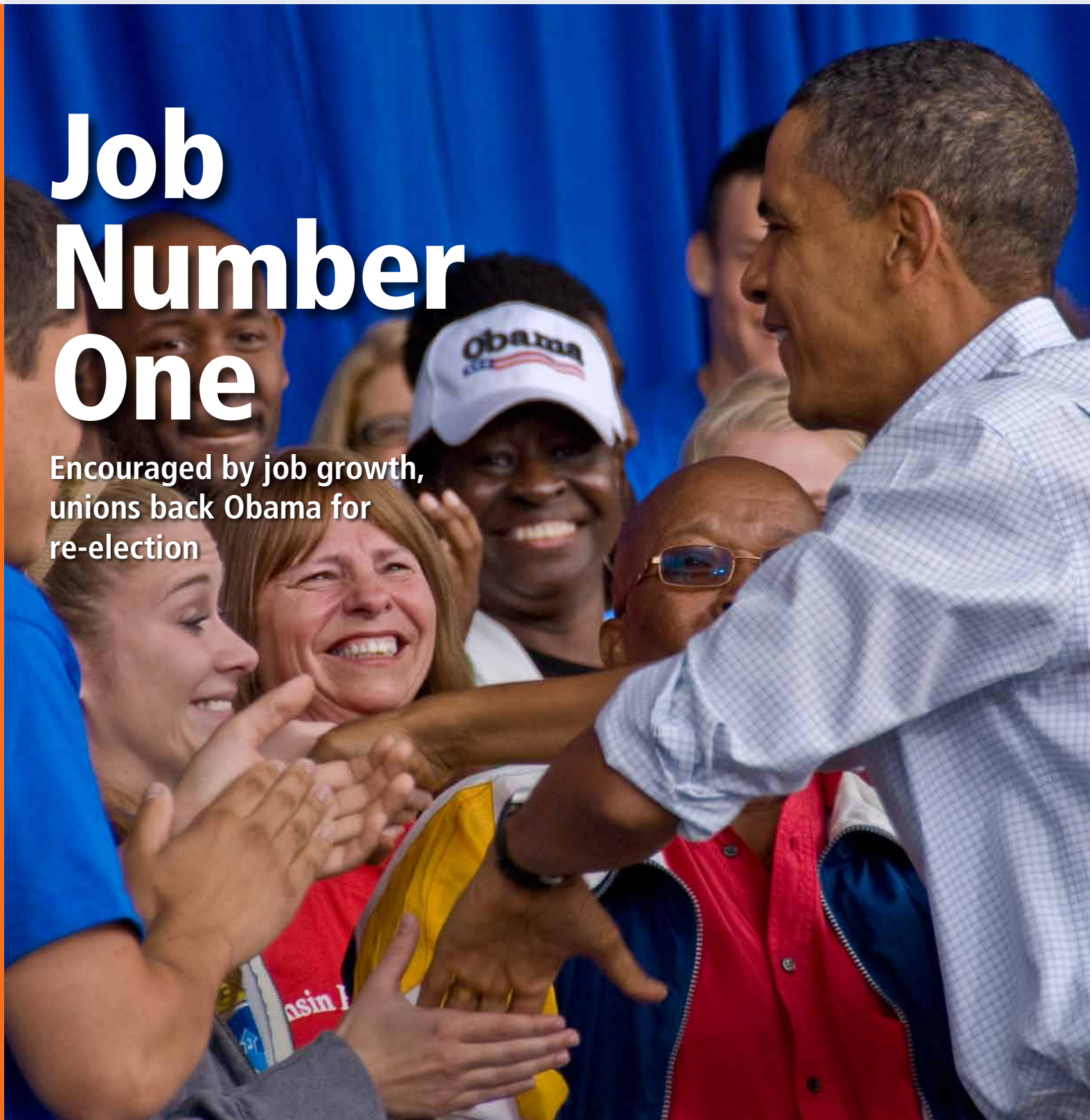


Job Number One

Encouraged by job growth,
unions back Obama for
re-election



FederationNews

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Unions commit to Obama's re-election efforts

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COVER PHOTO
COURTESY OF
AFL-CIO

Chicago Plumbers behind St. Patrick's Day traditions

Members of the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers Local 130 dye the Chicago River before the St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 17, 2012. This year marked the 50th for dyeing the river green, a tradition that was started by members of the Plumbers' Union.

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President's Report

Technology is changing the world. It's changing our economy, the way we do our jobs and the way we talk to one another. We live in the age of the 24-hour news cycle and non-stop cable news coverage. Social media connects millions of individuals and mobile technology allows instant access to an endless amount of news, messaging and information at our fingertips.

Technology has forced us to change the way we operate. The labor movement must be able to mobilize at a moment's notice and has taken steps to adopt cutting edge technology. The AFL-CIO recently launched a

brand new website that integrates social media and action campaigns into news and information about the nation's labor movement. International and local unions here in Chicago have embraced innovative tools allowing them to reach their members wherever they are and mobilize them to action at a moment's notice.

This changing technology is behind the Chicago Federation of Labor's decision to make the *Federation News*, our historic and award-winning labor publication, quarterly.

No longer is the publication the primary source of news and information. Over the last 18 months, we've invested in new technology designed to keep union



PHOTO COURTESY
OF LISA KING

members and supporters informed, connected and engaged in our movement's issues. Our vision for the *Federation News* is to make it a high-quality publication showcasing the great work of our affiliated unions and their members and focusing on feature stories dealing with broad issues affecting us all. This first issue features articles about a new plan to invest private money into transformative, job-creating projects, a look at the overburdened Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and retirement security, and an outdoors organization that connects with union members on a different level.

The new look and feel of the *Federation News* is designed to complement our activity on our website, www.chicagolabor.org, Facebook and Twitter.

We are excited for these changes and believe you, as delegates and leaders of the Chicago labor movement, will find it more useful, engaging and productive to our collective mission to support working people throughout Cook County.

In Unity,


JORGE RAMIREZ
PRESIDENT



Fire Fighter leader stands up for public employees

In a letter to the editor to the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Thomas E. Ryan responds to a January 29th op-ed attacking public employees by standing up for the public servants.

"It would be absurd to think only public employees care about the valuable work done for the public good. Consider also that the majority of these employees do NOT receive social security. Consider that after a lifetime of on-the-front line public service, firefighters, paramedics and police officers are substantially more likely to suffer from chronic job-related illness. Consider that there are over 700 widows of Chicago firefighters who collect benefits of \$1,200 or less a month. Their spouses risked their lives in service to the community and now these widows live below the Federal poverty line...."

"There is no singular reason for Illinois' economic crisis, but with regards to pensions the stark facts are that politicians didn't make the contributions they were legally obligated to."

SEIU janitors win contract

More than 7,000 SEIU Local 1 Janitors in Chicago and surrounding suburbs reached an agreement with building owners and contractors—averting a strike—after a month of contract negotiations. Janitors met their goals of securing a good wage increase and protecting health care benefits for their families. Details of the agreements, which include significant gains in pay and fully employer-paid family health insurance, will be presented to janitors for their approval at ratification votes.

In reaction to the tentative agree-

ment, Bargaining Committee member Urszula Przybyz, a janitor at ABM said, "We are very pleased with this outcome, not only for Local 1 janitors, but for all the working people in our city. When working families stick together, we all win. This is my sixth contract as a Local 1 janitor and the best one yet."

The wages and benefits included in the contracts will positively impact janitors and their families, our city and our economy not just for the next three years, but for many years to come.

AFSCME fights budget cuts

AFSCME Council 31 launched a statewide campaign to fight proposed devastating cuts to state services for the upcoming budget year.

The proposed budget would eliminate nearly 3,000 middle class jobs by cutting prisons, parole agents and state police, reducing mental health and developmental disability services for the most vulnerable populations. The union points out hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks granted to corporations recently as an illustration of the state's misguided priorities.

"As we engage in the battle to save jobs and the vital services that state employees provide, we cannot be deterred by the argument that there is no money and that these cuts are necessary," said Executive Director Henry Bayer in a report to AFSCME members.

Teachers present plan to strengthen schools

Joined by parents, local school council leaders, clergy and educators, the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) released a plan to strengthen

Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The comprehensive report, "The Schools Chicago's Students Deserve," offers proven policy recommendations to improve student academic performance and strengthen neighborhood schools.

"For far too long our students have been short-changed, their teachers have been undermined and their schools have been financially starved of the resources they need," said CTU President Karen Lewis. "Today we release our vision of what a CPS education should look like for every student, not just those from higher income brackets. We need fresh and innovative ideas, not the same status quo and failed policies of the past 17 years."

The CTU is currently negotiating a new contract with CPS to replace the one that expires later this year.

Teamsters authorize strike at Hostess

Members of Teamsters Local 734 working at Hostess overwhelmingly authorized a strike should the company

impose unfair contract terms during its ongoing bankruptcy. Local 734 members are part of the national bargaining unit of more than 7,500 Hostess employees who've engaged in strike authorization votes across the country. Local 734 represents 435 bakery drivers and workers with Hostess across Chicago.

"This is the second time in less than 10 years that Hostess finds itself in this position, and the solution will not be found on the backs of our members," said Brian Meidel, Recording Secretary of Teamsters Joint Council 25 and President of Local 734. "We want to do what we can to make this company viable again, but Hostess cannot be allowed to annihilate union contracts to repair its own mismanagement."

"Teamsters nationwide authorized a strike by a margin of 9-to-1," said John T. Coli, President of Joint Council 25. "This vote shows that our members are ready to do whatever it takes to make sure Hostess does the right thing by its workers and respects their contract."



Local 150 sues to block Indiana anti-union law

Operating Engineers Local 150 filed a federal lawsuit to block implementation of Indiana's new right-to-work law from being enforced. The union says the anti-union law violates the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution by treating building and construction workers and public workers differently from others.

"No legitimate state interest is served by requiring public sector employees to subsidize the cost of representation services for private sector employees who refuse to pay any fees to the Union," the lawsuit says.

Local 150 was among a large coalition of unions in Indiana and Illinois that fought the law, which was made a top priority by Republican leaders such as Governor Mitch Daniels and the state legislature.

Midway workers voice concerns over stalled ordinance

At an ad-hoc hearing on O'Hare and Midway Airport concession deals and the proposed, yet stalled, Stable Jobs Stable Airports Ordinance called

by Chicago Alderman Jason C Ervin (28th Ward), Chicago Aldermen heard from employees concerned they may be tossed out as the City of Chicago hands out lucrative contracts covering most of the concessions at O'Hare and Midway Airports. Policy experts noted the Stable Jobs Stable Airports Ordinance, sponsored by Ervin and thirty-one other Aldermen and modeled on policies adopted by other airports, could generate as much as \$8 million a year for Chicago.

"We are taxpayers and voters and we work hard to make the airports great. We want the alderman to have our back, protect our jobs and respect what we are worth," added Jerry Ward, a retail worker at Midway Airport, backed by UNITE HERE Local 1.

In January, the majority of existing retail workers in the O'Hare International Terminal (T5) were tossed out of work as a new contractor took over under the controversial 20-year International Terminal contract.

Alderman Ervin called the hearing after the City Council's Workforce Development and Audit Committee, which is considering the Stable Jobs Stable Airports Ordinance, abruptly cancelled the hearing it had set for the same time. The Workforce Development and Audit Committee has not met since September 2011.

Laborers announce apprenticeship program

Officials from Laborers' Local 1092 announced an agreement with the City of Chicago to launch an apprenticeship training program for members working on public infrastructure projects. The announcement came at an event with Mayor Rahm Emanuel at the Laborers' Training and Apprenticeship Center on the city's west side.

The agreement comes as the city prepares to launch a massive ten-year

sewer and water infrastructure project, upgrading 1,000 miles of pipes in a century-old system. Laborers' Local 1092 has been a strong proponent for a City apprenticeship program for construction laborers. Last summer unions representing city workers generated a series of cost-saving initiatives to help the city balance the current budget while minimizing layoffs and cuts. Local 1092 took this opportunity to outline the many advantages and cost savings that an apprenticeship program would provide.



TOP: JAMES CONNOLLY, BUSINESS MANAGER OF THE CHICAGO LABORERS' DISTRICT COUNCIL, SPEAKS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL ON CITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS | FROM FAR LEFT: SEIU JANITORS MARCH THROUGH THE LOOP FOR A FAIR CONTRACT (PHOTO: SEIU LOCAL 1) | STATE EMPLOYEES PROTEST PROPOSED FACILITY CLOSURES (PHOTO: AFS-CME COUNCIL 31) | CTU PRESIDENT KAREN LEWIS ADDRESSES THE MEDIA (PHOTO: CTU)



Unions join Obama re-election team

With the economy on the brink of total collapse, President Barack Obama fought back to create or save 3.6 million jobs, save the American auto industry, expand health care coverage to millions and clamp down reckless Wall Street banks. Standing on the side of working people is what has led the AFL-CIO and dozens of international unions to endorse the president for re-election in the November election.

"Barack Obama has placed his faith in America's working men and women to lead our country to economic recovery and to our full potential as a nation," said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.

Here in the Chicago area, union members have been energized by nearly 4,000 new jobs at Ford and Chrysler assembly plants, as well as President Obama's focus on job creating incentives, in-sourcing from foreign markets, and tax relief for working families.

But with Illinois remaining solidly 'blue', the real challenge will be the battle for Congress, as well as maintaining Democratic majorities in the Illinois General Assembly.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) announced the day after the March primary election that five Illinois districts will be heavily targeted in the committee's 'Red to Blue' campaign to pick up the 25 necessary seats to regain control of the House.

For labor, this presents an opportunity not only to run up the score for hometown President Obama but also to play a key role

in a national effort. According to DCCC Chairman Steve Israel, "the path to those 25 seats runs right through the state of Illinois."

Two seats are in the Chicago area where Tammy Duckworth will face tea-party activist and freshman Congressman Joe Walsh (R) in Illinois' 8th district and Brad Schneider will face freshman Robert Dold (R) in the 10th. Both candidates were backed by labor, as union members made phone calls, walked precincts and did other volunteer work to help get-out-the-vote.

"Chicago's union members have an opportunity to be a part of something historic," said Chicago Federation of Labor President Jorge Ramirez. "I know they'll be up to the challenge. We look forward to working with our affiliated unions, their members and the Illinois AFL-CIO to help elect candidates who stand for working people."

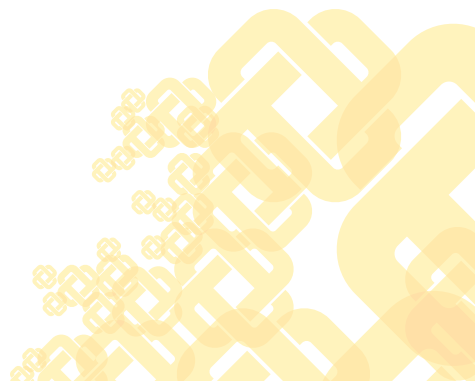
Democratic control of the governor's mansion, the state senate and state house has helped insulate Illinois from the type of attacks on collective bargaining in Ohio, Wisconsin and Indiana. But that doesn't mean labor won't keep fighting.

"It's not enough for elected leaders to say, 'at least we're not Wisconsin,'" said Ramirez. "We need people who will actually stand up for working people, not hide behind these attacks. In Ohio, labor fought back and won. In Wisconsin, labor fought back and recalled elected officials."

"Working men and women are on high alert. We're ready to fight."

"It's not enough for elected leaders to say, 'at least we're not Wisconsin.'"

JORGE RAMIREZ
PRESIDENT OF THE
CHICAGO FEDERATION
OF LABOR



TOP/LOWER LEFT: PRESIDENT OBAMA SPEAKS TO UNION MEMBERS AT A LABOR DAY RALLY IN 2010 | LOWER RIGHT: CHICAGO UNION MEMBERS HELP GET-OUT-THE-VOTE IN THE MARCH ELECTION (PHOTOS: AFL-CIO, CFL)



Feature Stories



Unions join private infrastructure trust to create jobs

Washington D.C. is stuck in political gridlock. Springfield is broke. The private sector is rebounding and there is money to invest. That's the reasoning behind the new Chicago Infrastructure Trust announced in March by Mayor Rahm Emanuel with former President Bill Clinton.

The Infrastructure Trust is an innovative way to leverage private investment for transformative infrastructure projects to guide the city's renewal of these vital and foundational elements in the 21st century. The first phase of work will be a \$225 million effort to retrofit city buildings to reduce energy consumption by as much as 20 percent and will create nearly 2,000 construction jobs for local working men and women.

President Clinton called the announcement, made at a Carpenters training facility in Chicago, "a huge deal" to be proud of.

"What you are doing here is the first, in effect, infrastructure bank using private capital that any city in the United States has established," said Clinton.

Labor leaders were on hand to lend their support for the initiative, in large part because of the number of jobs it will create. "Having world-class infrastructure is essential for Chicago's competitiveness now and in the future," said Jorge Ramirez, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor. "I look forward to working alongside the Mayor as we put people to work revitalizing the crucial infrastructure throughout the City."

Frank T. Libby, President of the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters applauded the nation's first-of-its-kind public-private partnership. "With unemployment and underemployment not witnessed since the Great Depression, this new proposed financing vehicle gives our city and region hope," said Libby.

Ullico, the labor-owned life insurance company, quickly signed on to the Trust, committing up to \$25 million for each project that will put people to work.

"We believe there is a clear and unparalleled role for Labor to play in a successful infrastructure investment program and we applaud the direction Mayor Emanuel has established for this critical initiative," said Edward M. Smith, CEO of Ullico.

Ullico isn't the only labor-affiliated organization to invest in Chicago's workers. The AFL-CIO Building and Housing Investment Trusts have invested roughly half a billion dollars in local construction projects that have created approximately 7,500 construction jobs in the Chicago area.

The Retrofit Chicago program will be the first series of investments made by the Trust, pending approval by the City Council, and mirrors work supported by the Clinton Global Initiative in large cities around the world to cut energy consumption.

In New York City, energy consumption was cut by nearly 40 percent at the Empire State Building by retrofitting the building and making it more energy efficient.



Chicago pipefitters show off big city fishing on national outdoor TV show

Chicago pipefitters Dan McNally, Fred Popplewell and Kevin Crum are all members of UA Local 597 who are avid fishermen in their limited spare time. In March, they had the chance to show off their skills out on Lake Michigan on the award-winning national outdoors show, *Brotherhood Outdoors*.

The trio set out for a day of fishing on Lake Michigan on a 30' Baha Cruiser 299 Sportfish with a full camera crew on board to capture the excursion and the day's catch.

Brotherhood Outdoors is broadcast on the Sportsman Channel and is produced by the Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA), a labor-oriented organization that connects union members with outdoor sports and conservation efforts. The unique TV series showcases union workers' commitment to their communities and their love for the great outdoors.

Passionate about building a future generation of sportsmen and women, McNally, Popplewell and Crum launched "Operation Brotherhood

Outdoors" as a way to highlight the variety of fishing opportunities a big city can offer.

"I hope the definition of brotherhood rings true in our episode," said McNally. "I want viewers to see the value of having a set of friends you trust and enjoy enough to work with and still want to spend time with outside of the shop. That's what Kevin, Fred and I have, and that's the example we want to set for a future generation of Chicago anglers."

The USA engages in conservation projects and strategic partnerships, including several here in Illinois, through which members volunteer their skills and resources to expand and improve hunting and fishing access, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreational opportunities for all to enjoy now and in the future.

The USA estimates 70 percent of union members nationwide have an interest in hunting, fishing or shooting. It is working to build a community of supporters who share the values of the labor movement.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
WWW.UNIONSPOSMEN.ORG.

WATCH DAN, FRED AND KEVIN IN ACTION
AT WWW.CHICAGOLABOR.ORG/VIDEO



PHOTO: UNION SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

"I hope the definition of brotherhood rings true in our episode."

DAN MCNALLY
UA LOCAL 597

Corporate bankruptcy hurts workers, taxpayers

Recent resistance by the federal agency responsible for guaranteeing private sector pension funds put a spotlight on this troubling practice. It also sounds a loud warning about the retirement security for a large majority of Americans.

When American Airlines filed for bankruptcy protection late last year, it planned on cutting one major cost that other corporations have abandoned: employee pension plans. American didn't just want to move toward a defined-contribution plan, it wanted to drop its current obligation to 130,000 current and future retirees as part of its reorganization plan.

The move would not have been groundbreaking—United Airlines dumped its pension obligation during its 2005 bankruptcy proceedings. Pushback from employees and their unions was expected. What wasn't expected was the opposition from the federal government.

The federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) is responsible for taking over a corporation's pension plan when the company abandons it for financial reasons. Director Joshua Gotbaum argued American Airlines hadn't adequately demonstrated its need to terminate the plan and, in turn, hand over \$9 billion in estimated pension liabilities to the PBGC. That would be the largest claim in the agency's history. American has since stated it can reorganize while preserving employees' pension plans.

The back-and-forth, played out in the media and before Congressional panels, revealed just how taxed the PBGC is with obligations handed over by private companies. Gotbaum acknowledged a \$26 billion gap between what the PBGC owes and its assets.

It's not just the airline industry. Hostess Brands, maker of the iconic Twinkie, filed for bankruptcy in January saying it needs to eliminate its pension plan. Its workers,

represented by the Teamsters, voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike if Hostess wins approval.

The lingering question is how American workers will pay for their retirement. Pension plans for public employees are under attack. Pension plans for most private sector workers have been replaced by 401(k) or similar defined-contribution plans. But that is not necessarily the best fit.

According to an op-ed in the *New York Times* by economics professor Teresa Ghilarducci, 401(k) plans were originally designed for executives and don't offer the same security as defined-benefit pension plans.

"The problem is that these steps set up incentives through the tax code, which means that the biggest benefits go to the highest earners—people who, moreover, would probably have saved anyway. Today 79 percent of such tax breaks go to the top 20 percent of workers."

She argues that pension plans should be expanded to cover more workers, rather than cut to cover fewer.

Retirement security is a serious problem this country will face when millions of American workers get ready for retirement. If they don't have enough saved, what kind of safety net will they have?





Unions stand up for workers against corporate greed

On Thursday, March 22, Chicago unions joined forces to fight corporate greed for two important contract struggles preventing workers from receiving the respect they deserve.

Close to 200 union members and community partners rallied at Daley Plaza to support members of SEIU Local 1 who are in talks for a new contract to replace the one that expired in early April. The Chicago janitors affected make far below the estimated annual cost of living for a family of four in Chicago.

The crowd then marched to the Verizon store on Michigan Ave. and Monroe St. as part of a national day of action for workers belonging to the Communication Workers of America (CWA) and IBEW to win a fair contract. Following a two-week strike last summer, workers returned to work after Verizon agreed to bargain for a fair contract. But since then, Verizon has fired some workers who took part in the strike, has shipped jobs overseas and wants to outsource even more jobs. The company is demanding that workers pay thousands of dollars more for health care coverage with slashed benefits. Verizon even wants to cut disability benefits for workers injured doing their jobs. Meanwhile, Verizon continues to pay executives exorbitant salaries and rake in billions in profits.

SUSAN HURLEY (CHICAGO JOBS WITH JUSTICE), BOB REITER (CFL) AND FRANK MATTHEWS (CWA) LEAD DEMONSTRATORS DOWN MICHIGAN AVE.



Teamsters Local 700 joins CFL

The Chicago Federation of Labor proudly welcomes new affiliate Teamsters Local 700, representing public sector members working at the City of Chicago, Cook County, State of Illinois, and other municipalities and law enforcement agencies across the state. Local 700 is led by President William P. Logan and adds a strong and important voice to the federation, particularly in the area of protecting public sector workers.

“We are proud to add the powerful leadership and hard working members of Teamsters Local 700 to the Chicago Federation of Labor,” said President Jorge Ramirez. “Our strength is directly related to work of our affiliates. This addition will benefit not just the CFL but the entire labor movement in the Chicago area.”

“The CFL has a long history of successfully campaigning for labor-friendly political candidates,” said Logan. “This affiliation will mean nothing but good things for our members.”



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 700 PRESIDENT WILLIAM LOGAN AND SECRETARY-TREASURER BECKY STRZECOWSKI



KATIE JORDAN (WORKERS UNITED) AND JESSE RIOS (AFGE) JOIN THE SOLIDARITY EFFORT



Solidarity with locked-out workers

Chicago union members showed solidarity recently with members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers (BCTGM) locked out at American Crystal Sugar and members of the United Steelworkers (USW) locked out at Cooper Tire & Rubber. The action was part of the "Journey for Justice" tour with BCTGM and USW, a multi-state tour calling attention not only to their struggles but also to the greater issue of corporate greed and anti-union sentiment.

During the tour, the USW reached a tentative agreement to end the lockout at Cooper Tire, based in Findlay, Ohio. The lockout, however, remains for 1,300 workers at American Crystal Sugar in Minnesota, Iowa and North Dakota.

According to the *New York Times*' Steven Greenhouse, lockouts are becoming increasingly common in labor-management relations. Citing a *Bloomberg BNA* report, lockouts have grown to represent a record percentage of the nation's work stoppages, with 17 employers telling workers not to show up until they were willing to accept management's contract offer last year.

Labor leaders named to MPEA board

Governor Pat Quinn and Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced their new appointments for the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) Board, including three representatives from organized labor: Ronald Powell, President of UFCW Local 881, Robert G. Reiter, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer of the Chicago Federation of Labor and Becky Strzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 700.

Organized labor has been instrumental in maintaining McCormick Place's status as a premiere destination for conventions and trade shows.

"I am honored by this nomination and I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Governor and Mayor to strengthen this powerful and significant economic engine for the Chicago region and to working men and women," said Reiter.

Woman of the Year

The Chicago Federation of Labor awarded Patricia A. Ousley, president of AFSCME Local 1006 representing employees at the Illinois Department of Employment Security, with its Woman of the Year award for 2012 at the March Delegates Meeting. She is the 31st distinguished woman to receive this award, started in 1982 by former president William A. Lee and presented in conjunction with Women's History Month.

Ousley serves on the Executive Board of AFSCME Council 31 and is an active member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Outside of her ardent activism at AFSCME, she is an elected trustee of the State Employee Retirement System Committee, a Delegate to the Chicago Federation of Labor, a founding member of Visionary Friends and a trustee at her church, Prayer and Faith Outreach Ministry. She has two children and seven grandchildren.

"Pat Ousley joins a list of distinguished women who have served working men and women beyond comparison here in Chicago and across the country," said President Jorge Ramirez in presenting the award. "We are proud to present this award to her and are honored that she is accepting it tonight."

Ousley thanked the leadership of the Chicago Federation of Labor, including President Ramirez, Secretary-Treasurer Bob Reiter, and First Vice President Rosetta Daylie, for selecting her to receive this award. "I am humbled and overwhelmed to receive this award," said Ousley. She thanked Delegates for their support and encouraged everyone to continue their hard work, particularly in the upcoming re-election of President Barack Obama.



TOP: ROSETTA DAYLIE (AFSCME) PRESENTS THE AWARD TO PATRICIA OUSLEY | BOTTOM: JORGE RAMIREZ AND BOB REITER WITH OUSLEY



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CFL Delegates Meetings

Tuesday, May 1 • Tuesday, June 5

START TIME: 6:00pm

WHERE: Chicago Plumbers Local 130 Hall
1340 W. Washington, Chicago



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.

Robert G. Reiter, Jr. • Secretary-Treasurer

Take Action!

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for delegates by email!**

Visit www.chicagolabor.org/delegates
for special information for Chicago
Federation of Labor Delegates.