



# Labor Fax

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**ELECTION DAY COUNTDOWN:  
62 DAYS: NOVEMBER 2, 2004**

## ARE YOU READY?

By Charles Wowkanech & Laurel Brennan

Over 100 years ago, recognizing the contribution workers made to America, Congress passed a law designating the first Monday of September as Labor Day. Soon after, Samuel Gompers, founder and longtime President of the American Federation of Labor, said that Labor Day was different than other holidays which are "more or less connected with conflicts and battles."

Unfortunately, while Gompers may have been accurate in his description of Labor Day at the time, we all know that union members, and working families across America *are* engaged in a battle. Everyday in workplaces across America, hard working men and women are fighting for their right to receive fair wages, comprehensive medical benefits, and the ability to join a union.

As this Labor Fax is distributed to members across the state, President Bush is preparing to accept the nomination from the Republican Party for a second term in office. Be assured that in his acceptance speech he will not talk about the millions of jobs lost during his first term, or the incentives he offers to corporations to send jobs overseas. He will not talk about the more than 40 million uninsured Americans, and he will not talk about the overtime pay he is taking away from workers all across America.

No, President Bush will not talk about these issues. But, we will!

Everyday between now and Election Day we have to remind our family, friends, co-workers, and anybody that will listen that because of the misguided, anti-working family policies of the Bush Administration, America's workers face the very real threat that their job will be exported overseas, they have to worry about whether or not their health benefits, if they have any at all, will cover the cost of a medical emergency, and with recently enacted regulations, they cannot be positive if they will be paid what they deserve for the hours they work.

The future of the labor movement in America will be determined by our actions over the next two months. Are you ready?



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Labor Fax  
APEX Award

## MAKE SURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS!

Under new guidelines established by the Help America Vote Act, first time voters who register by mail are subjected to strict identification requirements. Those registering to vote by mail should include a photo copy of their drivers license or the last 4 digits of either their social security number or their drivers license number on the registration form prior to mailing it in. If this information is not provided at the time of registration, identification will be verified at the polls. Those who change their registration or register through a WORKER/VOTER program are exempted from this provision.

## MCGREEVEY SIGNS PREVAILING WAGE BILL

On August 23, 2004, legislation initiated by the New Jersey State AFL-CIO was signed by Governor McGreevey. A-1819 / S-598, sponsored by Assemblyman Joe Egan (D-17) and Senator Fred Madden (D-4), extends the application of the Prevailing Wage Law to all construction and rehabilitation projects awarded by certain authorities. Those authorities include the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA), the New Jersey Educational Facilities Authority, the New Jersey Health Care Facilities Financing Authority and any county improvement authority.

## GOT OVERTIME PAY?

Across the nation, America's workers protested President George W. Bush's overtime pay take-away, in which some 6 million workers could lose their right to overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The new overtime rule, implemented by the Department of Labor, went into effect on August 23, 2004. While employees working under a union negotiated contract are exempt from these regulations, they have made their voices heard on this issue to show their solidarity with their non-union counterparts. Since Bush announced the overtime pay take-away in March 2003, workers have sent more than 1.6 million e-mail, mail and fax messages protesting the assault on the nation's wage and hour laws. Hearing them, the U.S. Senate has voted three times to stop Bush's overtime pay grab—but White House pressure and maneuvers by Republican congressional leaders derailed the drive to protect workers' paychecks.

- NJ State AFL-CIO: The Voice for Working Families in New Jersey -

**ON THE ROAD**

Officers and Staff of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO:  
 ...participated in the Rapid Response Conference in Atlantic City.  
 ...attended Orientation on College Credit program sponsored by the American Council on Education.  
 ...received training by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) on "Electrical Safety Programs."  
 ...attended US DOT Conference on Multi-modal transportation.  
 ...attended the New Jersey State Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) meeting.  
 ...attended and participated in New Jersey Building and Construction Trades Council Convention.  
 ...attended Governor's Commission to Support and Enhance New Jersey's Military and Coast Guard Installations.  
 ...attended and participated in the UAW Region 9 Leadership Conference in Wildwood.

**LABOR DAY EVENTS**

Several events will be held around the state to mark Labor Day which will be celebrated this year on Monday, September, 6:

The Southern New Jersey Central Labor Council will hold their annual Peter J. McGuire Labor Day Celebration. The event begins with a breakfast, held at the Clarion Hotel & Conference Center in Cherry Hill beginning at 9:00 a.m. A wreath laying ceremony will take place immediately after the breakfast at the Peter J. McGuire Memorial. For more information on this event call Nicole Nestopoulous at 856-663-1555.

On Sunday, September 5, the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark, Borough of Haledon and the City of Paterson will hold their 13th annual Labor Day Parade. Mr. Lou La Carbonara, President of the Italian American Labor Council, will serve as the Grand Marshall of this parade which begins at 1:30 p.m. at the American Labor Museum and concludes at the Great Falls in Paterson. A festival with food, fun and entertainment will follow the parade.

The final Labor Day event for 2004 will be held on Friday, September 10. Sponsored by the Essex-West Hudson Labor Council AFL-CIO, festivities will include a pre-parade program at Newark City Hall, followed by a parade led by Grand Marshal Vincent J. DeVito, President of UFCW Local 1245, to St. Patrick's Pro Cathedral on Washington Street, and conclude with a 45-minute Interfaith Observation of Labor Day.

**BUY AMERICAN, THE NEXT GENERATION**

While American jobs continue to be exported overseas, it seems that young Americans have not yet made the connection between buying American and saving their own jobs. According to a recent survey, nearly two-thirds of those under thirty said that they seldom ever check where the products they buy are made.

**Upcoming Events**

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| September 8  | Retirees Committee Meeting<br>Rutgers Labor Center   |
| September 9  | Meet the Author<br>Book Review and Reception<br>Featuring Thomas Gass<br>Author<br><i>"Nobody's Home:<br/>Candid Reflections of a Nursing Home Aide"</i><br>Rutgers Labor Center |
| September 13 | Retirees Committee Legislative Conference<br>IBEW Local 400<br>Wall Township   |
| September 14 | PEC Meeting<br>Trenton   |
| September 15 | HAAC Meeting<br>Trenton  |
| October 5-6  | NJ State AFL-CIO Legislative Conference<br>Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa<br>Atlantic City   |

**"NOBODY'S HOME"**

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO will welcome Thomas Gass to the Rutgers Labor Center on September 9. Mr. Gass is the author of "Nobody's Home: Candid Reflections of a Nursing Home Aide." This book details the experiences of Mr. Gass during the years he spent caring for residents in a nursing home. Following a reception, Mr. Gass will discuss his experiences and also take questions from the audience. Space is limited for this special event. Please RSVP to Tina Carr at 609-989-8730 to reserve a seat!

**RETIRES...SAVE THE DATE!**

The NJ State AFL-CIO's 4th Annual Legislative Conference will be held Monday, September 13 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the IBEW Local 400 Hall in Wall Township. All local unions and retiree chapters are encouraged to send members to this important event. Congressman Rush Holt (D-12) and Assemblyman Robert Morgan (D-12) are scheduled to attend this event to discuss the new Medicare Prescription Plan recently signed into law by President Bush. Come to this important event to discuss the important issues that are at stake during this presidential election.

**WORDS OF WISDOM**

"If there is no struggle there is no progress." Frederick Douglass, 1818-1895, American abolitionist, writer, statesman, reformer.