

Graphic Communicator

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TOP STORY

Union Midterm Vote Crucial to Labor Progress

By Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator



By Fred Bruning
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In a tense political atmosphere that has raised the stakes on next month's midterm elections, union leaders are calling on members to engage with the issues, remain focused on working-class priorities and back candidates who will deliver for organized labor.

"We cannot afford to be swayed by so-called 'culture war' distractions instead of basic concerns – jobs, good pay, pension protection – necessary to the wellbeing of our families and the union movement," said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman.

Like labor leaders across the country, Freeman said members should support candidates who have emphasized workplace equity, protecting the working class and upholding the country's democratic norms.

"These are always our priorities but we are in unusual times and must take nothing for granted," Freeman said. "Extreme views that challenge our sense of unity and common purpose are on the rise. We cannot be complacent."

President Joe Biden, perhaps the most labor-friendly chief executive since Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has delivered significantly for unions in the first two years of his term, analysts say, but progress would be in jeopardy if Republicans retake the House or Senate – or both.

For much of the early election season, there had been predictions of a lopsided GOP victory – a "red wave" that would wash over Democrats, put them in a legislative majority and make Biden virtually a lame duck president for the last two years of his term.

But the White House scored a string of victories – capped by passage of the \$740 billion Inflation Reduction Act passed

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Midterm Election Guide

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WHERE I STAND

KURT FREEMAN GCC/IBT PRESIDENT

Don't Be Distracted By Familiar Political Tricks That Divide Americans

CRUCIAL MIDTERM ELECTIONS ARE A FEW WEEKS AWAY.

My message: Vote – and vote smart.

It's that simple.

As union members, we have a duty to be solid citizens, stay informed, support candidates who are labor-friendly.

What we must not do is allow ourselves to be distracted by so-called "culture war" issues that pit Americans – and, often, union members – against each other.



That's a favorite trick of politicians who offer little to working people.

Get Americans to turn on one another so they don't pay attention to the most important issues – bringing home a decent paycheck, protecting middle class values, assuring a safe and secure future for their families.

It's fine to have passionate opinions on topics like abortion and gun rights. But make no mistake: At this remarkable moment, bread-and-butter issues demand topmost attention.

Inflation, gas prices, supply chain problems – all major worries.

It's easy to blame President Joe Biden – and poll numbers show many people do. After all, he's the man in charge.

Stop for a moment, though, to consider what Biden inherited: A pandemic still in full swing and all the disruption that it brought. A struggling job market. Uncertainty across the board.

Then, early this year, came Russia's outrageous invasion of Ukraine – naked aggression launched by President Vladimir Putin that further rocked world gas and petroleum markets, stalled grain exports and rattled investors.

Around the globe, economies teetered and inflation soared. Our country suffered, too, but, thanks to Biden and Democrats in the House and Senate, we were spared the worst.

Like the United States, most European countries are contending with inflation just under 10 percent. But our real gross domestic product



beats those overseas. Wages here are rising faster. Unemployment is lower. U.S. motorists pay less for gas than European drivers. (Last summer, CNN reported that gas in Britain was \$8.60 a gallon and that it took \$125 to fill an average auto in Britain.)

So while Biden's approval numbers stay stubbornly low – the President deserves better, in my opinion – his accomplishments are significant. The publication American Progress noted some of the most important:

- More jobs were added than ever before.
- Unemployment has declined at a record rate.
- The United States returned to pre-pandemic income levels faster than any other nation.
- Disposable income is up and poverty down.

Despite endless Republican obstructionism, Biden and Democrats passed major legislation intended to relieve pressure on working people and create even more jobs – many of them in unionized sectors.

First came a covid relief bill, then a massive infrastructure initiative and, finally, a game-changing measure that addresses environmental concerns, lowers the cost of prescription drugs for Medicare recipients and cracks down on billion-dollar businesses that paid no taxes.

And let's not forget that the Biden administration stepped in only a few months ago to protect GCC/IBT and Teamster pensions with billions in emergency aid – yes, billions – through the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

None of this would have happened if Republicans controlled the House or Senate. Keep that in mind when you go to polls Nov. 8. Against the odds, Biden and Democrats have accomplished plenty for working people. Let's give them a chance to keep up the good work. ■

OUTLOOK

SEAN M. O'BRIEN TEAMSTERS GENERAL PRESIDENT

Elected Leaders Must Earn Support of Workers

AS I TRAVEL AROUND THE COUNTRY talking to Teamsters, one thing I often hear is that members feel like politicians in Washington don't care about the struggles they face.

One of the reasons workers feel like they have been left on their own is because of the lack of policies and legislation that affect working people in a positive way. It's true, almost all legislation that is passed in our country benefits big business, not working people.

With that said, there was some incredibly important legislative progress for Teamsters over the last couple years.

Hands down, the most beneficial piece of legislation was the Butch Lewis Act that was included in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

This single piece of legislation provided funding to underfunded multiemployer pension plans and will ensure that millions of American



workers, retirees, and their families receive the pension benefits they were promised. This was the biggest victory for working people in more than a generation.

This victory would not have been possible without the two Senate seats – now held by Democrats Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff – that were gained in Georgia in the 2020 election.

Every Republican in the Senate voted against saving our pensions, requiring Vice-President Kamala Harris to break a 50-50 tie. If that isn't an example of elections having consequences, I don't know what is.

We need to elect more senators and representatives who would have joined those who voted to protect multiemployer pensions, not those who turned their back on us.

So as you get ready to vote this year, remember where the candidates on your ballot stand and how they voted in the past.

It's time to send a message to our elected leaders that in order to get our support, they must support us while casting their votes in Washington. ■



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25 Louisiana Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-508-6660

e-mail: webmessenger@gcciu.org
Internet: www.gccibt.org

GEORGE TEDESCHI
Editor

FRED BRUNING
Managing Editor

AFFILIATIONS

Change to Win Coalition

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Member of International
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Labor Progress Depends on Who's Running Washington

CRUNCH TIME.

Midterm elections are almost here and as our extensive coverage on Pages 1, 8 and 9 indicates there is a lot on the line for union members – and the nation.

The country is divided and emotions are running high.



But as GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman says in his Page 2 “Where I Stand” column, organized labor cannot be sidetracked by cynical political stunts to distract voters from the most basic issues families face.

Freeman said we can't “allow ourselves to be distracted by so-called ‘culture war’ issues that pit Americans – and, often,

union members – against each other.” He added: “That’s a favorite trick of politicians who offer little to working people.”

America needs steady leadership – and elected officials committed to the working class.

President Joe Biden has proven himself to be an outspoken and reliable friend of unions. We point out in a Page 6 editorial that Biden has amassed an impressive record of pro-labor achievements – usually without help from any Republicans.

Aside from big legislative wins aimed at boosting the economy and creating jobs, Biden has required contractors on big federal projects to sign labor agreements in advance. He has ordered that federal workers make at least \$15 an hour. Under Biden's watch, a White House study group was created to find ways to support collective bargaining.

We point out as well in the editorial that the Biden administration protected GCC/IBT and Teamster pensions with billions in emergency aid through the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. That's big news.



Biden will not be on the ballot next month but the election amounts to a referendum on his pro-labor agenda. If Democrats come up short on Nov. 8, progress surely will be stalled.

Turnout is key, and the union vote could make a huge difference in the outcome. Freeman and labor leaders around the country are urging members to stay engaged, study the issues and cast their votes for candidates committed to working class priorities.

“Against the odds, Biden and Democrats have accomplished plenty for working people,” Freeman said. “Let's give them a chance to keep up the good work.”

The midterms come at a time when public approval of unions continues on the upswing. There are organizing efforts around the nation at places large and small.

An item in Local Stops on Page 11 tells of a GCC/IBT victories at a Packaging Corporation of America shop in Illinois and at Newsday on Long Island, where workers on the paper's digital edition voted unanimously to align with Local 406-C.

“They wanted someone to stand up for them, to intercede for them, to be on their side,” said Judy Weinberg, editorial unit chairperson for 406. “They were uncertain of their position and wanted people to listen to them.”

And that's what unions do – they listen, they intercede, they stand up for workers.

That unyielding sense of mission was demonstrated recently at a shopping mall in Maryland where workers were demonstrating outside a Starbucks shop.

Like many of their co-workers across the nation, these determined employees were demanding workplace fairness from the coffee giant – and union representation.

Spotting the small group, George Tedeschi, GCC/IBT president emeritus, joined the picket line in a gesture of solidarity.

“Thanks especially to enthusiastic young workers, organized labor is making progress coast-to-coast,” Tedeschi said in a story on Page 10. “Traditional unionists in every sector should be cheering them on. They are the future.”

COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

U.S. Health Care has Become One More Industrial Product

While our doctors, nurses, and technicians are among the best in the world, our health care system itself is not designed for care but for the constant expansion of profits for insurance giants, drugmakers, hospital chains, system managers, financiers, and other voracious components of the medical industry.

For starters, ponder the term, “medical industry.”

The essence of health care is that it's a human right, essential to every person and to the common good. But corporate elites now claim to “own” our health by making it just another industrial product available to those able to pay whatever the system demands.

This rationing of care meant the industry was leaving a mass market of millions of patients untapped, so industry executives made a critical adjustment. Lower prices? Ha – don't be silly!

Instead, the industrywide system has been encouraging medical debt as the ticket to care. So, you come in sick or injured, scared and maybe incoherent or confused and suddenly you're hooked up to a long-term medical payment plan.

In a startling survey, the Kaiser Family Foundation revealed that Americans – including 41 percent of all adults – are in debt because of the so-called “care-industry.” This includes bills from the system itself, plus money borrowed from family or friends, and medical debt that patients put on credit cards.



An analysis three years ago estimated that families were being hit with at least \$195 billion in payments for medical borrowing – a number driven dramatically higher since the pandemic.

Here's the most significant statistic in the convoluted world of health care economics: Half of US adults don't have the money to cover a \$500 medical bill. As the system keeps jacking up its prices and profits, millions of families are forced by illness or injury into the dark valley of debt, inhabited by a shadowy network of ruthless debt collectors employed by the medical establishment.

But wait, you say, I have health insurance! Still, ever-rising prices and out-of-pocket insurance requirements put you into debt, too. And the Kaiser Family Foundation



survey found that six of 10 working-age adults with health coverage went into medical debt in the past five years.

Most perversely, having healthcare debt prevents many people from getting health care. One in seven Americans say the corporate system has refused care for them because they have unpaid medical bills, and a two-thirds majority say they've put off care because of the fear of crushing debt.

As one expert puts it: “The No.1 reason – and the No. 2, 3, and 4 reasons – that people go into medical debt is they don't have the money. It's not complicated.”

What's the most damning thing about America's health care system? The system. To help stop the corporate grifters and profiteers, go to RIPMedicalDebt.org. “Join our fight to end medical debt,” says RIP on its website, “and be a source of justice in an unjust system.”

Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower writes the Hightower Lowdown, a monthly newsletter chronicling the ongoing fight by America's ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Annual subscription rates for the Hightower Lowdown: \$10, digital; \$15, print. Information at Hightowerlowdown.org

Pension Fund Urges Update Of Paperwork

Officials at the GCC/IBT National Pension Fund say approximately 1,000 retirees who have failed to return recertification forms must comply immediately or risk losing benefits.

NPF administrator Jim Thomos said the fund sent three letters to its 20,000 plan retirees asking to submit “proof of life” forms confirming they are entitled to continued monthly payments.

The survey – part of a new NPF “attestation” project – is aimed at making certain the fund does not pay benefits to retirees after death, or, that payments are adjusted appropriately in the case of a surviving spouse with benefit privileges.

Thomos said the NPF, like all pension funds, cannot afford to continue payments after a recipient has died, and that it is difficult to recover money sent to the bank accounts of deceased retirees.

“No fund can afford to give away money and then pay money in legal fees to try to get those payments back,” said Thomos, who assumed the top NPF role in August following the retirement of long-time administrator Georges Smetana.

Response to the “attestation of life” survey was encouraging overall, Thomos said, but 1,000 recipients, or their families, have failed to respond to inquiries first sent in January with 1099-R tax forms and again in April and early August.

Retirees who did not respond by Aug. 29 likely will begin missing payments in October. Thomos urged those individuals to immediately contact the NPF office in Carol Stream, Illinois, at 630-871-7733. “I’m hoping to hear back from everybody,” he said.



GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman, an NPF trustee, echoed the call for compliance.

“The Fund needs to certify that benefits are being paid to the proper recipient, which will help protect the fund’s resources,” Freeman said. “If this form is not returned to the fund, pension benefits will be suspended. Returning this form will ensure that participants continue to receive benefits.”

Officials emphasized that the “attestation” requirement applies only to NPF participants and not retired members participating in other GCC pension funds. “Those enrolled in other pension fund programs have no obligation and need not be concerned,” Freeman said.

Thomos noted, however, that a number of pension programs have begun “attestation” campaigns to assure they are not making needless payments and to ensure good fiduciary practices.

“Many have been doing what we are doing here – for benefits of all participants and to make sure we have money to pay benefits into the future,” he said.

Thomos, who joined the NPF at its Carol Stream, Illinois,

“No fund can afford to give away money and then pay money in legal fees to try to get those payments back.”

– NPF Administrator Jim Thomos

office 16 years ago, previously served as controller and assistant administrator. Smetana said Thomos had been a “tremendous asset” and was particularly suited to lead the fund during uncertain economic times.

“Jim is uniquely qualified to guide the operations of this fund into the future,” said Smetana. “He exemplifies the type of drive and leadership the fund will need in today’s volatile environment.”

Smetana said he will continue assisting the fund in an advisory capacity.

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE, HOFFA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS SHOOT FOR THE SKY

When he visited the NASA space center in Houston on a Christmas holiday with his family, Austin Lennert knew where his career was headed.

“It was really amazing,” said Austin, 18, winner of a \$1,000 vocational/training award from the James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund, who hopes for a job one day with the space agency as a computer programmer – and perhaps even a role as an astronaut.

His interest in space exploration already had been stirred by the manned SpaceX program of entrepreneur Elon Musk.

“I watched the launch when they first sent human beings into space,” said Austin, son of Robert Lennert, a press operator at TC Transcontinental and member of Local 77-P, Neenah, Wisconsin. “I thought, ‘Hey, I actually have a chance of going into space.’”

Austin, who is studying at Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton, Wisconsin, was one of three students from GCC/IBT families to win Hoffa awards this year.

Joining him on the list of recipients were, Shane Sullivan, son of Patrick Sullivan, vice president of Local 3-N, Boston, and Marli Timothy, daughter of Brian Timothy, a machine operator at Packaging Corporation of America in Salt Lake City and member of Local 541-S.

Like Austin, Shane and Marli are aiming high.

Shane, 18, whose father is chapel chairman at the Boston Globe and brother of Local 3-N president Steve Sullivan, is the winner of a \$1,000 “Bootstrap” award and hopes to pursue a career in journalism.

A commitment to the journalistic mission “runs in the family,” Shane said. His dad works at the Globe, his mother, Elizabeth, was a journalism major in college, and an older brother is studying journalism at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

“I hope to become a reporter for a major publication like the Globe,” Shane said, a freshman at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. “I want to travel the world, and write.”

Marli Timothy, winner of a \$500 Hoffa vocational/training award, has the same sort of focus and determination.

As a member of the drill team at Hunter High School in West Valley City, Utah, Marli, 18, suffered a separated shoulder and required physical therapy. During recovery, she spent hours with the school’s athletic trainer and became interested in the field of sports medicine.



Austin Lennert



Shane Sullivan



Marli Timothy

Now she is majoring in health education and promotion at Utah State University Eastern in Price, Utah. “I always knew I wanted to go into the medical field,” Marli said.

It is a demanding career, she knows, but Marli says she is ready. “I’ve always been super-motivated like my Mom and Dad. I always set goals that I know I can achieve and push myself.”

The three GCC/IBT winners expressed gratitude for the Hoffa awards and the program’s commitment to education.

“This helps a lot,” said Austin Lennert. “I have really big goals.”

Shane Sullivan added his thanks and also noted the importance of the GCC/IBT in the life of his family.

“The union fights for the working class,” Shane said. “I’m very grateful for everything the union has done for my father and for the Hoffa award.”

Marli Timothy said the Hoffa scholarship money amounts to a vote of confidence in the next generation and the lofty aspirations of motivated young people.

“It’s giving me the opportunity to put myself out there,” she said, “It will help me push myself further with my career and help me do anything I want in the future.”

The Hoffa fund is an independent, tax-exempt organization, that awarded \$1.2 million in scholarships this year. Fund officials will begin accepting online applications at the end of November for next year’s awards. For more information go to the fund website, www.jrhmsf.org

GCC Hails Aggressive Teamster UPS Drive

A year before its agreement with United Parcel Service expires, the IBT has launched a nationwide mobilization campaign aimed at gaining major contract improvements and putting the company on notice that the union's recently installed leadership team will have little patience with corporate stonewalling.

"We are sending a message to UPS that the days of concessions and walking all over our members are over," said IBT President Sean M. O'Brien, who took office in March with a promise that he and General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman would usher in a bold era of assertiveness and militancy.

Early IBT efforts to put pressure on UPS drew support from GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman who said GCC package and paper product workers had a natural alliance with UPS workers.

"We believe the IBT's aggressive approach at UPS is a winning strategy," Freeman said. "Our packaging plants will be following the negotiations with interest since our plants make the boxes that are shipped by UPS."

O'Brien and Zuckerman have left little doubt about bargaining goals for a new contract when the existing pact expires July 31, 2023.

Among top priorities will be ending policies and practices the union considers intolerable: "excessive" overtime, a two-tier pay system for subcontractors and surveillance systems that monitor UPS drivers on the job.

The union also intends to press for more full-time jobs and address urgent health issues related to drivers who spend hours in delivery trucks that lack air conditioning – a life-threatening situation, leaders say.

In June, Esteban Chavez Jr., a 24-year-old UPS driver, collapsed in his truck when temperatures in Los Angeles hit the 90s. He died from what his family believes was heat stroke. The next month, a video went viral showing a UPS driver slumping to the ground while making a delivery in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The problem is widespread, drivers say.

"People are just dropping weekly here," Moe Nouhaili, a UPS driver in Las Vegas, told The Guardian newspaper. "It's not something where that one driver in Arizona is going viral. It's not just the way that UPS is treating workers, it's also how they're making us work, expecting us to meet these unrealistic productivity numbers even through the weather."

In connection with the UPS campaign and broader issues related to the global transportation industry, O'Brien and Zuckerman traveled to Argentina for talks with the International Transport Workers' Federation and continued to Rome with an ITF contingent for discussions at the Vatican on human rights, the climate crisis and workplace-related issues.



With an international transport workers group, IBT General President Sean M. O'Brien and General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman met with human rights officials at the Vatican and were welcomed by Pope Francis. At home, UPS drivers in New York rallied on behalf of the Teamsters campaign to win major contract improvements next year and put the company on notice that 'the days of concessions and walking all over our members are over.'



Welcomed by Pope Francis, delegates called on political, economic and business leaders to "pull the world back from the brink of recession" and help "build a sustainable global economy" instead of "concentrating solely on profit," an ITF statement said.

Union leaders – including Sara Nelson, President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, and International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Vice President Richard Johnsen – met at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences within the Vatican. Nelson and Johnsen pledged to support the UPS contract fight, Teamster officials said.

The Vatican trip was timely. Around the globe, workers are struggling to keep pace while big business and wealthy executives make enormous gains.

"Corporations conspire every day to lower working people's wages and living standards, and unions worldwide must better coordinate to organize and fight back," O'Brien said. "Not just with talk, but with real actions. Our friends at the ITF and in Argentina have pledged their support of the Teamsters' fight for the strongest contract at UPS. We will continue to pressure this global corporation from every angle possible over the coming year."

Like other package delivery services, UPS enjoyed increased profits as consumers shopped from home during the covid-19 epidemic.

The company, which has a workforce of more than a half-million, expects revenues to exceed \$100 billion this year – a 15 percent increase over 2021, according to a report by PAI Union News Service. IBT officials say UPS net profits were \$11.2 billion in the last two years.

PAI also noted that the AFL-CIO's Executive Paywatch survey showed the 2021 fiscal year compensation for Carol B. Tomé, chief executive officer at UPS, was \$27.62 million, including \$1.33 million in straight salary, \$23.67 million in stock awards and various other earnings – an amount 548 times the median pay of UPS workers, according to PAI.

The company's soaring profits and outsized rewards for top executives may work to the union's advantage, experts say.

"O'Brien has a historic opportunity," Steve Viscelli, a University of Pennsylvania sociologist who studies labor markets, told the Bloomberg news site. "There's no better time in the last 50 years for unions to make the case that they should be a part of the American economy and make it fair for working people."

The IBT contract campaign began Aug. 1 and is a nationwide effort. Teamster representatives and stewards at UPS facilities will be conducting site visits and delivering informational material to workers.

In New York, Teamster members rallied at the company's warehouse in Maspeth, Queens, to demand raises and job protections.

"We are going to spend the next year educating each other and building unity, because we need a new contract that holds UPS accountable," said Domenick DeDomenico, a driver and shop steward at IBT Local 804, Long Island City, New York. "There is strength in numbers. We are the workers that make UPS its billions and the managers can't run it without us."

O'Brien says the union will be relentless in demonstrating its fortitude and determination over the next year.

"UPS Teamsters are united and ready to mobilize in the fight for the best contract ever negotiated at UPS," O'Brien said. He warned there would be no extension if talks failed by Aug. 1, 2023. "We'll either have a signed agreement that day or be hitting the pavement," the IBT leader said.

SCHOLARSHIPS Benefiting Teamster Families



JAMES R. HOFFA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

2023 Academic and Vocational/Training Program
Scholarships for the children and financial dependents
of Teamster members

Application process opens **November 30, 2022**
Deadline: **March 1, 2023**

For more information, visit www.jrhmsf.org



Biden and Dems Deliver Historic Labor Progress

Have you heard about:

- The Project Labor Agreements order (PLA) requiring contractors on big federal jobs to enter union contracts before work begins?
- The Labor Department rule demanding workers on government projects earn at least \$15 an hour?
- The executive order on Worker Organizing and Empowerment that created a White House study group – chaired by Vice President Kamala Harris – aimed at supporting worker power, worker organizing, and collective bargaining?
- The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 – legislation that will update the post office, stabilize its shaky finances, ensure six-day service and help provide job security for thousands of hard-working postal system employees?

In less than two years, President Joe Biden and his team have done more for American workers – and the labor movement – than any administration since the days of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

But a lot of those important moves have gone by unnoticed – and unappreciated.

“Americans often fail to recognize government’s role in society, even if they have experienced it in their own lives,” Suzanne Mettler, a professor of government at Cornell, has noted in a New York Times op-ed. “That is because so much of what government does today is largely invisible.”

With midterm elections only weeks away, it’s time for union members to pay attention. Biden and Democrats have made a difference – bigtime.

The President has appointed pro-union members to the National Labor Relations Board and replaced the Trump administration’s business-friendly NLRB general counsel Peter Robb with Jennifer Abruzzo, a former special counsel at the Communications Workers of America.

The Senate confirmed 46 of Biden’s federal judge appointments by March 1 – an all-time record – and unlike the deeply conservative picks of former President Donald Trump, the Biden jurists can be counted upon to give labor a fair shake when considering cases related to organized labor or workers’ rights.

And we haven’t even mentioned the big, bold Administration-backed legislation that Democrats muscled into law often without much Republican help.

They include a \$1.9 trillion covid relief package, \$1.2 trillion infrastructure plan, \$280 billion Chips and Science Act boosting the U.S. technology and, most recently, a \$750 billion Inflation Reduction Act that boosts the environment, helps Americans pay for health care and gives Medicare recipients a break on prescription drugs.

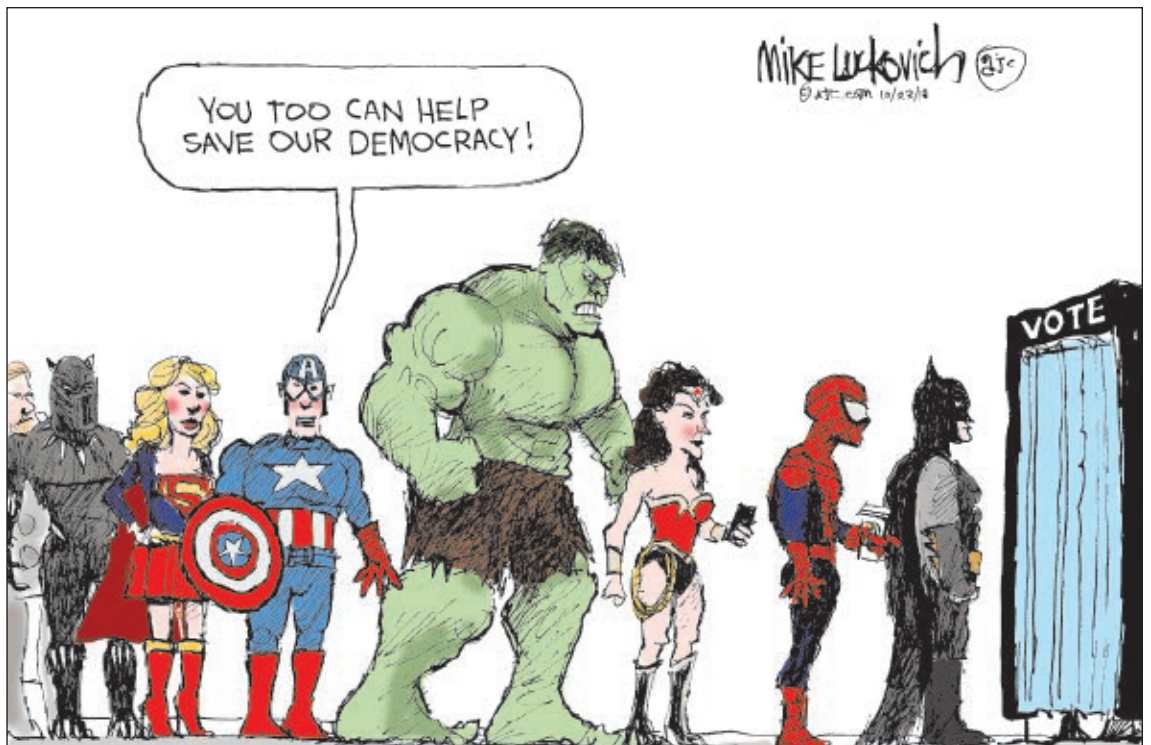
In particular, our union must also remember that the Biden administration protected GCC/IBT and Teamster pensions with billions in emergency aid through the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

Despite significant accomplishments, Biden gets little respect. His poll numbers are disappointing and Republicans take pleasure in portraying the President as incompetent and out of touch.

It’s baloney thickly sliced by a GOP that can’t shake Donald Trump and has little to offer but a slew of familiar complaints about big government and burdensome corporate taxes. Until they were shamed in the media, Republicans even held up a bill – the PACT Act – expanding benefits for 3.5 million veterans exposed to toxic “burn pits” while serving overseas.

President Biden will not be on the ballot Nov. 8 but at the local, state and federal levels, the 2022 midterms amount to a referendum on his worker-friendly approach and commitment to labor.

The administration has done a great deal of good over the past two years despite challenges – covid, Ukraine, global inflation – that would be daunting under any circumstances. Let’s look at things clearly, give credit where it’s due and elect officials who will help Joe Biden and Democrats keep making progress on behalf of American workers. ■



Point of View

BY MARK GRUENBERG

Join the Resistance – Vote!

There is no more important issue for workers and voters this fall than blocking the looming tyranny of Donald Trump and his enablers.

Without free and fair elections, we won’t beat inflation or have any chance of getting pro-labor legislation – like the Protect the Right to Organize (PRO) Act – on the books.

We’ll go backwards – or worse.

At the AFL-CIO convention in June, delegates passed a resolution called, “Building A Political Movement that Meets the Moment.”

The language was strong and direct.

“The pandemic reminded us that corporate-driven government is bad for working people and our nation, and that we must build a more equitable America, where every person is entitled to a voice on the job,” the resolution said.

It warned of “the very real threat of authoritarianism,” cautioned that Trump and his allies are determined to “divide and disenfranchise us” and concluded that “in short, we must build a political movement to meet this moment.”

Trump will never admit he tried to trash the Constitution by claiming the 2020 election was “stolen.” But if you watched the January 6 Committee hearings, that’s what he did,

Washington Post columnist E.J. Dionne reported that more than 100 “deniers”—Republicans who believe the 2020 election was stolen — have won nominations for top offices so far. That includes offices whose winners control elections.

They’re people like Pennsylvania State Sen. Doug Mastriano, the Republican gubernatorial nominee. He led the crusade in the Republican-majority legislature to “recount” the ballots in heavily minority Philadelphia and its suburbs. “Recount” really meant “Throw out.”

Or Maryland gubernatorial nominee State Rep. Dan Cox who spouted MAGA rhetoric about “individual freedom” when health authorities urged mask regulations to help beat covid.

Or Jim Marchant, Republican nominee for Nevada secretary of state and a peddler of crazy conspiracies.



Or Ron DeSantis, the authoritarian Republican governor of Florida and a Trump clone eyeing the party’s presidential bid in 2024.

On Jan. 6, 2021, as many as 2,000 Trump supporters trashed the Capitol in an attempt to halt the counting of Electoral College votes and keep Trump in office. Five police officers died as a result and 150 more were injured.

A half-century ago, burglars broke into Democratic Party offices in Washington, D.C. – a botched caper that led to the Watergate scandal and downfall of President Richard Nixon. But we came far closer to tyranny last year when rioters tried to overturn a fair election.

Unrepentant, Trump continues even now to claim the election was “stolen” and Joe Biden is an interloper in the White House. Trump’s supporters are as energized as ever. And Trump is likely to run for President again.

We can’t forget the insurrection – and Trump’s outrageous conduct – and focus on inflation. The Trump crusade to undermine democracy rates top priority – from union members and the nation as a whole.

We must resist by showing up at the polls on Election Day, Nov. 8 to conclusively and decisively defeat and destroy the tyrannical threat Trump represents. If Trump’s democracy-denying candidates triumph in the midterms, union members – and the nation – lose. ■

Mark Gruenberg is editor-in-chief of Press Associates Union News Service. He is based in Washington, D.C.

Don't Forget Your RMD's



How long are you going to live? The government has a calculator that takes a guess.

This is not an idle exercise.

Life expectancy is the way tax officials determine the amount you must withdraw annually from tax-deferred retirement accounts – IRA, 401(k) or 403(b).

Seniors are obligated to take the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) at 72-and-a-half or face a 50 percent penalty on the amount that should have been withdrawn. If, for example, you were required to take \$5,000 but didn't, the government would nail you for \$2,500. That's a lot of dough.

The amount you must withdraw each year is based on your tax-deferred account balance on Dec. 31. In 2021, investments did well – the S&P index was up 27 percent – which meant you probably had a good year and may have a large RMD to withdraw before Jan. 1.

But 2022 has brought mostly bad news from Wall Street.

By late summer, the S&P was down nearly 20 percent and NASDAQ dropped 28. If your bottom line sagged under the weight of a terrible market, you could have a lower RMD in 2023.

To get a better idea of your obligation, find the Social Security Administration's life expectancy calculator online (ssa.gov/oact/population/longevity.html) and see how long the SSA thinks you'll be around. Then divide the predicted age into your account balance and you'll have a general

idea of your RMD. Do it again on Dec. 31 and you will know precisely how much you must withdraw in 2023.

You can take RMD proceeds as you please.

I have friends who withdraw the whole thing early in the year and invest it – a little too adventurous for me but I understand the concept. A more conservative approach is to take the RMD in monthly withdrawals or one parcel at the end of the year to help pay taxes.

There can be pitfalls, no matter the strategy.

If, for example, you are a single person with an annual income of \$70,000 from pensions, Social Security and other sources, you likely will have an RMD obligation of approximately \$18,000 depending on age. That added income might cause Medicare premiums to double because you would have exceeded the Medicare income limit of \$85,000.

But there is no escape.

And what's fair is fair. Deferred tax plans gave millions of Americans an opportunity to significantly increase their retirement incomes. The deal was clear: Save tax now. Pay later.

"Later" has arrived. Let's make the withdrawals, pay the government what we owe, and be grateful we're still alive to do it.

Jerry Morgan is a former Newsday business writer and member of Local 406-C.

Guest Spot

BY JIM THOMOS

Important to File NPF Paperwork

When GCC/IBT members retire, one of their most important sources of income to meet day-to-day living expenses can be the pension benefits that they earned while working for a unionized employer.

While pension funds monitor governmental and third-party data bases in an attempt to confirm their retirees are still alive, it may take time for deaths to register on these data bases, if at all.

More and more pension plans are now requiring retirees to periodically submit proof that the retiree is still alive and entitled to continue receiving their monthly pension benefit.

Cases do arise where retirees or beneficiaries have joint accounts with relatives or other individuals who do not report the death of the retiree and then continue to wrongfully receive payments which should have stopped upon the death of the retiree or beneficiary.

In 2022, the GCC/IBT National Pension Fund (NPF), based in Carol Stream, Illinois, instituted an Attestation of Life program requiring retirees and beneficiaries to submit an Attestation of Life form to the fund office.

This program is intended to protect the NPF and its participants from the wrongful continuation of benefit payment when a benefit recipient passes away.

So, what is an Attestation of Life form?

An Attestation of Life form is a document signed by the rightful payee – retiree or their beneficiary – receiving benefits from the fund to confirm that they are alive as of that date.

While these forms typically must be notarized, due to the covid pandemic, the NPF's board of trustees made the decision that notarizations would not be required in the initial year of the program but that the retiree's signature must be witnessed.

What happens if one does not submit an Attestation of Life form?

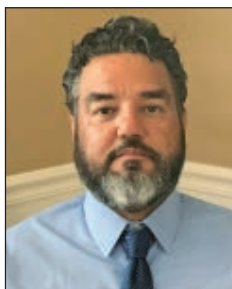
Failure to submit the periodically required Attestation of Life form before a specified date each year, will result in the suspension of the retiree's monthly pension benefits.

Benefits will be reinstated retroactively upon the pension funds receipt of the properly completed Attestation of Life form.

Therefore, it is important for retirees and beneficiaries to avoid the inconvenience of having their benefits suspended by submitting their Attestation of Life forms to the fund office as soon as possible after receiving them in the mail.

For additional information, please call 630-871-7733. We are here to serve you.

Jim Thomos is administrator of the GCC/IBT National Pension Fund. He succeeded Georges Smetana, who retired in August after nearly 20 years as the fund's top official.



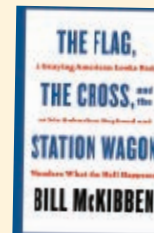
All the Best

Print

The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon: A Graying American Looks Back at His Suburban Boyhood and Wonders What the Hell Happened

Bill McKibben

Time doesn't stand still. As Bill McKibben knows, it doesn't even slow up. Perhaps the nation's most prominent environmental activist, McKibben, 61, struggles in this slender meditation (226 pages) to understand what happened to his beloved country between the wonder years of a youth spent in Lexington, Massachusetts, and time of such discord and division that Americans can't even agree that Joe Biden is the legitimate president of the United States. Something between a self-searching memoir and heartfelt sermon on the need for civility and mutual respect, "The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon" makes an urgent case for healing – binding the wounds of racial injustice and, at last, saving the Earth from a climate catastrophe. We can do it, McKibben promises, but only if we find common ground, "deal honestly" with ourselves – and get busy before time runs out. **Henry Holt and Company, \$27.99**

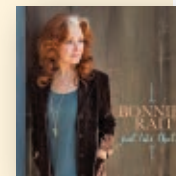


Music

Just Like That...

Bonnie Raitt

Bonnie Raitt will be 73 in November – think about that. She's been a major presence in the folk-rock-blues field since 1971 when her debut album, "Bonnie Raitt," brought immediate success and universal respect as musician and songwriter. Her latest recording, the first in six years, shows Raitt an undiminished performer of rare talent and integrity – dauntless, resourceful and free of sentimentality. With a voice that still cuts like steel, she sings of loss, healing and the sustaining power of love. "Just Like That..." achieves the emotional depth admirers have come to expect and speaks directly to these difficult times. "...all of a sudden, everything shifted," Raitt says, reflecting on the theme of this album. She is correct. Covid and political disruption have shaken the nation. But not everything has shifted. Bonnie Raitt remains the same. **Sub Pop/Redwing Records: Compact disc, \$15; LP, \$26.98**



Video/Streaming

The Bear

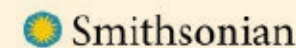
Christopher Storer, director

Simple idea, smash hit: High-end chef Carmen "Carmy" Berzatto (Jeremy Allen White) returns to Chicago after his brother – dead, by suicide – bequeaths him the family sandwich joint in a working-class neighborhood. The semi-pro staff at "Original Beef of Chicagoland" resent the guy with fancy notions on cuisine and cleanliness even though Carmy (a.k.a. "The Bear") refers to all employees as "chef" and makes clear they – and the restaurant – can do more than pound out greasy steak heroes. The series – eight episodes, with another season planned – has the immediacy of a reality show but with characters you care about more than any bunch of bachelors and bachelorettes. A lovable assortment of overachievers, the band of no-name "chefs" prove to Carmy – and themselves – they are worthy of a five-star review. FX on Hulu.



Internet

Smithsonian Institution



It's the 176th birthday of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum and a red sandstone wonder smack in the middle of downtown Washington, D.C. One of the nation's cultural jewels, the Smithsonian is the legacy of British scientist James Smithson who never visited the United States but had a deep belief that the "diffusion of knowledge" should not be limited by national boundaries. Smithson would be proud of the great work his generosity has allowed – and of this rich and splendid website reflecting the wide range of art and ideas the Smithsonian makes available online, or in person. **si.edu**



Union Members Can Make a Difference In Midterms and Assure Labor Progress

continued from PAGE 1

without a Republican vote – that prompted experts to reassess and suggest Democrats have a solid chance of holding onto the Senate, and with a significant voter turnout, perhaps salvage the House, too.

“Two months ago, it seemed that the Democratic Party was headed for a historic rout in this year’s midterm elections – but now, that assessment is being upended,” said The Hill news site shortly before Labor Day, adding “...Democrats are clearly on a roll.”

Union leaders say Americans are increasingly aware that Biden and Democrats are focused on working-class issues often ignored by Republicans.

“... in my lifetime nobody’s even come close to doing for working people what this guy’s done,” said Sean McGarvey, president of the North America’s Building Trades Unions told the Washington Post. “Not close.”

The inflation reduction bill – a revised version of the administration’s Build Back Better proposal – shows how strongly Biden and Democrats favor working people over corporate America.

Here are some important features of the bill, as outlined by Forbes magazine:

- Prescription drug reform that allows Medicare to negotiate the price of many prescription pharmaceuticals.
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) subsidy extension for approximately 3 million Americans who otherwise would have lost health insurance.
- Energy security and climate change investments that include tax credits for households to save on energy costs.

A 15 percent corporate minimum tax rate for businesses earning at least \$1 billion.

Biden, who won nearly 60 percent of union households in his successful 2020 race to unseat Donald Trump, has kept close ties with labor and says often that unions are essential if the United States hopes to maintain a viable middle class.

“The administration, I think, went out of their way to be pro-worker in every way, from actually saying words like ‘union’ and ‘labor’, which we haven’t always had even with Democratic presidents, House Labor Caucus Chairman Mark Pocan (D-Wisconsin) told the Bloomberg Law news site.

From the beginning of his presidency, Biden has called himself “a union guy” and conducted business accordingly.

Of special interest to GCC/IBT and Teamster members, the Biden administration made available \$1.7 billion through the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to protect



Joe Biden, perhaps the most labor-friendly president since FDR, calls himself a ‘union guy’ and has made good on his claim during the first two years in the White House.

“Joe Biden helped return dignity to the lives of our present and future members. I will be eternally grateful.”

–Steve Nobles, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president.



Labor Secretary Marty Walsh is a former union leader whose appointment by Biden demonstrated the President’s commitment to organized labor.

the union’s struggling retirement funds. “Joe Biden helped return dignity to the lives of our present and future members,” said Steve Nobles, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president. “I will be eternally grateful.”

Biden’s list of pro-labor achievements is remarkable, union leaders say.

The President backed a \$1 trillion infrastructure package that assures thousands of high-paying jobs, many in the union sector; supported organizing efforts at Amazon.com; established the Project Labor Agreements order requiring contractors on big federal jobs to enter union contracts; made it easier for federal workers to organize; signed an executive order on Worker Organizing and Empowerment that created a White House study group aimed at supporting “worker power, worker organizing, and collective bargaining.”

Biden picked Marty Walsh, former union leader and Boston mayor, as secretary of labor, nominated worker-friendly members to serve on the National Labor Relations Board and fired Peter Robb, the pro-business, Trump-appointed NLRB general counsel and replaced him with Jennifer Abruzzo, former special counsel for strategic initiatives at the Communications Workers of America.

The Washington Post notes that Biden has spoken to a meeting of North America’s Building Trades Unions and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, hosted union organizers in the Oval Office and supported unionization drives at Amazon warehouses and Starbucks coffee shops.

On Labor Day, Biden took part in a “Laborfest” celebration in Milwaukee and joined union leaders at a parade in Pittsburgh. The White House said he attended the events to hail the “dignity of American workers.”


Observers say the president’s zeal for unions likely is rarely matched even by Democrats who generally support organized labor but sometimes hedge their public comments.

“It’s been absolutely extraordinary,” former AFL-CIO political director Steve Rosenthal told the online publication, Politico. “We went through decades of Democratic presidents who didn’t say the ‘u’ word.” He added: “Biden has kicked the door down.”

While Biden and Democrats have proven themselves strong allies of organized labor, leaders acknowledge that many union members have been lured by Trump into the Republican fold.

“If you go to the rank and file in the John Deere factory or the Kellogg’s factory

Continues on page 16



SHOPS BUSY DURING RECORD SEASON FOR POLITICAL ADVERTISING

For GCC/IBT workers in Washington, D.C., the 2022 mid-term election season is proving to be busier than ever, union leaders say.

Many union print shops handle increased work before elections but being at ground zero – the nation’s capital – is proving especially demanding for Washington-area locals this year.

“With an increase of candidates running in local and national midterm elections, especially during the primaries, we are getting a lot of political printing – a lot more than other years,” said Janice Bort, secretary-treasurer of Local 72-C, Washington, D.C.

Shops are taking steps to meet the demand.

“It’s requiring more staffing and overtime,” Bort said. “We are having to actually hire more people to accommodate the increased workflow and putting on temporary workers in some cases because of the influx of political printing.”

Spending on political advertising is setting records in this important midterm election cycle.

The nonpartisan company Adimpact said outlays could reach almost \$10 billion and surpass even the money spent during the 2020 presidential contest between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, according to CNN.

“That,” said CNN, “is an astonishing sum...” – Dawn Hobbs



In Divided Nation Midterms Will be Hotly Contested



In a country divided by intense partisanship and emotional debate, the 2022 midterm elections will be especially hard-fought and closely watched. State races for governor, U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives now have national implications and are sure to be seen as a referendum on President Joe Biden and his predecessor, Donald Trump, though neither is on the ballot. Here is a sampling of the most important contests nationwide:

U.S Senate

Arizona: Freshman incumbent **Mark Kelly**, a moderate Democrat and husband of Gabrielle Giffords, the former U.S. representative who survived a 2011 assassination attempt, faces Trump-endorsed **Blake Masters**, a principal at Thiel Capital investment firm. Kelly is a retired Navy captain who flew combat missions in the first Gulf war and, as a NASA astronaut, rocketed four times into space. Masters must not be impressed. Kelly, he says, put the United States in “dire” danger by backing the worker-friendly policies of Joe Biden, whereas he – Masters – claims he will “restore American freedom and greatness.”

Colorado: **Joe O’Dea**, the Republican challenger to incumbent Democrat **Michael Bennet**, claims he would be an independent-minded legislator. O’Dea casts himself as a moderate who voted twice for Trump but hopes the former president does not run again. Bennet says watch out, O’Dea is all talk and would fall into step with hardline GOP policies once in office. O’Dea provided proof himself when he told the Washington Post he would not vote for Biden’s far-reaching Inflation Reduction Act which passed the Senate without a Republican vote. Bennet has held a lead in polling but this could be a close one.

Florida: **Marco Rubio**, a Republican who once promised to retire from the Senate but then decided Washington wasn’t such a bad place, after all, faces **Val Demings**, former Orlando police chief who now serves in the U.S. House of Representatives. Early polls indicate a tighter race than Rubio, a Tea Party favorite first elected in 2011, might have expected. Demings is raising more campaign funds than Rubio, has a straight-forward manner that voters appreciate and say she has never forgotten the advice offered by her hard-working mother, a maid, and father, an orange picker: “Never tire of doing good.”

Georgia: This race pits the incumbent Democrat **Raphael Warnock**, a dignified and deeply committed Baptist minister who has worked tirelessly for civil rights, against Trump-picked **Herschel Walker**, a former professional football player with a questionable background and no political experience. (The Associated Press found documentary evidence of “accusations that Walker repeatedly threatened his ex-wife’s life, exaggerated claims of financial success and alarmed business associates with unpredictable behavior.”) Walker’s tumultuous past and often uninformed comments have become campaign issues but Trump’s power keeps Walker competitive.

Nevada: With its large working-class population tied to the casino industry, Nevada leans toward Democrats but experts say incumbent Sen. **Catherine Cortez Masto** may have trouble overcoming a sour political mood that – unfairly, or not – has voters placing blame for inflation and domestic unease on the Biden administration. Masto, the first woman of Latin heritage in the Senate, faces Republican **Adam Laxalt**, co-chairman of Trump’s reelection campaign in Nevada who made unsubstantiated claims of election fraud and wanted to overturn the Biden win. Despite Laxalt’s extreme views, the contest likely will be a squeaker.

Ohio: Union members in Ohio know Democrat **Tim Ryan** is a good guy. He backs labor at every opportunity, shows up at picket lines and voted for the Protect the Right to Organize Act (PRO) in Congress as U.S. representative. Ryan is running against **J. D. Vance**, author of the best-selling book, “Hillbilly Elegy,” and a former Trump critic who became a worshipful supporter when it was time to seek the former president’s endorsement. Hypocritical, maybe, but Ohio is a red state that went for Trump by eight points in 2020. Ryan has a fight on his hands.

Pennsylvania: **Memet Oz** – the “Dr. Oz” of TV fame – caught the political bug and decided to run for Senate in Pennsylvania. Oz lived in New Jersey for decades but claimed residency at his in-laws’ house across the border and squeezed through the primary season to become the Trump-favored GOP candidate. He is opposed by Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor **John Fetterman**, an outspoken progressive with an “everyman” image who has been leading in polls despite suffering a stroke that kept him at home during the early stages of the campaign. Fetterman is a big guy – 6’-9” – with a sense of decency to match. “We’re all created equal, and we all deserve an equal shot,” he says. It’s an anti-Trumpian message – and, Fetterman believes, a winning one, too.

Wisconsin: **Ron Johnson**, the GOP incumbent, is among the most fierce and provocative pro-Trump members of the Senate. He has downplayed questions regarding his role in seeking to overturn Biden’s victory and insists he is the victim of investigators chasing “some massive conspiracy.” Opposing Johnson is the Wisconsin lieutenant governor, **Mandela Barnes**, a progressive who pledges to support mainline Democratic priorities like a middle-class tax cut, immigration reform and universal pre-kindergarten. Polls have favored Barnes, who is doing well with independents, but Republicans say Johnson will rally and salvage his Senate seat.

House of Representatives:

According to The Hill news site, these are among the most notable House races: Nevada: Rep. **Susie Lee** (D) vs. **April Becker** (R), a real estate attorney; Ohio: State Rep. **Emilia Sykes** (D) vs. **Madison Gesiotto Gilbert** (R), an attorney and conservative political commentator; Pennsylvania: **Chris Deluzio** (D), an Iraq war veteran and voting rights attorney vs. **Jeremy Shaffer**, a former township commissioner; Oregon: **Jamie McLeod-Skinner** (D), a small business owner and emergency response coordinator vs. **Lori Chavez-DeRemer** (R), mayor of Happy Valley, Oregon; Texas: Rep. **Henry Cuellar** vs. **Cassy Garcia** (R), formerly on the staff of Sen. Ted Cruz; Virginia: Rep. **Elaine Luria** (D) vs. State Sen. **Jen Kiggans** (R); and Rep. **Abigail Spanberger** (D) vs. **Yesli Vega** (R), a county supervisor.

Governors

Arizona: **Kari Lake**, a former newscaster is running with Trump’s support against Democrat **Katie Hobbs** who, as Secretary of State, oversaw Arizona’s 2020 election and courageously withstood attacks from the MAGA crowd making baseless claims of fraud. Republican insiders worry that Lake’s outlandish claims – she says she would not have certified Biden’s win – will hurt her chances in a state trending purple.

Florida: Everyone knows **Ron DeSantis**, the big talking, Trump-style Florida governor, wants to be president. Couple things could get in the way. First, DeSantis would

need to prove in November he’s a consistent winner by beating Democratic challenger **Charlie Crist**, a former Republican Florida governor who switched parties and now is a Democratic member of the House. The other hurdle? Donald Trump. If the former president decides on a comeback try, would DeSantis – supposedly, a loyal ally – step aside? Or would Trump give his ambitious admirer a push?

Georgia: This is a big one. **Stacey Abrams**, the voting rights activist and former state legislator who nearly beat Republican **Brian Kemp** four years ago, is trying again to win the state house. Though he governs from the far right, Kemp would not accede to Trump’s bogus claims of a “stolen” election and quickly dropped from the former president’s favor. Kemp is the favorite but Abrams, compelling and quick on her feet, is resourceful, tireless and a genius at turning out the vote – always a critical factor.

Michigan: Often the target of MAGA-world fury, Democratic governor **Gretchen Whitmer** proved herself an unbowed leader who imposed necessary covid restrictions, did not flinch when a mob gathered outside the Michigan state house in protest and showed no sign of backing down from principles even when a plot to kidnap her was revealed. Whitmer is opposed by **Tudor Dixon**, an anchor on the far-right streaming service, “Real America’s Voice.” Anything is possible but experts say the voters of Real Michigan likely will return Whitmer to office.

Pennsylvania: State Sen. **Doug Mastriano**, the GOP gubernatorial candidate, marched to the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021 – but didn’t join the mob that entered the building, he says – and is an ardent “Stop the Steal” acolyte of Donald Trump. Mastriano also is linked to a Christian Nationalism movement that claims that only Christian priorities should guide the nation. The Republican hopeful says he will defeat frontrunner **Josh Shapiro**, the Democratic state attorney general, because “my God will make it so.” That may be expecting a miracle. Shapiro has consistently led in the polls and has proven himself a tenacious fighter for justice. When Trump tried to overturn Pennsylvania’s 2020 election results, Shapiro argued the case all the way to the Supreme Court – and won. “I think our democracy is on the line,” Shapiro told National Public Radio. And, he added, “we are pushing back.” ■

★ YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE ★

2022
ELECTION

Fed Appeals Panel Tells McCaw: Pay Up

By Dawn Hobbs
Special to the Communicator

A federal appeals court panel in California unanimously upheld an NLRB decision that Santa Barbara News-Press owner Wendy McCaw and her business, Ampersand, must pay \$2.2 million in compensatory damages to employees of the newspaper and the GCC/IBT for repeated and egregious violations of federal labor law since 2007.

Three judges of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals found that McCaw “engaged in unusually aggravated misconduct sufficient to warrant more than a traditional remedy.” Judges sustained the NLRB’s demand that McCaw pay \$110,000 of the compensation to the union for negotiating expenses over the 15-year period during which a first-time contract has not yet been settled.

“We are gratified that the Ninth Circuit affirmed the NLRB’s decision finding Ampersand liable for over \$2 million in compensation to many employee victims of its unfair labor practices, and that it recognized that the bargaining expenses remedy payable to the union for its bad faith bargaining can include lawyers’ participation in offering counsel to the union bargaining committee,” said union attorney Ira Gottlieb.

Gottlieb said McCaw must accept that the case “has come to the end of the legal road” and at last comply with the Ninth Circuit ruling. “There is little chance that another court will be interested in reviewing what the board said and a three-member panel from the Ninth Circuit approved,” Gottlieb said.

The Ninth Circuit decision, Gottlieb said, specifically upholds the NLRB’s calculation of relief owed to employees and the union.

The hefty award will do nothing, however, to compensate the original eight reporters who were unjustly fired in retaliation for helping the GCC/IBT win a landslide victory in 2006.

Those employees, terminated in the fall of 2006 and early 2007, won an NLRB case against McCaw for back pay and reinstatement, but the judgment was overturned by Republican-appointed judges on a federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., in late 2012.

The reporters lost their jobs, suffered severe financial loss, and, in several cases, have been unable to rebuild their journalistic careers. Nevertheless, fired editorial staffers often have expressed gratitude to the GCC/IBT for holding McCaw accountable and persisting in what one reporter has called an “unfortunate and ugly episode in newspaper history.”

GCC/IBT president Kurt Freeman hailed the “courageous” reporters and said the Ninth Circuit decision made clear the futility of McCaw’s legal challenges.



“While the SBNP can seek a rehearing of the case before the whole court it is unlikely that they will be successful,” Freeman said. “As the NLRB’s enforcement of the damages award has been granted, the NLRB can now seek to recover the damages for the eligible harmed workers and the union.”

George Tedeschi, who authorized the 2006 organizing drive as GCC/IBT president and supported News-Press editorial workers unwaveringly in the following years, said the court decision was encouraging.

“It’s been a difficult and often frustrating struggle,” said Tedeschi, now president emeritus of the union. “We have taken an important step closer to the justice that has been too long delayed.”

GCC/IBT representative Nick Caruso, who has served as bargaining chair since negotiations began in 2007, expressed appreciation for Gottlieb, Tedeschi and News-Press employees in an email to Tedeschi.

“It is yet to be determined if we will achieve the ultimate goal of a first-time contract and checks in the hands of deserving individuals,” Caruso said. “But we can all be proud of the fight we have fought and many of the former and current newsroom employees have expressed their appreciation for our work.”

New Union Activists: ‘They Are the Future’

Striking workers at a Starbucks coffee shop in Olney, Maryland, picked up unexpected support from a veteran GCC/IBT organizer – President Emeritus George Tedeschi.

Visiting a retail mall near his home in suburban Washington, D.C., Tedeschi spotted a picket line outside Starbucks and joined workers demanding that the company come to the bargaining table.

“I wanted to encourage these idealistic young people fighting for basic rights against a huge corporation,” Tedeschi said. “I’ve been on many picket lines before. It was like old times.”

Tedeschi said he told picketers that history was on their side – that unions are gaining public approval and Americans are tired of corporate greed and ridiculous executive pay.

“Thanks especially to enthusiastic young workers, organized labor is making progress coast-to-coast,” Tedeschi said. “Traditional unionists in every sector should be cheering them on. They are the future.”

Starbucks Workers United, which describes itself as an organizing “collective,” says more than 200 Starbucks stores have been unionized and 10,000 people have signed “no contract, no coffee” pledges around the country.

“We believe that there can be no true partnership without power-sharing and accountability,” the group says on its website. “...organizing a union is the best way to truly contribute meaningfully to this partnership and both ensure that our voices are heard and ensure that when we are heard we have equal power to affect change and get things done.”

The upswing in union activity has been dramatic – and not just at Starbucks.

Workers at an Amazon facility in Staten Island, New York, launched a successful drive that drew widespread attention – including from the Teamsters who hailed the remarkable effort and rallied with organizers at the job site.

“But activity is picking up elsewhere in retail and tech at big companies that are generally viewed as progressive, with no history of labor unions,” said a report by the CNBC financial news cable channel.

CNBC noted that “first-ever unions” have formed at an Apple store in Maryland; Trader Joe’s; the online public benefit corporation, Kickstarter; Activision Blizzard, a video game company; and a Google fiber contractor.

The activity and energy have produced what Labor Notes news site called “a cascading effect” – one that may pose a challenge to traditional organizing strategy.

“The organizing wave is turning the labor movement’s prevailing wisdom on its head,” Labor Notes said. “Until now unions have mostly avoided filing for election at single



PHOTO COURTESY GEORGE TEDESCHI

Spotting union organizers outside a local Starbucks store, GCC/IBT President Emeritus George Tedeschi (third from left) joined the picket line to ‘encourage idealistic young people fighting for basic rights.’

workplaces that are part of big chains, like fast food restaurants or Amazon warehouses, not seeing a viable route to a first contract. But the worker-organizers behind the current upsurge have relied on grassroots organizing to produce a cascading effect.”

Corporate executives are reacting – with “panic,” CNBC reported.

In an attempt to squelch organizing efforts, Starbucks illegally withheld pay from unionized workers and now is the subject of a complaint from the National Labor Relations Board, according to the Washington Post. The NLRB is demanding back pay and benefits, the Post said, and will require interim CEO Howard Schulz to read a statement to workers outlining union rights.

“The CEOs of all of these big companies are horrified by what happened at Starbucks and they’re thinking this is what we want to avoid at all costs,” John Logan, a labor and employment studies professor at San Francisco State University, told the cable channel.

Tedeschi said that crucial to any organization drive – large or small – is courage and conviction.

“I told the Starbucks strikers in Olney they had to stick with it and never let the company intimidate them,” Tedeschi said. “They assured me they were hanging tough and believed strongly in what they were doing. I’m proud of them – the next generation of labor activists. Every union member should show the same determination.”

'INDUSTRY-SETTING' INTERNATIONAL PAPER CONTRACT

Workers at International Paper – the largest group in the GCC/IBT with more than 1,300 members – ratified a 4-year agreement that union leaders say is an “industry-setting settlement.”

“I’m happy to say there were substantial wage increases, and substantial market rate adjustments for inflation,” said Clark Ritchey, secretary-treasurer of District Council 2, whose membership spans the West Coast.

“It’s an industry-setting contract for the corrugated box industry,” Clark said of the agreement that covers International Paper workers from 13 plants from Southern California to Oregon and eastern Washington.

The workers also received increases to defined benefit pensions, and life insurance benefits, he said, adding that “we additionally dealt with a lot of language issues with grievance procedures and put in better timelines.”

Workers will also maintain their participation in a health care plan sponsored by DC-2 for the next four years with zero percent increase on contributions, he said.

“We had more leverage with having the 13 plants and it made negotiations go a little smoother than if we were trying to bargain just one by itself,” Ritchey said. The plants have been represented by DC-2 and Locals 388-M and 747-M for the past 50 years and comprise 85 percent of International Paper shops on the West Coast.

Ritchey, five of his staff members and a negotiations committee of 15 workers met in one location to hammer out the contract for the 13 plants over 10 days in June and two days in August.

“We had a great committee and they did an outstanding job of putting this together and representing the members from each of their respective plants,” Ritchey said.

After the contract settlement was reached, Ritchey and his staff traveled in a whirlwind effort for ratification to the 13 plants over seven days.

“Members are very happy with the settlement and overwhelmingly ratified the contract,” he said. “This will now set the stage for what we have to do at West Rock, Georgia Pacific and other plants over the next couple of years.”

DC-2 also negotiated a 6-year contract for 65 employees at Key Container in South Gate, California, which has been represented by Local 388-M for 45 years.

Highlights of the agreement include: significant wage increases each year with a larger increase in the first year to adjust for inflation; a large lump sum signing bonus; pension increases; and increases to the shift differential.

“The negotiating committee, as well as DC-2 President Dan Cabada and representative Fernando Aguilera all did a great job,” Ritchey said. “The committee knew we were in different economic times than we have been in the past, and they went out there and captured what was needed.”



PCA WORKERS 'EXCITED' AFTER ELECTION WIN

Workers at Packaging Corporation of America recently won a hard-fought election at the company’s plant in Bedford Park, Illinois.

“Everyone is very excited,” said Alejandro Guzman, conference organizer for the GCC/IBT. “We had a celebration lunch to discuss the next steps and people are wearing red every Wednesday to show solidarity as a union in the workplace.”

This effort to organize 115 workers began in early 2022 after two failed attempts. But workers realized “they needed a union more now than ever,” said Sergio Franco, president of Local 415-S, Chicago.

“We are happy that despite the company’s union-busting tactics and challenges that occurred throughout this campaign and election that the power of the people coming together prevailed,” Franco said.

Although the GCC/IBT requested an in-person ballot election, the National Labor Relations Board ordered mail-in balloting because the level of covid cases remained high in the region.

Despite the NLRB’s order that the election be conducted by mail, the company is challenging its validity. Union leaders and workers are undaunted, however, and say they expect results to be upheld.

“We won the election fair and square and are confident that we are also going to win the certification,” Guzman said.



EASTERN CONF SLATED FOR SPRING

Eastern Conference delegates will meet in late April or early May at Harrah’s Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City.

“Keep that time frame in mind,” said Harry Selnow, secretary-treasurer of the Eastern Conference and president of Local 612-M. “We are looking for a good turnout this year.”

Selnow said attendance at the Eastern Conference meeting earlier this year was “sparse” because of covid fears but “we are really hoping more attend in 2023 as we have a lot of important business to catch up on.”

For specific Eastern Conference dates and more information, contact Selnow at 973-227-6801.

NEWSDAY.COM WORKERS JOIN LOCAL 406-C

In a move that demonstrates the growing appetite for unionization in the online news field, workers at Newsday.com voted unanimously to affiliate with GCC/IBT Local 406-C, Long Island.



The vote by 13 workers in Newsday’s digital operation represents a significant development for Local 406-C which has represented editorial staff members at the paper since 1973.

“Many newspapers are moving away from print,” said Michael LaSpina, president of 406-C. “Cross-jurisdiction between print and digital will help everyone.”

LaSpina said workers in the digital sector were impressed by editorial unit contract provisions and particularly a wage scale that showed Newsday.com staffers were “far behind.”

There is no wage scale for Newsday’s digital staff, union officials said, nor guarantee of annual raises. “Their pay is all over the place,” one union leader said.

In addition to pay issues, union officials said, workers noted that the digital staff had been cut and remaining employees often were expected to work overtime. A 40-hour work week is in place at Newsday.com, five hours longer than the schedule for union members.

Digital staff members “felt overburdened with more and more work and not being paid fairly,” said Zachary Dowdy, Local 406 editorial unit vice president and a former Newsday reporter who frequently contributes to the Communicator. “They felt their concerns weren’t being addressed.”

Judy Weinberg, editorial unit chairperson and veteran member of the Newsday library staff, said online workers approached the union earlier this year about representation.

“They wanted someone to stand up for them, to intercede for them, to be on their side,” Weinberg said. “They were uncertain of their position and wanted people to listen to them.”

Bringing digital workers into the union fold will make for a more cohesive newsroom, Weinberg said. “We’re just trying to make a better working environment for them,” she said. “They’ve always been on the other side of the wall.”

Unionization of Newsday’s online workers follows a national trend.

Over the last several years, journalists at online sites like Gawker, Salon, HuffPost, Vice Media and Guardian US, joined unions, according to the website Nieman Reports, and so did digital staffers at a number of “legacy” publications like the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune and New Yorker magazine.

“This is part of a trend among journalists at web-based operations in legacy media,” Dowdy said. “It shows there is a place for unions in the digital environment.”

Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your GCC/IBT local has been involved in organizing efforts, community outreach or volunteer work, e-mail a brief summary to reporter Dawn Hobbs at dawnhobbs@cox.net or call 805-284-5351.

Les dirigeants exhortent les membres à se mobiliser pour les élections de mi-mandat

Par Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

Dans un contexte politique tendu qui a relevé les enjeux des élections de mi-mandat du mois prochain, les leaders syndicaux exhortent les membres à se mobiliser face aux problèmes, à rester focalisés sur les priorités de la classe ouvrière et à appuyer les candidats qui vont œuvrer en faveur des syndiqués.

« Nous ne pouvons nous permettre d'être influencés par les distractions de la soi-disant « guerre des cultures » au lieu de nous occuper des préoccupations fondamentales – les emplois, une bonne paie, la protection des retraites – qui sont nécessaires au bien-être de nos familles et du mouvement syndical », a déclaré Kurt Freeman, président de la CCG-FIT.

À l'instar des chefs syndicaux du pays, K. Freeman a dit que les membres devraient soutenir les candidats qui ont insisté sur l'équité au travail, la protection de la classe ouvrière et le maintien des normes démocratiques du pays.

« Cela demeure nos priorités, mais nous vivons des temps inhabituels et ne devons rien tenir pour acquis, a dit K. Freeman. Les positions extrêmes qui menacent notre sentiment d'unité et nos aspirations communes gagnent du terrain. Nous ne pouvons pas faire preuve de complaisance. »

Le président Joe Biden, sans doute été le chef d'État le plus favorable aux travailleurs depuis Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a

beaucoup fait pour les syndicats pendant les deux premières années de son mandat, affirment les analystes, mais les progrès accomplis seraient en péril si les républicains reprennent la Chambre ou le Sénat – ou les deux.

Pendant l'essentiel de la saison préélectorale, on a prédit une victoire écrasante des républicains – une « vague rouge » qui balayerait les démocrates, obtiendrait une majorité législative et ferait pour ainsi dire de Biden un président de paille pour les deux dernières années de son mandat.

Mais la Maison-Blanche a enregistré une série de victoires, la plus importante étant la loi de 740 milliards de dollars visant à réduire l'inflation qui a été adoptée sans un seul vote républicain, ce qui a amené les experts à revoir leur position et à suggérer que les démocrates ont une bonne chance de conserver le Sénat et, avec une forte participation des électeurs, peut-être même de sauver aussi la Chambre.

« Il y a deux mois, on aurait dit que le parti démocrate se dirigeait vers une déroute historique aux élections de mi-mandat de cette année, mais il semble à présent que cette évaluation est inversée, a indiqué le site de nouvelles The Hill peu avant la fête du Travail, ajoutant que « ... les démocrates ont manifestement le vent en poupe. »

Ce revirement de situation tient en partie à l'accent que Biden a mis sur les enjeux de la classe ouvrière, notamment le soutien des travailleurs syndiqués à un moment

où l'opinion publique est favorable aux syndicats. Dès le début de sa présidence, Biden s'est affiché comme un « gars des syndicats » et a agi en conséquence.

Les membres de la CCG-FIT et des Teamsters ont noté tout particulièrement le fait que l'administration Biden a débloqué 1,7 milliard de dollars par l'intermédiaire de la Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation afin de protéger la caisse de retraite en difficulté du syndicat. « Joe Biden a contribué à redonner de la dignité à l'existence de nos membres actuels et à venir, a indiqué Steve Nobles, secrétaire-trésorier et vice-président de la CCG-FIT. Je lui en serai éternellement reconnaissant. »

Globalement, la liste de ce que Biden a accompli pour les travailleurs est remarquable, estiment les leaders syndicaux.

Le président a appuyé un plan d'infrastructures d'un billion de dollars, qui garantit des milliers d'emplois bien payés, surtout dans le milieu syndiqué, a choisi Marty Walsh, un ancien chef syndical et maire de Boston, comme secrétaire au Travail, a nommé des membres sympathisants des travailleurs pour siéger au National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) et a congédié Peter Robb, le conseiller juridique général du NLRB choisi par Trump, pour le remplacer par Jennifer Abruzzo, une ancienne conseillère spéciale pour les initiatives stratégiques auprès des Communications Workers of America.

Mais il reste encore beaucoup à faire, estiment les chefs syndicaux, en particulier l'adoption de la loi visant à protéger le droit de s'organiser qui a franchi toutes les étapes de la Chambre, mais reste bloquée dans un Sénat dont où chaque parti détient 50 sièges et 60 votes sont nécessaires pour vaincre un filibustier.

Voilà pourquoi il est vraiment essentiel d'obtenir une victoire le 8 novembre, affirment les dirigeants syndicaux. Ils estiment que ce sera déjà dur de faire des progrès si les démocrates se maintiennent au pouvoir, mais impossible avec une majorité républicaine dans la Chambre et au Sénat.

Le rôle que les membres des syndicats vont jouer dans cette élection pourrait être décisif et déboucher sur deux autres années de gains formidables pour les travailleurs sous l'administration Biden ou une règle républicaine qui menace de saper les droits de la classe ouvrière et des syndicats, affirment les leaders.

Tout au long de la saison électorale, K. Freeman a exhorté les membres de la CCG-FIT à étudier les enjeux, à écouter les candidats et à soutenir ceux qui font des droits des travailleurs une priorité.

« L'heure cruciale approche, a dit K. Freeman. Nous devons mobiliser les travailleurs pour qu'ils votent le 8 novembre et élisent des candidats qui vont protéger les travailleurs et leurs syndicats. C'est un moment charnière. Relevons le défi. Notre avenir est en jeu. »

Los líderes instan a sus miembros a a movilizarse para las elecciones de mitad de mandato

Fred Bruning
Graphic Communicator

En un ambiente político tenso que ha aumentado lo que está en juego en las elecciones de mitad de mandato del próximo mes, los líderes sindicales están pidiendo a sus miembros que se comprometan con los problemas, que sigan centrados en las prioridades de la clase trabajadora y que respalden a los candidatos que cumplan lo que han prometido a los obreros sindicados.

«No podemos permitirnos el lujo de dejarnos llevar por las distracciones de la llamada "guerra cultural" en lugar de las preocupaciones básicas—empleos, buenos salarios, protección de las pensiones—necesarias para el bienestar de nuestras familias y del movimiento sindical», dijo el presidente del GCC/IBT, Kurt Freeman.

Al igual que los líderes sindicales de todo el país, Freeman dijo que los miembros deben apoyar a los candidatos que han hecho hincapié en la equidad en el lugar de trabajo, la protección de la clase trabajadora y la defensa de las normas democráticas del país.

«Estas son siempre nuestras prioridades, pero vivimos tiempos inusuales y no debemos dar nada por sentado», dijo Freeman. «Aumentan las opiniones extremas que desafían nuestro sentido de unidad y propósito común. No podemos dormirnos en los laureles.»

El presidente Joe Biden, tal vez el más favorable a los obreros desde Franklin

Delano Roosevelt, ha cumplido de manera importante lo que ha prometido a los sindicatos en los dos primeros años de su mandato, según los analistas, pero los avances estarían en peligro si los republicanos vuelven a dominar la Cámara de Representantes o el Senado, o ambos.

Durante gran parte de la primera fase de la temporada electoral, se predijo que los republicanos aplastarían a los demócratas, arrasándolos con una «ola roja», se llevarían la mayoría legislativa y convertirían a Biden en un presidente prácticamente cojo durante los últimos dos años de su mandato.

Pero la Casa Blanca marcó una serie de victorias —coronadas por la aprobación de la Ley de Reducción de la Inflación, de 740 mil millones de dólares, que se aprobó sin un voto de los republicanos— que llevó a los expertos a reevaluar y sugerir que los demócratas tienen una sólida oportunidad de conservar el Senado y, con una importante participación de los votantes, tal vez salvar también la Cámara.

«Hace dos meses, parecía que el Partido Demócrata se dirigía a una derrota histórica en las elecciones de mitad de mandato de este año; pero ahora, esa evaluación se revoca», dijo el sitio de noticias The Hill poco antes del Día del Trabajo, añadiendo «... los demócratas están claramente en una buena racha.»

Es probable que parte del cambio esté relacionado con el hecho de que Biden se haya centrado en cuestiones relacionadas con la clase obrera, incluido el apoyo a

los obreros sindicados en un momento en el que el sentimiento público favorece a los sindicatos. Desde el principio de su presidencia, Biden se ha autodenominado «un hombre de sindicatos» y ha llevado a cabo los asuntos conforme a ello.

De especial interés para los miembros del GCC/IBT y de los Teamsters, la administración Biden puso a disposición mil setecientos millones de dólares a través de la Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation para proteger los fondos de jubilación del sindicato, mismos que están en apuros. «Joe Biden ayudó a devolver la dignidad a las vidas de nuestros miembros actuales y futuros», dijo Steve Nobles, secretario-tesorero/vicepresidente del GCC/IBT. «Estaré eternamente agradecido.»

En general, la lista de logros de Biden a favor de los obreros es notable, dicen los líderes sindicales.

El presidente respaldó un paquete de infraestructuras de un billón de dólares que asegura miles de puestos de trabajo bien pagados, muchos de ellos en el sector sindical, eligió a Marty Walsh, antiguo líder sindical y alcalde de Boston, como Secretario de Trabajo, nombró a miembros favorables a los obreros para que formaran parte del Consejo Nacional de Relaciones Laborales y despidió a Peter Robb, el director jurídico proempresarial de dicho Consejo, nombrado por Trump, y lo sustituyó por Jennifer Abruzzo, antigua abogada especial de iniciativas estratégicas

de Communications Workers of America.

Sin embargo, los líderes sindicales afirman que aún queda mucho trabajo por hacer, especialmente la aprobación de la Ley de Protección del Derecho de Sindicación (PRO, por sus siglas en inglés), que fue aprobada por la Cámara de Representantes, pero que sigue estancada en el Senado, donde se necesitan 60 votos para superar el filibusterismo.

Por eso la victoria el 8 de noviembre es tan crucial, dicen los representantes sindicales. El progreso será suficientemente difícil si los demócratas retienen el poder. Será imposible, dicen, con mayorías republicanas en la Cámara y el Senado.

El papel que desempeñen los miembros de los sindicatos en estas elecciones podría marcar la diferencia decisiva entre dos años más de espectaculares avances para los obreros sindicados bajo un gobierno de Biden, o un dominio republicano que amenaza con socavar la clase obrera y los derechos sindicales, dicen los líderes.

A lo largo de la temporada electoral, Freeman ha instado a los miembros del GCC/IBT a que estudien las cuestiones, escuchen a los candidatos y apoyen a los que hacen de los derechos de los obreros una prioridad.

«Se acerca la hora de la verdad», dijo Freeman. «Tenemos que movilizar el voto obrero el 8 de noviembre y elegir a candidatos que protejan a los obreros y a sus sindicatos. Este es un momento crucial. Enfrentemos el reto. Nuestro futuro está en juego.»

In Memoriam

Listed here are GCC/IBT members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Membership Department of the office of the GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact the Graphic Communicator.

Local	Date of Death	Local	Date of Death
Death Benefit Claims Paid January 2020			
458M Terry R Nelson	11-29-19	2N Albert J Kulisan	12-14-19
458M Donald H Wilkens	11-09-19	2N Edward L Luczkiewicz	12-26-19
458M Tempy Vannetta Williams	11-13-19	2N Murray E Roth	12-29-19
493M Ethel J Jury	11-14-19	3N Robert E Deniger	01-05-20
503M Joseph S Sacilowski, Jr	10-31-19	3N Harold G Palmer	12-26-19
508M James J Burns Jr	11-11-19	4C Richard E Tarasiewicz	08-17-19
508M John R Regensburger	08-19-19	14M James W Bottinger	12-09-19
518M Wilbur J Beardsley	10-26-19	14M Katherine Maychuk	12-20-19
527S Donnie M Buice	11-19-19	14M Patrick J Mccann Jr	12-27-19
555M Andre Courchesne	12-07-19	14M Robert A Mukoda	03-31-14
555M Romeo V Desouza	11-18-19	24M Jerome A Bokan	01-06-20
555M Marcel Goulet	11-27-19	25M Carl M Chmielewski	12-11-19
555M Guy Jutras	11-24-19	25M Gladys M Harcus	01-11-20
555M Monique E Lamontagne	11-09-19	25M Dolores M Hering	01-01-20
555M Nubes Lofaro Bigi	12-19-19	72C Charles K New	12-27-19
568M James M Ruyle	10-23-18	77P Donald M Wagner	12-15-19
572T Dewayne Fess	02-25-19	100M Richard Evans	01-07-20
572T Gregory E Jordan	12-15-19	119B Cleo P Henderson	01-06-20
572T Max Kessler	07-26-18	119B Marjorie McDonald	11-01-19
572T Fernando Larena	11-06-19	119B Vincent L Thompson	09-26-19
572T Ralph L Villarino	10-05-19	197M Connie M Dowden	01-02-20
577M William C Haslam	10-30-19	197M James L Gladson	12-06-19
577M Norman A Schwaerzler	08-17-19	197M John P Mayfield, Sr	12-19-19
612M George Murray	10-15-19	235M Michael A Carriker	01-13-20
853T Florence N Boitano	12-09-19	235M Deshaun M Gavin	11-21-19
853T John R Sabino	05-20-19	235M Ronald D Maxwell	10-27-19
999ML Joseph L Camacho, Sr	12-04-19	285M James E Wallace	12-06-19
999ML Michael Ippolito	07-28-18	329C James E Shorts Jr	01-04-20
999ML Elizabeth L Salzwedel	12-03-19	458M Frank Fillipp Jr	11-19-19
4535M Raymond L Cox	08-31-19	458M James P Geminn, Sr	12-27-19
6505M Evelyn M Marquardt	10-22-19	458M Richard K Gross	11-18-19
6505M Julius H Schneider, II	08-26-19	458M Steven Hellstrom	12-12-19
6505M Anthony A Vaughn, Sr	11-29-19	458M Sylvia M Kabelman	12-19-19
Death Benefit Claims Paid February 2020			
1B Marlene A Gockowski	12-24-19	458M Santo P Maltese	12-17-19
1B Carol J Rath	11-24-19	458M Albert Martinez	12-11-19
1L Joseph Behar	12-03-19	458M Anthony S Pantaleo	12-20-19
1L Warren E Folger	11-29-19	458M Carmen P Santoro	11-16-19
1L Louis J Jaccino	12-18-19	458M Cornelius D Vanderweel	01-01-20
1M Frank A Behrner	01-02-20	458M Rudolph E Wolff	11-11-19
1M Thomas L Brown	12-24-19	508M David C Mullen	05-01-17
1M Eino I Mattson	12-28-19	543M Dennis A Stoll	12-15-19
1M Thomas E Schroepfer	12-20-19	543M Glen T Tjaden	12-19-19
2N Anthony F Alessi	01-07-20	555M Robert Dulude	01-03-20
2N Dennis G Kehoe	12-14-19	555M Claude Fiset	10-01-19
		555M Yvan Forest	01-04-20
		568M Keith Brown	01-09-20
		568M William L Webster	01-01-20
		572T Joseph S Kawata	11-17-17
		572T Enrique Munoz	10-13-19
		575M Larry J Martin	12-12-19

Local	Date of Death
612M Peter Kaloustian	12-30-19
612M George V Sampson	01-08-20
853T Daniel P Soria	12-13-19
999ML Julia A Berding	12-04-19
999ML Armand B Como	12-12-19
999ML Larry O Ferguson	12-10-19
999ML John E Ramsey	01-02-20
999ML John S Smith	03-26-19
999ML Raymond R Winka	12-29-19
6505M Gerald T Cline	09-09-19
6505M Robert M Phelps, Sr	01-01-20
6505M Norbert F Piaskowski	11-23-19
6505M Robert E Pipkin	01-08-20

Local	Date of Death
Death Benefit Claims Paid March 2020	
1B Leona W Eggerth	01-21-20
1B Phyllis M Vizecky	12-18-19
1L Lawrence Hirsch	10-11-19
1L Peter P Manfredi	12-16-19
1L Jay D Silber	06-09-19
1L Joseph P Taddeo	12-08-19
1L Ralph Vaccaro	01-24-20
1M Gary D Ford	01-20-20
1M James W Ormodt	12-27-19
1M Donald W Pfalz	11-21-19
1M Paul R Singerhouse	01-13-20
1M Rudy I Strandness	01-18-20
3N Timothy J Manning, Jr	01-27-20
3N Gabriella Mckinnon	11-08-19
14M Ida B Alderman	12-17-19
14M John J Curran	02-02-20
14M David L Kratz Jr	01-26-20
17M Matthew F Babich	01-31-20
25M Arthur W Berndt	02-02-20
25M Ernest C Bishop	11-04-19
25M Douglas L Bradley	11-11-19
25M Robert E Breining	02-09-20
25M Billy E Fetty	12-24-19
58M Peter M Zaborowski, Jr	12-27-19
77P John U Ashenbrenner	01-15-20
77P Graham T Boorse	07-17-19
77P Bernard F Rottscholl	01-13-20
77P Edward P Wendt	11-26-19
117T Sam Abolofia	12-29-19
117T Lawrence J Retherford	12-10-19
119B Manuel Rodriguez	02-07-20
119B Perry Yiatrusis	01-25-20
235M James Manos	01-10-20
241M Melvin V Elechko	12-29-19
241M Paul Kolcharno	01-28-20
285M Nicholas J Finamore	12-02-19
388M Patrick J Mchale	02-06-19
458M Theodore N Alt	10-25-18
458M Ronald J Gudewicz	12-26-19
458M Ronald V Smith	01-08-20
458M Robert C Thomas	01-13-20
458M Rudolph K Voneyser	12-29-19
555M Glenn T Cowie	12-29-19
572T John E Medina	12-31-19
577M Joseph A Balistreri	01-18-20

Local	Date of Death
577M Milton F Gregory	02-12-16
577M Jerome J Sentowski	01-07-20
577M Phillip J Strazinski	10-06-19
577M John A Strickland	04-09-19
577M James R Thrun	05-05-19
577M Elizabeth A Ward	06-01-18
577M James P Willi	11-08-19
853T Richard L Vago	12-28-19
999ML Edward N Yankovich	02-06-20

Local	Date of Death
Death Benefit Claims Paid April 2020	
1B Louis Dansky	02-23-20
1B Marian K Toland	07-26-19
1L James F Beegan	01-20-20
1L Samuel R Brandon	07-12-19
1L Barton L Brown Sr	11-12-19
1L Elwood Getzelman	02-19-20
1L Michael Hellman	01-16-20
1L George W Hughes	12-06-19
1L Raymond Louis Link	01-30-20
1L Robert Milanese	10-27-19
1L Salvatore C Toro	01-24-20
1M William J Murray, Jr	01-28-20
3N Leo C Strassell	11-16-19
14M Richard Atamian	08-06-19
14M Anna H Walker	12-08-19
24M Clyde K Zeak	01-20-20
25M Larry N Booker	01-12-20
25M Thomas M Noonan Jr	02-02-20
25M Calvin A Percy	02-12-20
25M Allen L Powell	02-07-20
25M Rose A Schuh	02-15-20
25M Margaret A Stowe	11-07-19
25M Frederick W Zeitz	01-08-20
58M Byron E Conner	10-18-18
72C Martina Jablonski	12-17-19
100M Kenneth E.T. Minaker	12-21-19
117T Leonard C Hawney	01-17-20
117T Martha E Piver	01-08-20
119B Lucas Martinez	02-17-20
137C William G Laity	01-28-20
197M Donald A Wounsch	12-10-19
235M Jeannine M Bray	01-25-20
235M George A Willman Jr	01-29-20
285M Norbert L Young	02-05-20
388M Delbert L Larsen	02-12-20
406C Daniel G Meyer	12-24-19
458M Carmen P Gambino	01-22-20
458M Curtis A Hannah, Jr	02-27-20
458M Edward C Hiller	02-07-20
458M Donald W Janke	02-04-20
458M Harold L Willison	12-26-19
493M James A Anderson	03-09-20
508M Robert A Goodman	02-20-20
508M Leeta A Hanahan	02-08-20
508M Ernest J Mchugh	02-06-20
508M Ronald D Schuster	02-08-20
518M John N Weaver	01-11-20
518M William W Wittkowski, Jr	01-22-20
555M Jean Pierre Proulx	01-12-20

Local	Date of Death
555M Alain Savoie	02-25-20
568M Lawrence M Rowe	12-18-19
572T Raymond S Jimenez	02-10-20
572T Jack E Younger	01-24-20
575M Corman E Flynn	01-02-20
577M Charles F Dunn	02-08-20
853T Verle Dixon Walker	01-23-20
999ML Murray P Andrews	03-05-20
999ML Edwin F Zabik	02-12-20
6505M Martin E Arnold	10-30-19
6505M Joseph Z Farhat	02-06-20
6505M John G Hood	12-13-19
6505M Wayne E Hutcherson	02-21-20

Local	Date of Death
Death Benefit Claims Paid May 2020	
1B Ronald F Mrnak	04-05-20
1B Phyllis R Ranallo	08-03-15
1B Frances C Rauen	09-03-05
1L Walter Ehrlich	04-02-20
1L Frederick C Misbach Jr	12-14-18
1M Roger H Coon	02-09-20
1M Helen M Holter	03-07-20
1M James K Larson	03-25-20
2N Raymond Cappello	12-31-19
2N Edward Stackpole	12-01-19
3N Frank E Mcquesten	03-07-20
3N Carl J Schloth	03-22-20
4C Steven T Stauffer	12-06-19
14M Donald A Ferguson	03-10-20
14M Fortunato M Pileggi	02-25-20
16N Joseph T Austin	04-04-20
16N Bruce S Bolinski	05-27-16
17M William A Porter	03-07-20
24M Robert Paul Riggle	02-28-20
24M John J Thomas	01-27-20
25M Eugene Doppke	04-01-20
25M Earl L Long	02-29-20
25M Jimmy E Ruff	02-28-20
25M Ronald A Turner	01-06-20
38N Ronald D Kimbauer, Sr	03-03-20
58M Frederick A Cooper	02-05-20
72C Jay E Rupard	01-18-20
77P Carl R Foust	03-13-20
77P Timothy J Koslowski	04-14-20
77P Clifford A Moran	03-15-20
77P Ronald G Pieper	03-06-20
77P Carlton F Springer	03-25-20
117T Jerry O Havenar	01-03-13
119B Joseph Dixon	03-18-20
119B Marie E Pena	04-03-20
235M Carl L Bogue	03-06-20
235M James R Gibson, Sr	03-21-20
235M Garland A Wilson	04-02-20
241M Martin F Cummings, Jr	01-12-20
285M Frank S Little Jr	02-22-20
388M Kenneth E Fairless	11-24-19
458M Richard Blaha	03-27-20
458M Roland F Check	03-15-20
458M James Chiero	03-05-20
458M David Feddor	03-23-20

NATION RALLIES BUT SOME SHOPS STILL FACE COVID ISSUES

By Dawn Hobbs
Special to the Communicator

While the U.S. economy – and everyday life – inches back to “normal” after more than two years of covid restrictions, some GCC/IBT shops continue dealing with issues related to the coronavirus outbreak.

Meanwhile, union leaders are urging members to follow government guidelines and seek booster shots intended to guard against the highly transmissible BA.4 and BA.5 variants.

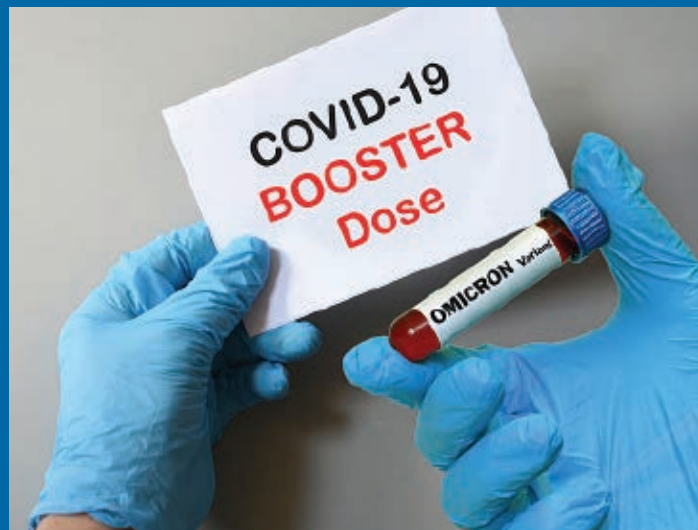
“Protect yourself and your family,” said GCC/IBT President Kurt Freeman, who noted that health authorities have expressed concern about a possible fall surge in covid cases. “Get vaccinated and boosted.”

The stubborn persistence of the virus was evident recently at the R.R. Donnelly Printing Company in Mt. Vernon, Maryland, where a cluster of 15 workers tested positive.

“We had an issue doing production there because so many people were out,” said Janice Bort, secretary-treasurer of Local 72-C, Washington, D.C. “Other companies have seen slight spikes, but it’s slowly going back to normal.”

Bort said GCC/IBT shops in her local are no longer demanding workers wear masks on the job – a policy consistent with advisories from U.S. health authorities who recommend masking only when community transmission rate is high.

Leaders at two of the largest GCC/IBT district councils say that while



covid remains a concern, case numbers among members appear to be dropping though worrisome outbreaks still occur.

In the Midwest, Israel Castro, secretary-treasurer of GCC/IBT District Council 3, said positive cases are “inching up” in some areas, but are reduced in others – and that individuals who do get sick are experiencing more mild cold or flu-like symptoms.

“People are very relaxed about it now and are not as concerned about it as they had been in the past,” Castro said. “Hopefully, with the vaccines and new medicines, it’s not so deadly a virus anymore.”

Like many GCC/IBT shops across the country, several employers in DC-3 offered gift cards and other incentives to workers who sought vaccinations – a successful program that resulted in most workers visiting health care providers for vaccinations and booster shots, Castro said.

On the West Coast, union officials also reported the covid situation seems to have stabilized, at least for the moment.

“People aren’t getting super sick like they were before,” said Clark Ritchey, secretary-treasurer of District Council 2, who pointed out, however, that one older member struggled with symptoms for months.

“But, in general, it seems like it’s been dissipating, from even six months ago,” Ritchey said. Mask mandates have been dropped, he said. “Everyone is trying to get back to normal.”

Organizing Minor League Players

Million-dollar contracts are routine in Big League baseball. In the minors, players barely get by.

Relief is on the way.

The MLB Players' Association – the union representing major league players – is planning to organize thousands of minor leaguers around the country who earn as little as \$400 a week for a six-month season, according to news reports.

Average salary for big leaguers is above \$4 million, according to the Associated Press, and highly regarded players earn far more.

Max Scherzer, a pitcher for the New York Mets, is the highest paid with a salary this season of more than \$43 million. Outfielder Mike Trout of the Los Angeles Angels makes just over \$37 million. Third baseman Anthony Rendon, also of the Angels, earns more than \$36.5 million.

Union chief Tony Clark said minor leaguers – between 5-6,000 players at any given time – endure “poverty wages, oppressive work rules, discipline without due process, ever-expanding offseason obligations” and a variety of other indignities, the AP reported.

In a letter to player agents, Clark said management shows players “a chronic lack of respect” and imposes harsh working conditions “because minor league players have never had a seat at the bargaining table.”

Until now, the major league players union has refused to represent players in the minors but the union’s executive board unanimously approved the organizing campaign and promises “overwhelming support,” according to a report in USA Today.

The MLBPA initiative is a welcome development, Harry Marino, executive director of Advocates for Minor Leaguers, an advocacy group formed in 2020, said in a statement noted by the newspaper.

“Though there is much work left to be done, one thing is clear – better days are ahead for minor league players,” Marino said.



OK to Wear Union Shirts at Tesla

Elon Musk may be a genius when it comes to selling electric autos but he's stuck in reverse as an employer.

For the second time in a year, his booming auto company, Tesla, has been cited by the National Labor Relations Board, according to the Associated Press.

Last year, the NLRB found that Musk had engaged in an unfair labor practice by threatening employees with loss of stock options if they affiliated with the United Auto Workers, which has tried to organize workers for some time but a vote has yet to be conducted.

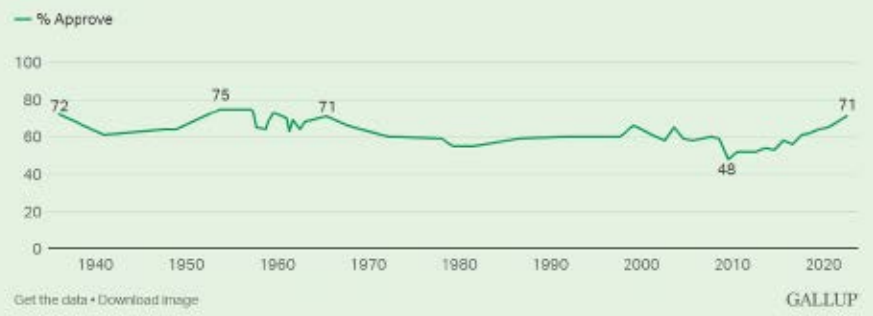
This time, the labor board – with three of five members appointed by President Joe Biden – reversed a Trump-era decision allowing Tesla to bar workers from wearing shirts with the UAW insignia, AP reported.

“The board reaffirms that any attempt to restrict the wearing of union clothing or insignia is presumptively unlawful...” the NLRB ruled. Telling people they can't show up for work in a shirts of their choice, the board said, is “presumptively unlawful.”



Americans' Approval of Labor Unions, 1936-2022

Do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?



GALLUP ORGANIZATION CHART VIA PAI UNION NEWS SERVICE

For Unions, Been a Very Good Year

From Starbucks to Trader Joes, from Amazon to Apple and at dozens of other workplaces, unions are on a roll.

In the first half of the year, unions won 641 elections — the most in nearly 20 years, according to the online news publication Vox which cited data from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) analyzed by Bloomberg Law. And, Vox noted, petitions for more elections were up nearly 60 percent in the first nine months of the fiscal year so “expect more elections — and potential wins.”

One reason for the burst of union activity was the covid pandemic, Vox said.

“During the global crisis, many of the companies that have since unionized called their employees ‘essential workers’ but didn’t treat them that way when it came to wages, benefits, and safety,” Vox observed. “The situation galvanized workers to organize...”

But there may be another factor behind the upswing in organizing: Public approval for unions is on the rise.

“Some 71 percent of Americans approve of unions in 2022, according to new survey data from Gallup,” Vox noted.

It's been more than a half-century since the score has been that high. But back then, Vox said, union membership was twice what it is now.

In other words, lots of recent progress – and plenty of catch-up still to do.



Office Surveillance: Gimme a Break

Get the feeling you are being watched?

For many workers, that is not a symptom of paranoia but sober assessment of modern employment.

The New York Times reported that production increasingly is being measured by electronic surveillance and that employees are being “tracked, recorded and ranked” – often with significant effects on job security and advancement.



THELADDERS.COM VIA GOOGLE IMAGES

“Since the dawn of modern offices, workers have orchestrated their actions by watching the clock,” the Times said. “Now, more and more, the clock is watching them.”

Workers in a wide variety of jobs – from radiologists to social workers – are being judged according to the number of keystrokes they log during the workday and amount of their “inactivity” time.

“Architects, academic administrators, doctors, nursing home workers and lawyers described growing electronic surveillance over every minute of their workday,” the Times reported, and the practice is widespread. “...tracking how employees spend their days, from making phone calls to composing emails, has become routine practice,” the Times said.

While the snooping is relatively new in white-collar fields, lower-paid workers – supermarket cashiers, delivery drivers – have endured surveillance for years, the Times said.

Labor activists said the surveillance represents the “most significant expansion of employer power in generations,” the paper reported.

And how.

Employees say the spying is relentless, they have little control over their work lives – and in some cases, according to the Times, “they don’t even have enough time to use the bathroom.”

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Union Members Can Make A Difference In Midterms

continued from PAGE 8

or in the Nabisco factory and you look at where are those memberships drifting, they're drifting further right," Faiz Shakir, an adviser to Sen. Bernie Sanders, told the Washington Post. "There are more people siding with Trump and the Republican Party. And so you need to be talking to those people."

The GCC/IBT's Freeman agrees.

"We have to make clear where our long-term interests lie," Freeman said. "Republicans have taken a dramatic rightward turn encouraged by Trump and other national GOP leaders. That kind of extreme conservatism sees the labor movement as a threat. We can't fool ourselves about the danger. If Republicans take control again, progress could be reversed. We can't let that happen."

With so much on the line, labor leaders are telling members to vote wisely in midterm elections – which usually draw far fewer voters to the polls than presidential contests – and allow Biden to continue pursuing a pro-union agenda.

Plenty of work remains, they say – especially passage of the Protect the Right to Organize Act (PRO) that sailed through the House but remains stalled in a 50-50 Senate where 60 votes are needed to overcome a filibuster.

"We want...people to see what a difference the administration has made..." AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler told Bloomberg Law. "We want to see things like the PRO Act passed but the outdated rules in the Senate are what's holding everything up."

That's why victory on Nov. 8 is so crucial, labor leaders say. Progress will be tough enough if Democrats hold on to power. It will be impossible, they say, with GOP majorities in the House and Senate.

Leaders are telling union members they can make a crucial difference in tight races.

Winnable contests, for instance, are in Pennsylvania where labor-friendly Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor John Fetterman is battling Trump-endorsed TV doctor Mehmet Oz and in Ohio, where working-class favorite Rep. Tim Ryan of Ohio faces J.D. Vance, an author who once denounced Trump and then sought – and gained – the former president's endorsement. (See Page 9 for a midterm election guide.)

Steve Rosenthal, a Democratic political consultant, said turning out the labor vote in traditionally strong union states like Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin is essential.

"The states that matter in 2022 will also determine 2024, and they're the states that decided 2016," Rosenthal told Bloomberg Law. "You've essentially got the future of the free world and democracy in the balance..."

Trump's influence in the Republican Party, and the extremist views he has unleashed, continue a worry for union leaders.

"As our country becomes more diverse, fearmongers prey on racial and economic anxieties, stirring up resentment," said Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers at the union's July convention, according to PAI Union News Service. "This is not conservatism. It's extremism. Radical MAGA forces are dividing Americans from one another, spreading lies and hate, and breaking democratic norms to enrich themselves and grab power."

The role union members play in this election could make the deciding difference between two more years of dramatic labor gains under a Biden administration or GOP rule that threatens to undercut the working class and union rights, leaders say.

"So as you get ready to vote this year, remember where the candidates on your ballot stand

FIGHTING FOR TEAMSTERS AND OUR FAMILIES

Corporate America has promoted its pro-Big Business, anti-worker agenda at the expense of working families. Teamster members fight corporate greed through strong, grassroots action and work to ensure that elected officials hear our concerns loud and clear.

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In addition to DRIVE PAC, the Teamsters have established an additional Political Action Committee called TEAM Fund – the Teamsters Education And Mobilization Fund. TEAM Fund allows Teamster retirees, family members, non-active members, and our allies to participate and support the political objectives of the Teamsters Union, our members, and our families.



Visit www.teamster.org/teamfund to donate or to visit the online store with union-made Teamster merchandise.



and how they voted in the past," IBT General President Sean M. O'Brien said in a column for the Communicator on Page 2. "It's time to send a message to our elected leaders that in order to get our support, they must support us while casting their votes in Washington."

Freeman has been emphasizing the same point throughout the election season – urging GCC/IBT members to study the issues, listen to candidates and support those who make labor rights a priority.

"Crunch time is coming," Freeman said. "We have to mobilize the labor vote Nov. 8 and elect candidates who will protect working people and their unions. This is a pivotal moment. Let's meet the challenge. Our future is on the line." ■

NOTICE ON WORKER OBJECTIONS TO AGENCY FEES

Annual notice is hereby given of the policy on worker objections to agency fees which has been adopted by the General Board in response to the United States Supreme Court's 1988 decision in *Beck v. CWA*. The policy sets forth a formal procedure by which an agency fee payer may file an objection to the payment of that portion of his or her dues which is attributable to expenditures for activities which are not germane to collective bargaining. The policy applies only to agency fee payers who work in the United States. The policy applies to the Conference, district councils, and local unions.

Agency fee payers (also referred to as "financial core members") are those individuals covered by a union security agreement who meet their financial obligations by paying all dues, fees, and assessments, but elect not to become or remain actual members of the union. Agency fee payers may not exercise the rights of membership such as running for union office, electing union officers, ratifying contracts, and voting on strikes. They may be eligible to receive strike benefits if they are participants in the Emergency and Special Defense Fund, but they are not eligible to receive benefits from the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund whose benefits are for members only.

The policy adopted by the General Board includes the following elements:

1. The agency fee payable by objectors will be based on the expenditures of the Conference, district councils, or local unions for those activities or projects normally or reasonably undertaken by the union to advance the employment-related interests of the employees it represents. Among these "chargeable" expenditures are those for negotiating with employers, enforcing collective bargaining agreements, informal meetings with employer representatives, discussing work-related issues with employees, handling employees' work-related problems through the grievance procedure, administrative agencies, or informal meetings, and union administration. Based upon an independent audit by the Conference's auditors, it has been determined that eighty and sixty-eight hundredths percent of the Conference's expenditures for the year ending December 31, 2021 were for such activities. Because at least a proportion of district council and local union total expenditures are spent on "chargeable" activities as are spent by the Conference, in

calculating the amount of local union dues to be paid by objectors, district councils and local unions may exercise the option of presuming that the Conference's percentage of chargeable activities applies to the district council or local union also. Alternatively, district councils or local unions may calculate their own percentage of chargeable activities.

2. Objectors will be given an explanation of the basis for the fee charged to them. That explanation will include a more detailed list of categories of expenditures deemed to be "chargeable" and those deemed to be "nonchargeable" and the accountants' report showing the Conference's expenditures on which the fee is based. Objectors will have the option of appealing the union's calculation of the fee, and a portion of the objector's fee shall be held in escrow while he or she pursues that appeal. Details on the method of making such a challenge and the rights accorded to those who do so will be provided to objectors with the explanation of the fee calculation.

3. Objections for the year 2023 must be filed on or before December 31, 2022 for current agency fee payers unless a prior objection was filed on a continuing basis. Timely objections are for one year and will expire on December 31, 2023 unless they are filed on a continuing basis. Objections filed on a continuing basis will be honored until they are revoked. If an employee is not an agency fee payer, the employee must assume non-member status and file an objection to be eligible for a reduction of dues for the period beginning with the timely receipt of the objection. New employees who wish to object must not obtain member status and must file an objection within thirty days of first receiving notice of this policy for a reduction of dues for the period beginning with receipt of a timely objection.

Objections should be sent to the attention of the Agency Fee Administrator, Office of the Secretary-Treasurer, Graphic Communications Conference/IBT, 25 Louisiana Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001. The objection should be signed and contain the objector's current home address, place of employment, and district council and/or local union number. Copies of the full text of the procedures for worker objections to agency fees are available upon request from the Agency Fee Administrator.