



Labor Fax

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WORKING FAMILIES VOTE!

By Charles Wowkanech & Laurel Brennan

Last summer, the AFL-CIO Executive Council decided to hold off on making an endorsement of a single candidate for President, vowing instead to focus on preparations for the greatest involvement ever by working voters in the crucial 2008 elections. With this in mind, and with the move of New Jersey's Presidential Primary Election to an earlier date this year, our State's Primary outcome will have a stronger influence on determining the Presidential Candidates, and, ultimately, greater implications on determining Labor's Endorsed Presidential Candidate.

We are urging our labor family to take the opportunity to examine the candidates' records on issues important to working families, and make Labor's voice heard during the New Jersey Primary Election on February 5th.

Much is at stake for union members and our families in this election. It is our time to change the debate over the direction of our country, and make our dream of economic and social justice a reality. The causes of the failing health of our entire economy are obvious: stagnant wages, disappearing pension benefits, and runaway health care costs. An impending recession projected by economists serve as evidence that workers need unions to protect jobs, rights and working conditions. This election is our opportunity to restore the freedom of workers to organize and reform our health care system, among other priorities.

While so much is at stake, we also have a great deal to be proud of. As we commemorate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., we take notice of and celebrate the diversity of our candidates. Also, as we listen to the topics being debated on a national level, we hear discussions on issues of importance to working families. It is our responsibility to make sure that Labor's priorities remain at the front of national debate.



1998
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APEX Award

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OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP 2008

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO is pursuing Operation Clean Sweep 2008, to ensure the accuracy of the COPE file. We ask that all affiliates send your most current membership roster to COPE Director John Shea by March 15, 2008. The COPE files create the lists needed for voter registration drives, labor-to-labor walks, phone banks, and Get-Out-The-Vote. Working together, our membership records help us communicate efficiently and effectively with working families and educate them on the Presidential, Congressional, and Labor Candidates running for office.

NEW JERSEY PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION DAY

** TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2008 **

Voters are encouraged to research the Candidates' positions on issues of importance to working families by visiting:
<http://www.afclcio.com/issues/politics/>

FAMILY LEAVE POSTED FOR COMMITTEE VOTE

Paid Family Leave legislation (S-786: Sweeney) has been posted for a vote in the Senate Budget & Appropriations Committee for this Monday, January 28, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. We respectfully urge all union leaders to please testify in support of the bill in Committee and call members of the Committee to ask for their support. Due to continued strong opposition of this bill from the business community, grass roots mobilization in support of the bill from our membership is essential. Please ask your members to send a free, pre-written e-mail to all members of the committee at:

<http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/pfl12308>

HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA SURVEY

The AFL-CIO and Working America launched a 2008 Health Care for America Survey, which enables tens of thousands of working men and women to make their voices heard on an issue that touches every one of us as health care costs outpace wages, push working families into debt, undercut bargaining and leave millions uninsured. The results of this survey will be shared with candidates for office at every level and the media. Please complete the survey and encourage your friends, family members and co-workers to do the same, by visiting:

<http://www.afclcio.com/issues/healthcare/survey/index.cfm?source=nj>

WORDS OF WISDOM

"The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress."

~Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Illinois AFL-CIO Convention, on October 7, 1965.

ON THE ROAD

Officers and Staff of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO:

...Testified before the House Committee on Education and Labor on strengthening OSHA and requiring joint labor-management committees on safety and health in the workplace.

...Stood with Senator Frank R. Lautenberg to announce new chemical security protections for New Jersey.

...Participated in a meeting of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel on Immigrant Policy.

...Conducted LEAP services for Officers and Staff of UNITEHERE Local 54 and members of UAW in Atlantic City.

...Supplied information on registered apprenticeship programs at the Department of Education's Career and Technical Education Advisory Board meeting.

...Joined USW Local 2026 members at the US Pipe & Foundry, Inc. Job Fair, organized by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development Rapid Response Team and Burlington County One-Stop Business Services Center.

...Attended the Salem County and Mercer County Workforce Investment Board meetings.

...Provided technical assistance to local consortia applying for the Construction Trades Training Program for Women and Minorities Grants of the School Development Authority, and the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

2008 OSHEP CONFERENCE

Register now for the 2008 OSHEP Conference, being held on February 21, 2008, at the Heldrich Hotel & Conference Center in New Brunswick, NJ. This year's Conference will highlight important workplace safety and health issues like Outdoor Electrical Safety, Workplace Violence, Global Warming and Energy Control, and World Trade Center Health Effects, among others. The OSHEP Conference serves as an important networking and educational event for safety and health professionals, union activists, employers, union staff representatives and shop stewards, safety directors, general contractors, human resources representatives and safety and health trainers. For more information, contact Komilla John, OSHEP Coordinator at (609) 989-8289.

TAX HELP FOR WORKING FAMILIES

The Earned Income Credit (EIC) is an important special tax benefit for working people of low or moderate incomes. Workers who qualify for the EIC and file a federal tax return can get back some or all of the federal tax withheld from their pay during the year. Another important tax benefit that working families should know about is the Child Tax Credit. For information on the EIC, CTC, and other important tax information crucial to working families, please visit <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2008/>

MINIMUM WAGE COMMISSION REPORT

The New Jersey Minimum Wage Advisory Commission issued a report on the adequacy of the minimum wage in December, recommending the implementation of an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) and increasing the minimum wage to \$8.25 an hour. A copy of the report can be found on our website.

Upcoming Events

January 30, 2008	PEC Meeting Trenton, NJ
February 2, 2008	Board of Fire Commissioners Labor Candidates Seminar Trenton, NJ
February 6-7, 2008	CLC President's Retreat Atlantic City, NJ
February 13, 2008	NJ State AFL-CIO Retirees Committee Meeting New Brunswick, NJ
February 21, 2008	OSHEP Conference New Brunswick, NJ
February 21, 2008	Future International Free Trade Agreements Meeting with Congressmen Pascrell and Sires Paramus, NJ
March 12-14, 2008	Safety and Health Train-the-Trainer Manchester, NJ
March 28-29, 2008	Women in Leadership Development (WILD) Conference New Brunswick, NJ
April 25 -27, 2008	Organizing Institute Course New Brunswick, NJ
June 10-11, 2008	27th New Jersey State AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention Atlantic City, NJ

For more information on any events listed, please check our online calendar at www.njafclcio.org.

CORZINE SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER #96

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO commends Governor Corzine for continuing to take a strong stand against construction contractors who illegally thwart tax law to gain an advantage over legitimate contractors, by signing an Executive Order, which creates a commission to examine Construction industry independent contractor reform. "1099 abuse" hurts workers and cheats important pro-worker funds such as the unemployment insurance fund. The Commission includes four labor representatives.

OSHEP TRAINS YOUTH WORKERS

OSHEP continually strives to implement innovative approaches to safety and health training and education. To that end, OSHEP is currently piloting an OSHA 10-hour General Industry Course that is customized for youth workers within the Monroe School District. This pilot program consists of curricula customized with activities and teaching tools to engage and educate youth about OSHA regulations and workplace safety and health.