The relationship between the workers’ families and our lawyers was symbiotic,” said Bea Lumpkin. “We kept up the public pressure. They wrote briefs and we showed up in court to support our lawyers. We gained strength from each other.”



CFL President Bob Reiter receiving his Peggy Browning Fund award. Pictured from L to R: Craig Rosenbaum, Chicago News Guild Executive Director and former Peggy Browning Fund awardee; CFL President Bob Reiter; AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre; Rachel Del Rossi and Richard Brean.

“The relationship between the workers’ families and our lawyers was symbiotic...We kept up the public pressure. They wrote briefs and we showed up in court to support our lawyers. We gained strength from each other.”

- Bea Lumpkin

Lumpkin praised the Peggy Browning Fund in preparing future labor lawyers in fight for workers and unions. “For graduating law school students, labor law is more than a chance to do good,” said Lumpkin. “It’s a chance to grow as labor grows and to advance justice where it counts the most.”

The Peggy Browning Fund was created to honor Margaret A. “Peggy” Browning, a prominent labor attorney and the first labor lawyer appointed to the National Labor Relations Board in 1993. Browning died in 1997 after a long career fighting on the side of unions and workers. The mission of the Peggy Browning Fund is to educate and inspire the next generation of advocates for workplace justice. Through fellowship, workers’ rights conferences, networking, and other programs, the fund provides unique opportunities for law students to work for economic and social justice.

“The Peggy Browning Fund is the number one way for law students to gain practical experience while working for the labor movement during law school,” said Patrick Foote, a former journalist, Chicago News Guild-CWA member, Kent College of Law graduate, and Peggy Browning Fund Fellow. “During my fellowship, I worked in a union legal department and worked on cases from defending workers in arbitration to suing former President Trump over his executive orders threatening collective bargaining agreements.”

After graduating from law school in 2020 and passing the Illinois bar exam, Foote credits his Peggy Fund experience with launching his labor side legal career. His fellowship was at the AFL-CIO. He’s now an associate at Chicago based Allison, Slutsky & Kennedy.



With over \$100 billion in mega public and private construction projects breaking ground in Chicago over the next 15 years, now is the time to explore careers in the unionized building trades. HIRE360 is a unique partnership between developers, general contractors, the hospitality industry, and trade unions with the common goal to ensure the coming work is done equitably and inclusively. Interested in learning more? Sign up at www.HIRE360Chicago.com. After you register, a HIRE360 representative will reach out to you about next steps.

125 Years of Organizing Chicago Workers

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF LABOR

ENDORSES

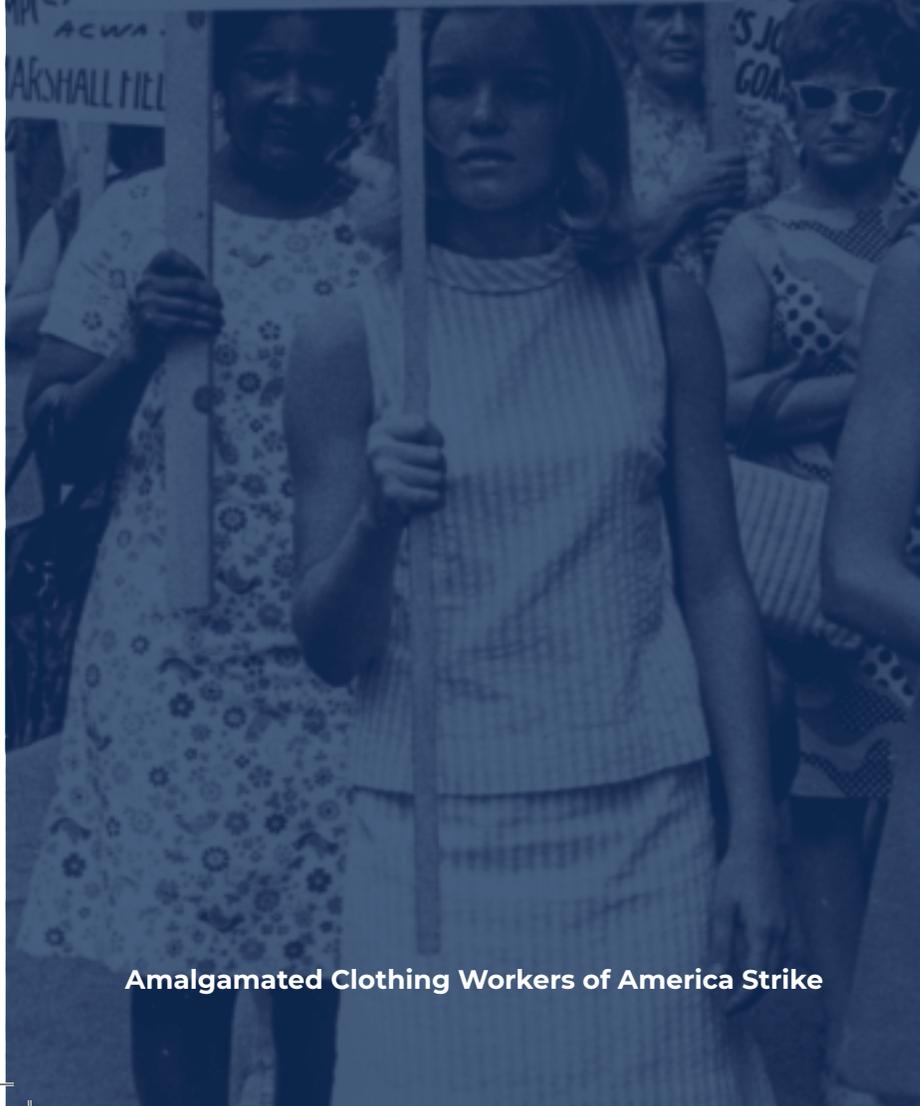
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Campaign Against
Imported Clothing

Against
Clothing

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IN CHICAGO
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Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America Strike



Former CFL President John Fitzpatrick and Mother Jones

A special celebration, praises from friends and allies, and continuing the fight for workers marked the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Chicago Federation of Labor on Nov. 9, 2021.



CFL President Bob Reiter, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre, and CFL Secretary-Treasurer Don Villar

In 1896, the guilds and unions that built Chicago and labored at the city's factories, workshops, mills, railyards, stockyards, and industries came together to form the CFL. In the spirit of solidarity, local labor unions dedicated themselves to improving the lives of working families, bringing fairness and dignity to the workplace, and securing social equity for all.

The CFL marked the special day with an open house, the first at its new headquarters. The CFL moved into its new office in Prudential Two in May 2020 after several decades on the 26th floor of Prudential One. Because of the Pandemic, the CFL could not hold an open house to showcase the new headquarters.

Labor activists, allies in the fight for workers' rights, and elected leaders were among those stopping by the CFL's open house. AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre flew to Chicago to be part of the celebration. He presented the CFL with a congratulatory plaque for the CFL's 125 years signed by AFL-CIO President Liz Shuller, Secretary Treasurer Fred Redmond, and himself.

The Illinois House of Representatives, Chicago City Council, and Cook County Board were among those that passed resolutions commemorating the CFL's 125th Anniversary. Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot issued a proclamation, calling Nov. 9, Chicago Federation of Labor Day in the city. President Joe Biden and Senator Dick Durbin also issued letters recognizing the milestone.

The resolutions, proclamation, and letters recognized the CFL's history of advocating for workers. Starting from the industrial revolution to today, the CFL has been involved in every local ordinance, state, and federal law that improves the lives of

working families. In recent years, the CFL helped pass the Fair Work Week Ordinance, Earned Sick Leave, formation of the city's Office of Labor Standards, raising the minimum wage, and so many other workplace protections.

The advocacy has never stopped, not even for the 125th anniversary celebration. Before the open house, EVP Gebre held an immigrant labor breakfast roundtable at the CFL with Secretary Treasurer Don Villar. Members of UNITE-HERE Local 1, Teamsters Local 777, workers advocates, and a worker from a suburban plant where an immigrant worker was killed joined the discussion on protecting immigrant workers from exploitative and abusive employers and hiring agents. In October, the Department of Homeland Security issued a memo calling for a review of the agency's policies and changes to protect immigrant workers in response to the local workplace death.

The roundtable was followed with a national call with labor activists, attorneys general offices from around the country, and immigrant rights activists on the effort now underway in DHS and Department of Labor to protect immigrant workers. Immigrant workers, because of their status, are subjected to dangerous working conditions, abuse, exploitation, and threats.

As the third largest Central Labor Council of the AFL-CIO, the CFL is an expression of the hopes and aspiration of working people. Monuments recognizing the struggle to improve the lives of working families can be found throughout Chicago. The Haymarket Monument in the West Loop remembers the fight for the eight-hour workday and the weekend. Haymarket is celebrated around the world. The Pullman National Monument honors the workers who fought industrial serfdom and made Chicago the railroad capital of the world. The Stockyard Gates pays homage to the workers who toiled in one of the city's most dangerous industries made infamous by Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle." The Steelworkers Monument remembers the workers who died fighting for better wages and working conditions. Union halls honor the rank-and-file members who came together and continue to come together in solidarity.

From the CFL emerged key figures in the labor movement. The women and men who rose from the working class to shape the policies and laws workers enjoy today – Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, Bessie Abramowitz Hillman, Sidney Hillman, John Fitzpatrick, Milton Webster, and so many others. Chicago is rich in 125 years of labor history and the men and women who work for the common good. The CFL takes pride in calling Chicago the hometown of the American Labor Movement and continuing for another 125 years.

Aviation Workers Speak Out Against Verbal and Physical Passenger Abuses at CFL's Air Rage Town Hall

Chicago's aviation workers spoke out against the skyrocketing numbers of assaults against flight attendants, gate agents, and other airport workers at Chicago Federation of Labor's Airport Labor Committee "Air Rage Town Hall" at the O'Hare Hilton on Sept. 29, 2021. Workers demanded something to be done to make their workplaces in the skies and on the ground safe.

"An injury to one is an injury to all," said CFL Secretary-Treasurer Don Villar. "It seems that every week, there's another case of air rage where we see a viral video or news story of one our union sisters or brothers being assaulted." Villar moderated the town hall panel which included AFA-CWA MEC United President Scott Pejas, TWU 556 Vice President Corliss King, ALPA United Communications Vice Chair Roger Philips, APFA Vice President Susan Wroble, CWA 4201 President Qushuan Naugle, David Roderick from Machinist Lodge 141, and Ashley Keller from UNITE HERE Local 1.

"Flight attendants go to work, do their jobs, and like everyone else who works, look to return home safely to their families at the end of the workday," said King, a veteran Southwest Airlines flight attendant. "As we've seen in the case of a Southwest Airlines flight attendant whose teeth were knocked out by a passenger, they are enduring a lot of abuse for doing their jobs."

In the Southwest Airlines incident on May 23, the flight attendant was attacked after she told a passenger to fasten her seatbelt, stow her tray table, and wear her mask properly as the plane was descending to land in Sacramento, Calif.

"Our main duty is the safety of all the passengers," said Pejas, a veteran United Airlines flight attendant, "Flight attendants take this duty seriously when they enforce mask mandates and direct passengers on safety requirements. Unfortunately, we are seeing more and more passengers disregard our safety directives, and put the safety of everyone at risk."

A recent AFA-CWA survey of flight attendants found that 85 percent reported dealing with an unruly passenger, and one in five said they had been involved in a physical incident with passengers. The escalation of unruly passengers is not just happening aboard airplanes. They are also taking place in the terminals and at the gates.

"Customer service agents understand that travelers are stressed by flight delays, cancelations and missed connections," said Qushuan Naugle, American Airlines Customer Service agent. "Our members, who work very long days, are trying their best to accommodate passengers. It seems that more and more passengers feel it's alright to direct their frustrations at workers with verbal and physical abuse. We're just trying to do our jobs."

A 2019 U.S. Government Accountability survey of airport customer service agents found that more than half reported being verbally threatened by a passenger and 10% said they had been physically assaulted.

Airport Labor Committee unions are calling on more to be done to protect their members and all aviation workers. They're calling for tougher penalties for unruly passengers, airline management to do more to protect workers, and law enforcement to be more proactive to keep everyone safe.

"The Chicago labor movement stand in solidarity with workers who are facing difficult working conditions," said Bob Reiter, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor. "When one worker is injured, it impacts all workers. When one group of workers is dealing with a pandemic of violence like we're seeing here, it impacts all of us. We join in the call for more to be done to protect the health and safety of aviation workers."

The CFL's Airport Labor Committee is made up of the various union affiliates that represent workers at Chicago's Midway & O'Hare Airports. They include transportation/airline industry unions; service sector, hospitality and food catering unions; federal and municipal public sector unions; and the building and construction trades unions.



Air Rage Town Hall



CFL Secretary-Treasurer Don Villar getting his COVID-19 booster shot at the CFL's clinic in November 2021.

CFL Holds Booster Clinics for COVID-19 Vaccine

In October and November, prior to the monthly CFL Delegates meeting, the CFL ran clinics to help union and community members across Chicagoland get the first dose and booster COVID-19 vaccines as well as their flu shots. These clinics were a follow up to the vaccine clinics the CFL ran from March through May to help union members gain access to the life-saving vaccine. Overall, the CFL has helped nearly 5,000 people gain access to the COVID-19 vaccine as well as their booster shots.

In the spring, Vice President Kamala Harris visited the CFL's vaccine clinics to congratulate the CFL on its successful clinics. "I came to say thank you," said Vice President Harris. "Because this site is a model for the rest of the country, a safe place to come where the dignity of work is recognized... We see light at the end of the tunnel because we've gone through so much as a nation.

"You know the power of the collective. You know the importance and the strength of people standing together," she said. "We're all here to make a statement that we understand the significance of getting vaccinated, that it's bigger than us" adding that now more than ever it is critical that union members reach out to their friends and family to encourage them to get vaccinated.

CCCOC Quarterly Luncheon Returns

After a more than two-year hiatus, the CFL Cook County Cooperative Organizing Committee resumed its quarterly lunch meeting. National Labor Relations Board Deputy General Counsel Peter Sung Ohr traveled from Washington, D.C. to give the keynote speech at the Oct. 29 meeting at Harry Caray's Italian Steakhouse.

The CCCOC luncheon was a homecoming of sorts for Ohr, who served as the NLRB Chicago Region 13 Director for nearly a decade. A week after his inauguration in January, President Joe Biden fired Trump's appointed NLRB General Counsel and named Ohr to serve as the interim NLRB GC. Ohr led the office while President Biden's nominee, Jennifer Abruzzo, went through the Senate confirmation process. Abruzzo formally took over as NLRB GC in July. Instead of returning to his role as Region 13 Director, Ohr stayed in Washington as Abruzzo's deputy.

Because America's labor policies can shift from pro-worker to anti-worker depending on who is in the White House, Ohr said it was important for the Biden Administration to act quickly after Inauguration Day. During the early weeks and months as interim GC, Ohr began the process of rolling back many of the Trump-era policies that tipped the floor in favor of corporations and rolled back workers' rights.

Many unions that have recently taken unfair labor practice charges before the NLRB have seen how the shift at the top has made its way to the shopfloor. "Push back on make whole settlements in discharge cases that are not at 100 percent," said Ohr. "Many people are quick to resolve issues. But we should not be settling to just get a settlement. Regions [directors] know their marching orders to get full settlements."

While the Protect the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, the first overhaul of labor law in nearly a hundred years, has stalled in Congress, parts of the pro-union proposal are advancing. Ohr said the NLRB is working on rule changes that hobbled organizing drives and cases that will increase worker protections.

Besides working on pro-labor rules, policies, and cases, Ohr said the NLRB is poised to see increased funding. For years, the NLRB has suffered from a lack of moneys to carry out its mission. President Biden's budget calls for an increase in the agency's budget. The funding will help the NLRB hire more attorneys, field agents, and staff to protect workers' rights. "The NLRB is currently looking for a new Region 13 Director and other staff positions," said Ohr. He urged local unions to send in applications. He encouraged anyone who may be interested or know someone interested in advocating for workers to apply.

The next CCCOC luncheon will be on Feb. 18, 2022, at noon.

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Take a moment and visit the Proud Union Home Store to see the array of Proud Union Home and CFL merchandise. From hats and apparel to yard signs, you're sure to find the perfect items to show off your union pride!



**PROUD
UNION
HOME**



180 N. Stetson Ave.
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Chicago, Illinois 60601

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UPCOMING CFL DELEGATES MEETINGS

Tuesday, **Feb. 1**, 2022

Tuesday, **Mar. 1**, 2022

Tuesday, **Apr. 5**, 2022

6 p.m.

Location dependent on local public health orders. The CFL will email location information prior to the meeting.

Delegates must present their current Chicago Federation of Labor membership card or this notice for admission. We look forward to full representation from your local union to assist the Federation in the development of its policies.

Don V. Villar
Secretary-Treasurer