



Labor Fax

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OUR VOICES WERE HEARD!

By Charles Wowkanech & Laurel Brennan

We went into this year's election knowing that the stakes were going to be high. Halting the exportation of union jobs, increasing the number of families with access to affordable health care, and protecting our overtime pay and right to organize were just a few of the issues we were taking on when we launched our Labor 2004 program.

By registering a record number of new voters and communicating with union members through mailers, phone banks and labor to labor walks we were determined that our voices were going to be heard in this election. Labor 2004 also had a tremendous showing on Election Day with over 6,000 union members working across the state to get out the vote.

Unfortunately, the results were not what we had hoped for on the national level. But, we can take pride in knowing that John Kerry won big in both New Jersey, where exit polls show that 34% of the total votes cast were from union households, and Pennsylvania, which benefited from the efforts of over 5,000 of our members since June.

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO, and our Labor Candidates Program, through your efforts, also gave victories to 30 rank-and-file union members running for office across the state. These victories bring the total number of union members elected to public office in New Jersey to 309.

The voice of the labor movement in New Jersey, of our state's working families, were certainly heard in the Election of 2004. More importantly, our voices will continue to be heard in town halls, county buildings, the State House, and in the halls of Congress as we continue our efforts to improve the lives of New Jersey's working families.



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Labor Fax Co-Editors:

Charles Wowkanech

President

Laurel Brennan

Secretary-Treasurer

Associate Editor:

Steve Lenox

(609) 989-8730 • www.njaflcio.org

BACK TO WORK

Over 10,000 members of UNITE HERE Local 54 are back to work after settling their month-long strike against seven Atlantic City casinos. Under the new contract, the best ever negotiated in the gaming industry, workers will continue to receive employer-paid family health care coverage, a 51% increase in employer pension contributions and increased protections against contracting out jobs. The New Jersey State AFL-CIO thanks all of our affiliates and members that stood in solidarity with the striking casino workers by attending rallies, marching with striking workers and honoring picket lines.

HERE ONE DAY, GONE THE NEXT

Respect and support for New Jersey's industrial and manufacturing workers was the theme of the New Jersey's State AFL-CIO's testimony in support of A-3417, which requires pre-notification of certain plant closings to their employees. The bill, sponsored by Assemblyman Jeff Van Drew (D-1) is a step-up from current federal notification requirements and also has additional pro-worker provisions. A-3417 was released from the Assembly Labor Committee by a vote of 4-2 with Assemblyman Guy Gregg (R-24) and Assemblyman Mike Doherty (R-23) voting against the measure.

KEEP THE JOBS HERE

It seems that the most liberal of Democrats and conservative of Republicans, and most of New Jersey's Assembly representatives, can agree on one thing: the "offshore-outsourcing" of state funded contracts which sacrifice American jobs is bad public policy and is a bad idea. A-2133, sponsored by Assemblyman Reed Gusciora (D-15) has 35 sponsors, including 5 Republicans. To find out how you can help the New Jersey State AFL-CIO lobby in support of this bill visit www.njaflcio.org. The Senate version of this bill, sponsored by Senator Shirley Turner, passed the Senate on June 21, 2004 by a vote of 29-5-6.

BY THE NUMBERS

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO recently offered testimony to the Senate Health Committee in support of S-689, a bill which requires nursing homes and hospitals to compile and provide certain staffing information and make it available to the public. The committee, led by Senator Joe Vitale (D-19), supported our argument that making this information available to the public will help healthcare consumers make more informed decisions as to where they seek both medical and nursing home care and voted unanimously for this measure. This bill now has to be scheduled for a vote by the full Senate before being sent to the Governor's desk.

ON THE ROAD

Officers and Staff of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO:
 ...testified before the Senate Labor Committee.
 ...attended meeting of Joint Labor Management Task Force on the proliferation of box stores in New Jersey.
 ...participated in Labor 2004 GOTV operations.
 ...presented testimony to the Senate Health Committee.
 ...conducted LEAP training for dislocated employees of Dallas Airmotive employees in Millville.
 ...participated in a Local 108 RWDSU YTTW Consortium Meeting
 ...participated in a New Jersey Apprenticeship Policy Committee Meeting
 ...delivered report at Rutgers University State Advisory Council meeting.
 ...participated in a training coordinators meeting of the State BTC and presented new opportunities for OSHEP training.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

The CWA, UFCW, and BCTGM each have celebrated organizing victories with nearly 500 workers voting to join their unions in New Jersey since September. These victories include 100 workers at Homastote, a building materials manufacturer in Trenton, 45 workers at the Carteret Senior Living Home and 55 workers at Mivila Food Corp. in Paterson voting to join the UFCW; 160 workers at Rich's Mother's Kitchen in Burlington gaining a voice on the job through the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union; and 90 paralegals, transportation aides and litigation aides at Children's Family Services throughout New Jersey organizing with the CWA. Additionally, CWA 1032 won their first two contracts with Passaic Valley Water Commission a year after organizing 160 employees which had previously been represented by an organization independent of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO

REMEMBERING THE PAST

The American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark will hold its annual Sol Stetin Awards Dinner Thursday, November 18, 2004 at the Tides Estate in North Haledon. For more information on this event contact Angelica Santomauro, Director, at 973-595-7953.

Shop Union for the Holidays



GIVE THE GIFT OF GOOD JOBS

This holiday season, support good jobs by giving union-made gifts. Your shopping dollars can keep good-paying jobs – with good wages and benefits – in your community.

For a fine selection of holiday gifts, go to: www.shopunionmade.org

Union Label & Service Trades Dept., AFL-CIO

Upcoming Events

November 29 -	OSHEP Train-the Trainer Course
December 2	Rutgers Labor Center
January 12, 2005	Retirees Committee Rutgers Labor Center

TO BETTER SERVE OUR MEMBERS

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO is proud to announce several enhancements to our Occupational Safety and Health Education Program (OSHEP). As the lead organization in this program, the New Jersey State AFL-CIO will work with our partners, including the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Rutgers University and industry associations to create safer, more secure workplaces for our members.

EXPANDED SERVICES, EXPANDED STAFF

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO is proud to announce the addition of two new staff people, Ron Bulvanoski and Laurie Hrebenak. Ron Bulvanoski brings 35 years of experience in the labor movement as a member of IBEW 456, and five years as a trainer in the field of Occupational Safety and Health. Laurie brings diverse training, management and operational skills to the OSHEP Project, acquired through her co-directorship of a successful non-profit organization. Both Ron and Laurie will assist in the recently expanded OSHEP Program.

KEEPING OUR WORKPLACES SAFE!

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO will conduct a Health and Safety Train-the-Trainer Course November 29 – December 2, 2004, at the Rutgers Labor Education Center. Topics to be covered include ergonomics, hazard awareness, OSHA, sexual harassment, workplace violence, and development of safety and health committees. If you are interested in enhancing your training skills through this course or would like more information, contact Christine Rampolla at 732-418-3427.

LEAP TRAINING

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO, through its LEAP program, provided Worker Advocate Training to UAW 2315 members recently laid off from the Dallas Airmotive plant in Millville. For more information about this program contact Nancy Miller, project coordinator, at 973-614-0049.

OF NOTE

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO extends condolences to the family of Jose Gilberto Soto. Mr. Soto, a Teamsters representative from New Jersey, was killed on November 5 while visiting El Salvador in an effort to organize port drivers.