

# AFL-CIO

---

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT STRATEGIC CAMPAIGN CENTER

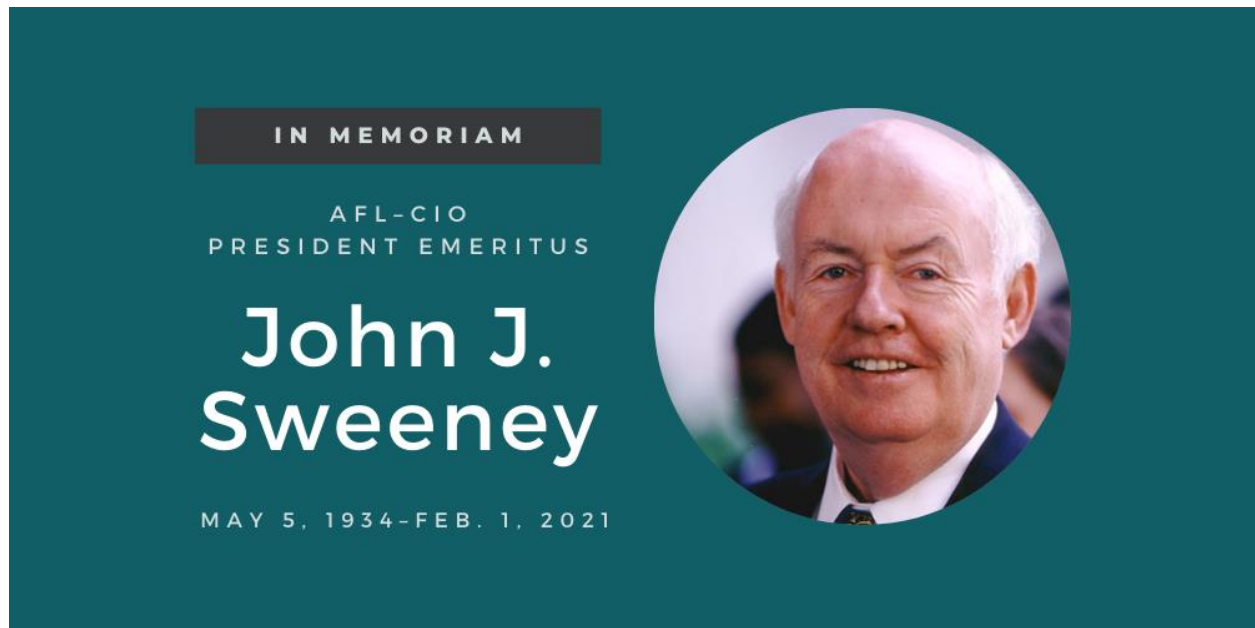
**WEEKLY REPORT ENDING  
FEBRUARY 5, 2021**

## Introduction

The update that follows captures the scale and complexity of the work moving through the Strategic campaign structure. We begin each report with the Strategic Campaign Center's Weekly Spotlight, lifting up a particular piece of the program. This week, we are highlighting **The Battle for Worker Empowerment Begins**.

This document covers reports from:

- A. Weekly Spotlight
- B. Political/Democracy
- C. Data, Analytics and Infrastructure Resource
- D. Communications Resource
- E. Policy/Legislation
- F. Training
- G. Essential Life Services/Growth
- H. Governance
- I. Safety & Health
- J. Office of the General Counsel
- K. Coalition Partners
- L. Field Reporting—Highlights



### **The Legendary Career and Spiritual Calling of John Sweeney**

John Sweeney was a legend, plain and simple. He was guided into unionism by his Catholic faith, and not a single day passed that he didn't put the needs of working people first. John viewed his leadership as a spiritual calling, a divine act of solidarity in a world plagued by distance and division. The son of Irish immigrants, he used work as a way to directly apply his values, consistently exhibiting grit over flash and pursuing progress instead of posturing. He built the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) into a powerhouse, doubling its membership, earning respect across the labor movement and in the halls of power. Throughout his storied life, John used the lessons he learned as a ground-level union leader to uphold dignity for all working people and expand human rights worldwide. I was proud to join his insurgent ticket in 1995, which recommitted the AFL-CIO to worker organizing and collective power. As president, John was a great leader and true innovator, driving the labor movement forward. We stand on that foundation today as we take on the challenges of inequality, systemic racism and much more. Former President Bill Clinton called John "a force for inclusion and activism." I was blessed to call him a brother, a mentor and a friend. May God bless John's memory, his family and the labor movement to which he devoted his life.

*—President Richard Trumka*

# WEEKLY SPOTLIGHT

## The Battle for Worker Empowerment Begins

America is facing multiple crises—COVID-19, jobs, racism, climate. But at the heart of all that has gone wrong is declining faith in democracy after years of growing inequality. That decline left our democracy vulnerable to open attack—and that attack came on Jan. 6. We defeated it, but until we fix our democracy and end the radical inequality that has grown in our country, our democracy and our freedom are not safe. The only way to do that is to empower all working people—to give all working people a real right to organize, to make our voices heard on the job and in the life of our nation. It's time our nation got serious about giving workers the power to build a better country and defend our democracy. And that means it's time to pass the Protecting the Right to Organize Act of 2021—the PRO Act.

This week, on Feb. 4, the PRO Act was reintroduced in the U.S. Congress, with the support of President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and with 42 Senate co-sponsors and 197 House co-sponsors. In just one week, we have reached the same level of support for the PRO Act that we had in the last Congress.

The PRO Act is the medicine our country needs after decades of wage stagnation, falling pension and health care security, and a loss of faith in democracy. The PRO Act changes our labor laws so that workers have a real right to organize without our employers threatening us. The PRO Act restores a real right to strike and, by so doing, restores the power of collective bargaining. The PRO Act brings democracy back to the workplace and fairness back to the economy, because it will give the 60 million Americans who want to join a union a real chance to do just that.

How did we gain so much ground in Congress so fast? The reality is that it's all the result of the labor movement's mobilization—the mobilization in 2018 that won the House, the mobilization in 2020 that elected Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, the mobilization that won the two Georgia Senate seats on Jan. 5 and, most of all, the intense work this week by the entire labor movement—national and local unions, state federations and central labor councils—to nail down the support of House and Senate members.

Across the AFL-CIO's Central Region, including the critical industrial states from Pennsylvania to Wisconsin, state federations met with every single Democratic senator—and all of them agreed to be original co-sponsors of the PRO Act.

But we did not limit our outreach to Democrats. In the Central Region, state federations met with seven House Republicans, winning the support this week of Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania.

In the Western Region, state and local labor movements secured 54 House co-sponsors, led by the California labor movement, which secured 37 co-sponsorships and four commitments to co-sponsor. And for the isolated holdout, Rep. Ami Bera, the Sacramento labor movement set up a phone bank so our members could get in on the conversation directly.

Across the Western Region, all of the state feds with congressional targets reached out to their member of Congress, sending letters, calling and meeting with them; this includes Hawaii and New Mexico, for example. And in the West, as in the Central Region, our outreach has been bipartisan, with the Wyoming State AFL-CIO meeting with Republican Rep. Liz Cheney to discuss support for the PRO Act.

U.S. Labor Civil Rights Commentary COVID-19 Economic Justice Labor Politics & Gov. Washington

### Ron Bieber: Congress and Biden should act on an agenda for working people

by Ron Bieber February 4, 2021



In the Eastern Region, Georgia AFL-CIO President Charlie Flemming had the pleasure of talking with newly elected Sens. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff about supporting the PRO Act, and was reassured that as soon as their staffs could find their offices and figure out how to do it, they would sign them up as co-sponsors. In Florida, the state federation contacted the state's entire Democratic delegation. In West Virginia, the state AFL-CIO continued to urge Sen. Joe Manchin to sign on as a co-sponsor. The week ended with a strong feeling of confidence that the list of Senate co-sponsors would

soon grow—at a minimum with the addition of the names of the new Georgia senators that working people did so much to elect.

Across the country, these meetings were coordinated with simultaneous press releases and op-eds. The Central Region state federations did this in all 13 states, coinciding with the PRO Act's introduction on the floor of the House and the Senate. Each state fed crafted a unique message drawing upon the themes of putting workers first with an agenda that wins for working families, rooted in the PRO Act, and outlining why, when workers organize unions, they help solve the crises of racial injustice, economic inequality and dangerous work conditions exacerbated by the pandemic.

This week we showed how the pieces fit together—how successful political efforts and successful issue mobilization can really make the difference. But the fight to build working people's power and democracy in the workplace is just beginning. After decades of defeat and delay, the labor movement has no illusions about what a tough fight this will be. We have a powerful ally in President Biden, but that won't change the fact that we will face the combined opposition of all those who have gotten rich off of taking the wealth we produce.

This is a historic moment. Working people have tried to fix our labor laws before—in 1977 and 1993 and 2009, only to run afoul of politicians' razzle-dazzle—the old “we'll get to you next”

routine. We have learned that legislation as transformative as the PRO Act doesn't pass because of lobbyists' skill or even because we elect politicians who support us. We have to have workers in motion—organizing now, pushing the envelope of existing law, challenging employees and politicians. We have to meet the moment our society is in, come together with allies old and new. Worker power must be the demand not just of unions, but of our whole country.

Across this nation, a mighty giant is awakening—the working people of America. On Friday, Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama, released a video about what Amazon's anti-union campaign is like—complete with videos of posters put up in bathrooms. Within 24 hours, 2 million people had watched the video and heard the voices of Amazon workers standing up. That is a sign that we are beginning to meet the moment. And we have just begun.

## State Federation/Central Labor Council News

### Alaska AFL-CIO



The Alaska AFL-CIO is excited to announce a bittersweet leadership change within the Alaska labor movement. Alaska AFL-CIO President Vince Beltrami is retiring after 15 years of service. Joelle Hall, Alaska AFL-CIO's director of operations, was elected at a meeting of the vice presidents to serve the remainder of his term.

Vince Beltrami spent the greater part of his adult life advancing the labor movement in Alaska. After moving to the state in 1988 and becoming a member of the Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1547, he quickly understood the importance of organized labor and sought to make a difference. Former Alaska AFL-CIO President Jim Sampson recognized Vince's leadership capacity while he served as Anchorage

Building Trades Council president from 2000–2003 and as statewide training director of the Alaska Joint Electrical Apprenticeship & Training Trust from 2003–2006. It was clear that Vince was the obvious choice to fill his shoes upon his retirement in 2006. Vince hit the ground running and never looked back. Under his leadership, the Alaska AFL-CIO transformed from a few part-time staff members to a powerhouse organization that strives to represent working people in every corner of Alaska. His tenacious leadership style put the Alaska AFL-CIO in a strong position to propel the cause of working people to new heights.

Alaska AFL-CIO Secretary/Treasurer Jake Metcalfe said:

*"Vince Beltrami has been an incredible force for the Alaska labor movement. He leaves behind a legacy as he closes this chapter as president for the Alaska AFL-CIO. Since his early days as an IBEW organizer, Vince has made life better for all working people in Alaska. Through his leadership, Vince brought us into a new century. He will retire in power knowing we are all stronger and better able to do what is right for Alaska workers. Vince, you did a hell of a job, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts."*

While Vince's shoes will be tough to fill, we are confident that Joelle Hall is up to the challenge. She brings over 10 years of experience running the organization's operations and an immense knowledge of Alaska's political landscape and players. Joelle was hired full time at the Alaska AFL-CIO in 2009, and since then she has led the successful effort to defeat anti-labor legislation at all levels of government and fought hard to elect worker-friendly candidates to public office. She is well respected within the labor community and will continue to advance the goals of our organization. While we are saddened to see Vince leave, we know he is ready to enjoy his well-deserved retirement. We are excited to see incoming President Joelle Hall's vision for the future of Alaska's labor movement.

## New Hampshire Phone Bank Program

We continued calling union members in New Hampshire this week, informing them about S.B. 61, a bill that directly attacks workers' rights, interferes in our business environment and cuts wages for workers—including the essential workers we have been relying on through the COVID-19 pandemic. This week we asked members to call Sens. Denise Ricciardi and Kevin Avarad and tell them that S.B. 61 is wrong for New Hampshire.

AFL-CIO Staff Calls		
	<i>Attempts</i>	<i>Canvassed</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,198</b>	<b>271</b>

Call Legislator Survey Responses					
<i>State Senate</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total</i>
9	69	91%	7	9%	76
12	157	81%	38	19%	195
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>271</b>



## **POLITICAL/DEMOCRACY**

- Working with federation colleagues on state legislation mobilization support.
- Working with federation colleagues on Workers First Agenda mobilization, specifically the PRO Act.
- Met with Economic Power & Growth to discuss how to sharpen connection between political mobilization and organizing opportunities.
- Working with federation colleagues to determine peer-to-peer texting joint mobilization options for 2021.
- Identifying, in collaboration with national political directors, Labor 2021 electoral work.
- Exploring educational angles with regard to congressional and state legislative redistricting.

# DATA, ANALYTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE RESOURCE

Through the COVID-19 crisis and Labor 2020, the AFL-CIO's Data, Analytics and Infrastructure Resource (DAIR) has come into its own as a weapon of solidarity—using data to link millions of people physically isolated by the disease in a web of solidarity and common purpose. And now the DAIR team is driving toward improvements to our underlying data and technology in order to make the AFL-CIO's tools flexibly fit the mission. From Action Builder to UnionHall and peer-to-peer texting, the DAIR team is helping unions spread the word and organize.

## Data This Week

- **Action Builder:** We held our monthly affiliate work group meeting on Wednesday, with 11 unions participating. We spent a good portion of the meeting talking through the rollout of the new entities feature, which will allow tracking of companies and other information important for organizing campaigns that's not connected to an individual worker record. We also gave an update on other new development features and reprioritized the development road map for the coming month. We also continued one-on-one meetings with affiliate unions to talk about planning for the launch of the entities feature, which is tentatively scheduled for the end of February.
- **UnionHall:** We are officially underway with the first development work on our major overhaul of UnionHall—the website tool many unions use for their locals. This week we scoped development for the coming two weeks. We will be scheduling an update for affiliate unions soon to review the project's progress.
- **Approvals system overhaul:** Continued efforts to make improvements to the approvals tracker through development planning and break out to make it easier for staff to use the system. Worked with data team leads to pull together development road map for the next iteration of the tool to account for adjustments.
- **Vote history analysis:** Continued to collect and standardize vote history from states for 2020 analysis. We currently have about half of the states in.
- **Membership update, phones and phone logic:** Started the next membership update (deadline Feb. 5 for file submissions). Also added approximately 700,000 new phone numbers to the file, which should hit LAN early next week, along with updates in phone dispositions from recent phone contact work. In all, this will lead to improvements in phone contact ability for future campaigning.
- **LAN support and troubleshooting:** Regular LAN support and troubleshooting for use for legislative and election work. Collecting Wisconsin early vote data and having loaded to LAN for use in primaries.

- **LUD development:** Met with group including Mob and Task Force to discuss necessary updates to LUD for relaunch of LUC program. Started pulling together a development plan for requested changes. Launched 2021 LUD training schedule.

## COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCE

The work of the labor movement's communicators has never been more important. By providing information and messages and telling the stories of our members, the AFL-CIO and our affiliates are able to link working people together in common thought and action as we tackle the three crises confronting America—a pandemic, economic hardship and structural racism. Communication is about building power and uniting those who have a common mission around a common message. It is, in so many ways, the most effective tool to build solidarity.

The power of our communications program can be measured, in part, by the nature of the coordination and whom it touches. This consistent, nimble and strategic effort begins with the vision and leadership of the AFL-CIO and affiliate officers and then is developed in close coordination with key labor movement staff—all help shape the content that union communicators create, refine and disseminate. That collaboration shapes our messaging to internal and external audiences, in the national and local media, advancing a vision that guides the responses of not just the labor movement, but the larger groundswell underway for racial and economic justice.

A recap of the week's most notable press clips, social media engagement, email campaigns and actions, and website hits:

- Bloomberg TV: President Trumka Discusses Marty Walsh's Qualifications  
<http://go.aflcio.org/20210204-bloomberg>
- The Washington Post: Amazon's Anti-Union Blitz Stalks Alabama Warehouse Workers Everywhere, Even the Bathroom  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/02/02/amazon-union-warehouse-workers/>
- Los Angeles Times: Biden Moves Quickly to Show Union Workers That Democrats Care  
<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2021-01-29/biden-takes-an-aggressive-approach-on-labor>
- Politico Global Translations: AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Shuler Talks Tech and Jobs  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1728mvkufcMbiEb7wpfk7RrWvrgHN5b4r/view>
- AFL-CIO: John J. Sweeney, 1934–2021  
<https://aflcio.org/2021/2/2/john-j-sweeney-1934-2021>  
<https://aflcio.org/john-j-sweeney-1934-2021-afl-cio-president-emeritus>
- The Washington Post: John J. Sweeney, AFL-CIO Leader Who Raised Unions' Political Clout, Dies at 86  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/john-sweeney-dead/2021/02/02/7e2b1faa-6567-11eb-8c64-9595888caa15\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/john-sweeney-dead/2021/02/02/7e2b1faa-6567-11eb-8c64-9595888caa15_story.html)

- The New York Times: John J. Sweeney, Crusading Labor Leader, Is Dead at 86  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/us/john-j-sweeney-dead.html>
- The American Prospect: The Man Who Realigned Labor  
<https://prospect.org/labor/man-who-realigned-labor-john-sweeney-obit/>

## HIGHLIGHTS

FACEBOOK THIS WEEK		
<i>Reach</i>	<i>Clicks</i>	<i>Engagement</i>
<b>453,424</b>	<b>51,023</b>	<b>53,411</b>
FACEBOOK TO DATE (SINCE 04/12/20)		
<i>Reach</i>	<i>Clicks</i>	<i>Engagement</i>
<b>60,613,889</b>	<b>3,537,894</b>	<b>6,919,343</b>

TWITTER THIS WEEK		
<i>Impressions</i>	<i>Likes</i>	<i>Retweets</i>
<b>707,900</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>899</b>
TWITTER TO DATE (SINCE 04/12/20)		
<i>Impressions</i>	<i>Likes</i>	<i>Retweets</i>
<b>23,548,629</b>	<b>108,920</b>	<b>44,559</b>

YOUTUBE THIS WEEK	
<i>Views</i>	<i>Average minutes viewed</i>
<b>253</b>	<b>4:54</b>
YOUTUBE TO DATE (SINCE 04/12/20)	
<i>Views</i>	
<b>393,702</b>	

WEBSITE THIS WEEK		
<i>Total Visitors</i>	<i>Visitors to Coronavirus-related Sites</i>	<i>Time Spent on Site</i>
<b>36,274</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>1 minute</b>
WEBSITE TO DATE (SINCE 04/12/20)		
<i>Total Visitors</i>	<i>Visitors to Coronavirus-related Sites</i>	
<b>1,729,993</b>	<b>553,788</b>	

EMAIL THIS WEEK				
<i>Email Actions Taken</i>	<i>Open Rate</i>	<i>Click-through Rate</i>	<i>New Subscribers</i>	<i>Click-to-call Actions Taken</i>
<b>5,964</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>565</b>
EMAIL TO DATE (SINCE 04/12/20)				
<i>Email Actions Taken</i>	<i>Average Open Rate</i>	<i>Average Click-through Rate</i>	<i>New Subscribers</i>	<i>Click-to-call Actions Taken</i>
<b>60,761</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>108,921</b>	<b>90,220</b>

## POLICY/LEGISLATION

The text below goes over the week's COVID-19 policy milestones and offers feedback and highlights.

- President Biden and congressional leadership made clear this week their intention to get the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill finished and signed into law before the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program expires on March 14.
- Both chambers passed budget resolutions that direct the committees to begin drafting legislation that will implement the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan without needing any Republican votes. The Senate passed its budget early on Feb. 5, 51-50, with Vice President Harris casting the deciding vote. The House passed its budget 218-212, with only two Democrats voting no (Rep. Jared Golden of Maine and Rep. Ed Case of Hawaii). No Republican voted yes.
- On Feb. 5, President Biden announced that he would not slow down enactment of the bill to negotiate with Republicans and reiterated his demand that Congress quickly pass the main elements of his plan, which include \$350 billion for state and local governments, \$170 billion for education, COBRA subsidies for the uninsured, \$1,400 checks for individuals, an extension of unemployment insurance (UI) through September, rental assistance, child care and paid leave, relief for multiemployer pensions, an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour, and \$160 billion to speed delivery of COVID-19 vaccines and other critical medical supplies.
- Markups will begin in House committees next week. Senate markups will be delayed by at least a week due to the impeachment trial of the former president, which begins Feb. 8.
- The decision to use the budget reconciliation process to enact the rescue plan does mean that some proposals may be struck down by the Senate parliamentarian under the Byrd rule, which limits the categories of legislation that can be included in reconciliation. Those rulings won't be made until the bill reaches the Senate floor and a senator raises an objection; negative rulings by the parliamentarian can be waived with 60 votes.
- Proposals that may be at risk of violating the Byrd rule include the minimum wage increase, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) emergency temporary standard (ETS) and paid leave; it will be argued that they are not primarily budget matters, but policy choices that have only an incidental effect on the budget. There has been talk in Democratic circles that the Byrd rule itself could be challenged and amended by a simple majority. A challenge to the Byrd rule is likely if Republicans are successful at using it to block critical aid from getting to the American people.

## STATE & LOCAL POLICY & LEGISLATION

- Forty-eight states are in legislative session. The remaining two are Florida (begins March 2) and Louisiana (begins April 12).
- Fifteen states have mask requirements at their state capitols, with varying degrees of application and enforcement: Alabama (public only), Alaska, Arizona (Senate), California, Colorado (no enforcement), Florida, Illinois, Indiana (except members), Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma (except members), South Carolina (Senate), Texas.
- The Long Beach City Council and the San Jose Rules and Open Government Committee recently passed hazard pay ordinances. The ordinances require large grocery stores with more than 300 workers to pay their retail workers an additional \$4 and \$5 per hour, respectively.
- The Oakland City Council passed a hazard pay ordinance on Feb. 2. The ordinance goes into effect immediately and requires large retail stores to pay their workers an additional \$5 per hour in hazard pay.
- The Seattle City Council passed an ordinance on Jan. 25 that requires grocery stores with more than 500 workers worldwide that have stores larger than 10,000 square feet to pay their workers an additional \$4 per hour in hazard pay. Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda (OPEIU) was the lead sponsor of the bill.
- Right of recall bills are pending in California, D.C., Minnesota and Philadelphia. The Philadelphia measure has passed and is awaiting the mayor's signature.
- COVID-19 workers' compensation-related bills have been introduced in Connecticut, D.C., Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Vermont and Virginia. The D.C. measure has passed and is awaiting the mayor's signature.
- Paid family medical leave measures have been introduced in 17 states: Arizona (state employees), Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Vermont, Washington.
- Sixteen states have paid sick days measures introduced: Georgia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma (state employees), Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington.
- Seventeen states have measures introduced to expand voting by mail: Alabama, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Utah.
- Attacks on voting by mail have been introduced in 11 states: Alaska, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington.
- Corporate liability immunity bills are pending in Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming. The Montana bill has passed and is awaiting the governor's signature.



## TRAINING

The work of the training team during the COVID-19 crisis has enabled the labor movement to continue to function as a movement of democratic institutions, and it has made the COVID-19 campaign possible. The current focus of the training team is developing Common Sense Economics for 2021, with an emphasis on supporting labor law reform and racial justice efforts, as well as supporting the training of local union coordinators, and skills training for federation body leaders and staff.

- Preparation for next week's New Officer Training being held via Zoom on Feb. 9–10.
- Preparing to offer advanced Technical Support Lead training for affiliates, state federations and central labor councils. This training will provide hands-on experience for people who will have primary responsibility for the technical aspects of interactive meetings and conventions. The training calendar will reflect these offerings soon.
- The new PRO Act Common Sense Economics training is now part of the Build Back Better with Unions toolkit sent out by the Communications Resource this week. We are excited to see this being used across the country.
- Our team began staffing the Racial Justice Task Force this week, which is a big transition, and we are preparing for additional meetings for next week.
- Our team is supporting the following Executive Council committee meetings next week: State and Local, Women Workers, Civil and Human Rights, SF/CLC Advisory. This has been a primary focus this week.
- Preparation for Executive Council Committee on State and Local Labor Councils and Community Partnerships, affiliates staff meeting.
- Preparation for Civil and Human Rights Committee meeting.
- Agenda development for Executive Council committees.

## ESSENTIAL LIFE SERVICES/GROWTH

This section highlights this week's COVID-19 response services from our affiliates, state feds and CLC groups. These include food drives, fundraisers, assistance, mobilizations and more.

### AM I SAFE AT WORK?

- “This winter has been one of the darkest periods of the pandemic so far in the U.S....But recent weeks have provided reasons for cautious optimism that the crisis might be abating, at least in the short term. New infections, hospitalizations and deaths are falling as vaccinations speed up.” <http://bit.ly/3cJiq57>. We continue to share organizing leads generated by the Am I Safe at Work? site with affiliated unions. Thus far, leads generated by the site have gone to AFGE, AFSCME, AFT, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), Communications Workers of America (CWA), Machinists (IAM), IBEW, Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT), Laborers (LIUNA), Transport Workers (TWU), UAW, UNITE HERE, and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW).

### NEW ORGANIZING

- **Alabama:** NFL players publicly support Amazon workers' right to form a union <http://bit.ly/39PqWO9>.
- **New Mexico:** Nearly 1,000 grad workers at the University of New Mexico form union and petition state labor board for recognition <http://bit.ly/2NYrjgK>.
- **Maine:** Hospital hires union buster to fight organizing drive by 1,600 nurses <http://bit.ly/2MAwm6P>.
- **California:** Union vote coming up soon for behavioral health workers <http://bit.ly/39PPt5E>.
- **Ohio:** Auto parts workers strike to unionize <http://bit.ly/3tnts69>.
- **South Carolina:** New union at Google alleges contract workers were silenced about pay <http://bloom.bg/3cNbiEO>.

### STRIKES, WALKOUTS AND OTHER WORKER FIGHTBACKS

- **California:** 75 striking workers halt construction at Amazon warehouse <http://bit.ly/3pUla3c>.
- **Georgia:** Union bus drivers' strike over CEO's dismissal <http://bit.ly/36l29cJ>.
- **Connecticut:** Snowplow drivers in contract fight engage in sickout as big snowstorm hits <http://bit.ly/3oT8N6i>.
- **Montana:** Paramedics walk out to protest unsafe working conditions <http://bit.ly/2OaStkV>.
- **Pennsylvania:** Teachers are on strike to protest school district using pandemic to cut pay and benefits.
- **District of Columbia:** Schoolteachers considering a strike over unsafe working conditions <https://bit.ly/2O8CWC3>.

### ORGANIZING CLIMATE/RACIAL JUSTICE

- **National:** How the pandemic may be causing support of labor unions to rise <http://cnb.cx/3tvC0YK>.
- **National:** The labor feminism of 9to5 should guide our organizing today <http://bit.ly/3oVHJ6E>.
- **Georgia:** How a legacy of organizing among domestic workers helped turn Georgia blue

<http://bit.ly/3rkHKCy>.

- **Pennsylvania:** Turnpike lays off workers to switch to “labor-saving technology” in what might be broader, pandemic-related trend <http://nyti.ms/2YQ6mqt>.
- **National:** A parallel pandemic hits health care workers: trauma and exhaustion <http://nyti.ms/2MXQ4cu>.
- **National:** The pandemic has hit women’s jobs the hardest, especially those held by Black women and Latinas <http://nbcnews.to/3pTpkIW>.
- **Global:** Nearly 400,000 ship workers are stranded at sea due to COVID-19 <http://n.pr/2YHXeV3>.

#### **ORGANIZING LEGACY: AFL-CIO President Emeritus John Sweeney (1934–2021)**

- “Not only was he great at organizing, he loved doing it.” —AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler
- “As a union president, he built a renowned organizing program and elevated young organizers, women and people of color into positions of responsibility within the union.” —UNI Global Union
- “As president of the AFL-CIO, brother Sweeney revitalized the labor movement, spearheading aggressive organizing strategies, expanding and diversifying union leadership and membership, and launching a new wave of activism for social and economic justice.” —General President Daniel E. Stepano, Plasterers and Cement Masons (OPCMIA)

#### **UNIONS HELP WITH COVID-19 VACCINE SITES AND AWARENESS**

- **FLOC aids in effort to inoculate all members of the Latino and Black communities against COVID-19.** The Farm Labor Organizing Committee held its first COVID-19 vaccination clinic at its office off Broadway Street in Toledo, part of a push to vaccinate the Latino and Black communities in the Old South End. FLOC aims to assist those in the minority population by providing valuable resources to the community.
- **Community organizations with space are stepping up to make room so more people can be vaccinated.** UAW Local 12 is preparing to administer 300 vaccines to eligible people in Lucas County, Ohio. “It’ll be a good feeling. You know because of COVID we canceled all our union meetings, our retirees meetings. Our neighbors are our friends, so it would be great to open up our doors,” said Tony Totty, president of UAW Local 14, which is working with Local 12. It’s needed now more than ever as more groups of people are eligible for vaccinations and others are getting their second dose.
- **New Mexico union promotes vaccine as some health workers decline shots.** A critical care nurse chokes back tears, his voice heavy, as he speaks about having to put a COVID-19 patient on a ventilator. “As health care professionals, we’re Type A—we want to fix everything. And with COVID, you can no longer fix everything,” said Nick Armijo, driving home after a tough day at Christus St. Vincent Regional Medical Center’s COVID-19 unit. A union is using YouTube videos of Armijo and three other medical workers sharing heart-wrenching experiences to encourage people to get vaccinated and ease the strain COVID-19 has put on hospitals—and workers.

## UNITED WAY PARTNERSHIP

- The AFL-CIO/United Way Worldwide partnership meeting is held to share the work of labor-community partnerships and coordinate ideas for community service work. Each meeting shows the solidarity between the organizations and the deep partnership garnered over the past 79 years. This week's meeting touched on the PRO Act, tornado relief, a reading of President Trumka's statement on the passing of President Emeritus John Sweeney, and upcoming events and meetings.
- Alabama's labor movement is showing up and making history. When a tornado hit outside of Birmingham, Alabama, last week, labor was the first to respond. Labor liaison David Clark, CLC President Marianne Hayward and the Alabama AFL-CIO sprang into action to assess the damage on the ground and began outreach to union members. This area also happens to be where a historic movement is underway—the organization of workers at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer. “Next week on Feb. 8, the facility's 5,800 employees will begin voting by mail on whether to join the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, a part of the United Food and Commercial Workers. If they vote yes, the Bessemer warehouse will make national history as the first Amazon facility in the country to unionize,” Alabama AFL-CIO President Bren Riley wrote in a column for the Alabama Political Reporter.
- United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, with the help of labor liaison Jim Blatnick, runs a relief program geared toward helping the community with basic needs. PA211sw.org provides directions and forms for applicants. National 211.org can help people locate programs in their communities, or you can dial 211 from any telephone.
- United Way of San Diego County AFL-CIO labor liaison Ruby Featherly assisted in rent relief and food programs for community members dealing with hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over \$63,000 in assistance was distributed in January.

FOOD RELIEF ACTIVITIES TO DATE		
<i>Events Held</i>	<i>Number of People Fed</i>	<i>Where Number of People Fed was not available, # lbs of Food Served</i>
<b>338</b>	<b>773,224</b>	<b>4,964,233</b>

## Local Union Coordinators Program

Since Labor Day, the number of local unions designating a local union coordinator has increased 70%. On Labor Day 2020, 34% of local unions had a local union coordinator compared with 58% this week. The number of local unions with a local union coordinator grew by 2,353 during this period. Campaign organizing correlates to the urgency of harmonizing the collective power achieved through an established Local Union Coordinator structure as demonstrated in the growth achieved through Labor 2020 and the Georgia runoffs. Now we turn our attention to advancing the Local Union Coordinators program through both federal and state legislative attacks and opportunities.

This week we begin highlighting local union coordinators serving their local union leadership in this important role.

LOCAL UNION COORDINATOR CALL PROGRAM SUMMARY							
<i>Phase</i>	<i>Total Local Unions</i>	<i>Targets with Known Phone Numbers</i>	<i>Attempts</i>	<i>Canvassed</i>	<i>Left Message</i>	<i>Locals with LUC</i>	<i>% Members Covered by LUC</i>
Phase 1	3,882	4,910	7,904	1,221	3,084	2,511	82%
Phase 2	1,834	3,150	3,052	718	1,292	566	66%
Phase 3	1,750	3,294	3,567	663	1,339	486	57%
Phase 4	14,801	23,253	13,240	2,588	5,590	3,881	53%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,267</b>	<b>34,607</b>	<b>27,763</b>	<b>5,190</b>	<b>11,305</b>	<b>7,444</b>	<b>58%</b>

### Local Union Coordinator Spotlight



*Each week, we will spotlight one of our local union coordinators (LUCs). LUCs are the backbone of our AFL-CIO field operations and the connection between the federation and local unions.*

Kathy Hiley has been a member of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) for 35 years and has been involved with the West Central Florida Labor Council for nearly 10 years. She has served on its board of trustees for three consecutive terms. She is involved in every state legislative cycle and in 2020 volunteered to help elect Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. Her efforts have been pivotal in keeping the CLC looped in to national

APWU issues and fights.

“I’m very dedicated to helping the union people, whether they’re in my local or within the CLC,” she said. “I feel victory is when we localize our voice for the betterment of one another.”

## GOVERNANCE

Governance Requests		
To Date (since 3/3/20)		
<i>Received</i>	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Completion Rate</i>
<b>332</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>97.9%</b>

Enabling Remote Work to Date	
<i>Remote Conventions/Elections Approved</i>	<i>Remote COPE Endorsements Votes Enabled</i>
<b>51</b>	<b>60</b>

Zoom Licenses to Date				
<i>Total Requests</i>	<i>Requested, Not Yet Approved</i>	<i>Approved, Not Yet Issued</i>	<i>Issued</i>	<i>Denied</i>
<b>313</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>58</b>

## SAFETY & HEALTH

- Coordinated and organized a national affiliate meeting with federal OSHA about COVID-19 priorities and needs.
- Shared information and coordinated strategy internally and with allies on the use of the Congressional Review Act in the new Congress.
- Continuing to work with unions and internally on information, distribution issues, implementation, policy, legal and strategy issues for COVID-19 vaccines as they relate to the workplace, coordinating with public health groups, medical doctors, labor and policy/legal allies on these areas. We conduct three affiliate meetings per week with report-outs and updates on these issues.
- Worked with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) on respirator needs, supply and coordination, and on vaccination needs, logistics and access issues for essential workers.
- Coordination with allies on ensuring access to and uptake of vaccine among adult workers.
- Preparing for Workers Memorial Day 2021 in light of OSHA's 50th anniversary, the COVID-19 pandemic and the new Biden administration.
- Preparing the annual "Death on the Job" report and coordination for publication and release.
- Planning for Occupational Health Internship Program with unions in 2021.
- Press interviews: USA Today.



# OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

## Racial Justice Work

- Arranged for one of the presenters from our Union Lawyers Alliance webinar “Race-Conscious Measures to Advance Diversity at Work and in Unions” to present to the Racial Justice Task Force about legal constraints on unions’ efforts to diversify their leadership and ways that unions have addressed them.
- The ULA rolled out an expanded Diversity, Outreach, Opportunities and Recruitment (DOOR) mentoring program to include “new” lawyers of color (those within five years of passing the bar) who are ULA members. In the past, the DOOR program only provided mentoring to law students working at ULA member firms and organizations. In addition to covering new lawyers of color, the expanded program has been revised by a working group of the ULA’s Diversity and Racial Justice Committee to provide greater structure, guidance and support for mentors and mentees.
- We have speakers lined up for a two-part program this month for the National Black Law Students Association about unions, the fight for racial justice and the practice of labor law. Speakers at the first session will be Lee Saunders, Kim Anderson (National Education Association executive director), Glenn Kelly (Bricklayers local president and young workers’ representative on the General Board) and Bill Spriggs. Homer La Rue will moderate.
- Speaking to New York state fed about qualified immunity.

## Litigation

- We entered appearance in an unfair labor practice case in which employer has challenged the president’s authority to remove the general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Working on opposition to employer’s special appeal.
- Working on amicus brief in Cedar Point Nursery Supreme Court case, a challenge to a California Agricultural Labor Relations Board regulation requiring that farms grant access to union organizers. Challenge is under the Takings Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Case may have broader implications, including for much more limited access sometimes granted under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). We are also working with UFCW lawyers in California and D.C. on brief for their California locals as well as Teamsters locals and United Farm Workers.
- Received NLRB’s reply brief on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in board’s appeal of District Court’s ruling striking down core provisions of Trump board’s election rule in our action against board. Preparing final reply brief.

## **Presidential Transition**

- Represented federation in meeting with departments of Labor and Homeland Security on status of pending Trump-era regulations and related litigation regarding guest worker visa programs. Representatives of Department for Professional Employees (DPE), International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), AFT, LIUNA and Bricklayers (BAC) were in attendance.
- Circulated memo on congressional budget reconciliation process with eye toward whether the PRO Act, or portions of it, could be adopted through reconciliation internally and to affiliate general counsels. Spoke with Hill staff regarding the same.
- Working on compliance issues.
- The Building the Bench project continues with coalition of progressive groups in consultation with AFSCME, AFT, NEA and SEIU.
- Staff group continues to work on appointment matters in Biden administration.

## **Other**

- Participating in PRO Act internal working group.
- Consulting with Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union-UFCW (RWDSU-UFCW) lawyers in Alabama regarding the Amazon election. Also coordinating with communications shop.
- We continue to plan for our spring 2021 Union Lawyers Alliance conference. It will be virtual.
- Continuing to pursue Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests of Department of Interior regarding Trump campaign/convention events at Mount Rushmore and Fort McHenry, seeking evidence of violation of Hatch Act. Partial response received regarding Fort McHenry.

## COALITION PARTNERS

### Allies

One-on-one meetings with Strategic Victory Fund, Civic Action Fund, Fair Fight Action, Data for Progress, Jain Family Institute, Demand Justice, National Democratic Redistricting Committee, MoveOn, Below Zero, VPP, Voting Rights Lab, Democracy for America, Momentum Community and Uphold Our Democracy.

Convened open mic regarding redistricting with 400 participants.

## CONSTITUENCY GROUPS, FAITH & ALLIES/COMMUNITY BUILDING

### A. Philip Randolph Institute

This week APRI President Clayola Brown accepted the appointment as the incoming civil, human and women's rights director at the AFL-CIO.

### Longtime Labor Activist Named AFL-CIO Civil Rights Director



**(Washington, D.C., Feb. 3, 2021)**—The AFL-CIO announced Clayola Brown's appointment as civil, human and women's rights director, tasked with guiding the federation in our fight against America's legacy of systemic racism, exclusion and injustice. A lifelong civil rights and labor activist, Brown has served as president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) since 2004.

"From her first days organizing textile workers to her service on the AFL-CIO's Executive Council to her unparalleled leadership at the A. Philip Randolph Institute, Clayola has always recognized that the struggle for worker power is intrinsically linked to the fight against racial and social injustice," said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. "The labor movement is stronger for her decades

of committed activism, and I'm thrilled to have such an accomplished trade unionist taking on this critical role."

After getting her start organizing textile workers alongside her mother in Charleston, South Carolina, Brown served in key leadership positions with UNITE (now UNITE HERE) and Workers United. She went on to make history as the first woman to lead APRI, an organization of Black trade unionists dedicated to fighting for racial equality and economic justice. Brown also has served on the AFL-CIO Executive Council and the NAACP National Board.

"I'm thrilled to be coming on board," Brown said. "The labor movement has always been essential to the advancement of Americans' most fundamental civil and human rights. As our movement continues to surge forward, the demands of working people are going to be heard loud and clear. We're bringing everything we have to the fights ahead, and we intend to win."

## **Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance**

This week the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance held a virtual call to action to reverse public charge by executive order. The event was held to continue to amplify and encourage the Biden administration to issue an executive order that “directs immediate review of the public charge rule and other actions to remove barriers and restore trust in the legal immigration system, including improving the naturalization process.” APALA encouraged members to write to President Biden and show support via social media outlets. APALA also put out a statement condemning Myanmar’s military for its use of violence to undermine democracy. The full statement can be found [here](#).

## **Coalition of Black Trade Unionists**

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists celebrated its 50th anniversary this week. The CBTU is supporting the Amazon campaign in Alabama with phone banking and postcards.

## **Coalition of Labor Union Women**

The Coalition of Labor Union Women this week assisted with the Amazon campaign in Alabama by sending out postcards. Last week, CLUW co-sponsored, along with the AFL-CIO, the Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, and other worker organizations, the Indie Lens Pop-Up virtual film screening of “9to5: The Story of a Movement.” CLUW also put together a video montage of all the work it did in 2020. CLUW continues to support union workers by offering Zoom training.

## **Labor Council for Latin American Advancement**

This week the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement joined immigrant workers, community members and leaders for a press conference aimed at elevating the voices of our compañeras and compañeros in Gainesville, Georgia, whose lives have been affected by the tragedy that occurred last week at the Foundation Food Group poultry processing plant.

## **Pride At Work**

Pride At Work, with AFT, Oregon Tradeswomen, Democracy Forward and National Women’s Law Center, filed suit in U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon against the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) in response to the Trump administration implementing “a rule that makes it easier for federal contractors to discriminate by claiming a religious exemption to nondiscrimination protections.” P@W Executive Director Jerame Davis’ op-ed, published in LGBTQ Nation, can be found [here](#).

## FIELD REPORTING—HIGHLIGHTS

Below you will find the most critical field highlights from each region—East, Central and West.

### EAST REGION

#### New Member of AFL-CIO Eastern Region Team: Cameo Hawkins

Eastern Region Field Director David Driscoll-Knight announced the addition of Cameo Hawkins, who has joined the team as a senior regional administrative specialist. In her new role, Cameo serves as a liaison for Driscoll-Knight, responds to correspondence, and schedules meetings and trainings. In addition, she provides administrative and technical assistance to our Eastern Region senior field representatives to ensure a positive workflow. Welcome, Cameo—we're excited to have you on board!



#### New Hampshire AFL-CIO: Fight Against Right to Work Continues



Next week, the New Hampshire State Senate is set to vote on S.B. 61, a “right to work” bill that makes it harder for working people to form unions and collectively bargain for better wages and benefits. The state’s right to work fight has been heavily covered in the press following a hearing last week where dozens of union members spoke out against it. Ahead of the vote, New Hampshire AFL-CIO President Glenn Brackett (IBEW) [authored an op-ed](#) in the Concord Monitor about how this bill ultimately will harm New Hampshire’s working families.

*“For all of its history, New Hampshire has avoided this devastating impact to our working people—and it’s been for our benefit. If you don’t believe me, fine. I’ll let the facts do the talking.”*

*“It would harm our income: In 2019, the median income for New Hampshire households was \$86,900, \$20,000 more than the average income (\$64,071) for those in ‘right to work’ states.”*

*“It would harm our livelihoods: In 2019, the average percentage of people living in poverty in ‘right to work’ states was 11.2%. In New Hampshire, that percentage is just 3.2%.”*

*“And it would harm our safety: The rate of workplace deaths in New Hampshire was 1.5% in 2019. In ‘right to work’ states, that same percentage was 4.9%.”*

## Alabama AFL-CIO: In the Wake of Disaster, Unions Step Up and Make the Difference

On Jan. 25, a devastating tornado touched down in Fultondale, Alabama. The state federation, along with allied labor organizations, immediately jumped in to help. Unfortunately, the homes of two union siblings were damaged beyond repair. In response to the tragedy, a list of approximately 400 union volunteers able and willing to help clean up and rebuild has been sourced. Last weekend, union members brought equipment (pictured, right) to help in the cleanup efforts. The disaster



occurred not too far from the site of one of the most important union campaigns in the nation, the organization of the Amazon workers at the Bessemer plant. In a recent column for the Alabama Political Reporter, Alabama AFL-CIO President Bren Riley (USW) touched on both:

*“We confidently believe that Fultondale will fully recover from this natural disaster. And we also have full faith in Bessemer’s courageous Amazon workers as they begin their union vote next week. Not everyone is or knows a union member, but if you do, you know the importance of our fight. That’s why when workers need our help, time and time again, we show up. And we’re not going anywhere.”*

## Rhode Island AFL-CIO: Major Labor and Environmental Initiative Announced

**Rhode Island AFL-CIO** President George Nee (OPEIU) reports that the state federation has announced a new initiative called Climate Jobs Rhode Island. The coalition will be chaired by Priscilla De La Cruz, the Rhode Island director of Green Energy Consumers Alliance, and Patrick Crowley (NEA-RI), secretary-treasurer of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO, and is committed to working to make Rhode Island a national leader in a 21st-century economy grounded in the principles of economic, environmental, racial and social justice.



*“The **Rhode Island AFL-CIO** is proud to stand with our friends and allies in the Rhode Island building trades and the environmental movement as we work together to build a green economy in Rhode Island,” Nee said. “The labor movement believes working people don’t just need a seat at the table, but many seats, speaking for all of those fighting for a more just Rhode Island. The fight against exploitation, injustice and racism can only be won when workers have more power. We are proud to add the voices of our 80,000 members in Rhode Island to this effort.”*



## Georgia AFL-CIO: Labor Responds to Devastating Liquid Nitrogen Leak



**Georgia AFL-CIO** President Charlie Flemming (IAM) reports that the state federation is devastated by the news out of the Foundation Food Group poultry plant in Gainesville, where a liquid nitrogen leak led to the death of six workers and injuries to roughly a dozen more. The plant is unorganized, highlighting the need for more unions and worker protections in Georgia in order to prevent accidents such as this one.

*"We demand OSHA to conduct a swift and thorough investigation into this incident and [that] measures are quickly taken to prevent such a tragedy from happening again," Flemming said in a [statement](#). "No one should go to work in fear for their lives....Labor unions don't just offer the opportunity to bargain for better wages and benefits—they offer a collective voice to stand up for safety and protections on the job."*

## CENTRAL REGION

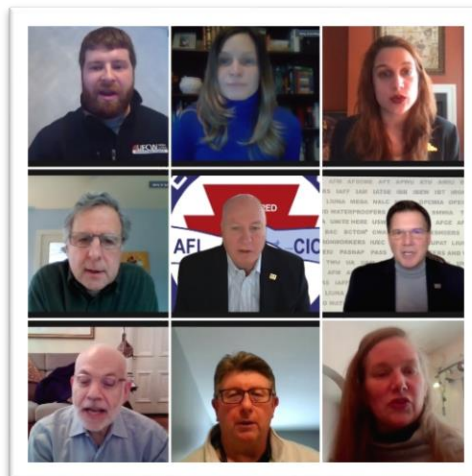
### Ohio Workers Fight to Save Jobs at GE-Savant



AFL-CIO members from across Ohio joined together to call out GE-Savant for abandoning Ohio workers after it announced plans to shut down their LED light factory in Bucyrus, Ohio, which makes lighting fixtures for Walmart stores, and move production to China. The **Dayton-Miami Valley Regional Labor Council** and the **Ohio AFL-CIO** joined IUE-CWA members as they protested at four Walmart locations in Columbus, Dayton, Warren and Bucyrus. Union members passed out fliers asking shoppers to sign an online petition telling Walmart and GE-Savant to keep buying American and make sure these good union jobs stay in Ohio. Protests will continue through the weekend, with more CLCs joining this week's protest.

## Pennsylvania AFL-CIO Preps to Push Workers First Agenda with Legislative Conference

The **Pennsylvania AFL-CIO** hosted its 2021 Legislative Conference by Zoom this week. Union members from across the commonwealth were joined by representatives, newly elected Pennsylvania Treasurer Stacy Garrity, Auditor General Timothy DeFoor, Attorney General Josh Shapiro, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman and others to form a plan to make sure that across all levels of government, from the smallest borough to Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania lawmakers are committed to an agenda that puts workers first and prioritizes the well-being of working families.



## Central State Federations Blitz to Feb. 4 PRO Act Introduction

The state federations of the Central Region have been in high gear, driving toward the Feb. 4 introduction of the PRO Act in the House and the Senate. Our state feds coordinated outreach with our labor councils to the 112 U.S. House members elected from the Central Region, targeting the 45 Democratic representatives, 41 of whom became original co-sponsors of the PRO Act, including some who were not sponsors when it was last introduced. Seven Republicans in the House were also targeted by our state feds for specific, personal outreach, one of whom (Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania) signed on. All Democratic senators met with our state feds and committed to be original co-sponsors of the PRO Act as well.

The Central Region state federations also coordinated simultaneous press releases and op-eds in all 13 Central states at 1 p.m. Feb. 4, to coincide with the introduction of the PRO Act on the floor of the House and the Senate. Each state fed crafted a unique message drawing upon the themes of putting workers first with an agenda that wins for working families, rooted in the PRO Act, and outlining unions as a critical solution to the crises of racial injustice, economic inequality and dangerous work conditions exacerbated by the pandemic.





## WEST REGION

Al Ekblad (IUOE), executive secretary



### Montana State AFL-CIO Increases Momentum Fighting Back Right to Work Legislation

*Sample social media graphic from Montana State AFL-CIO toolkit*

A surge of grassroots union action mobilized by the Montana State AFL-CIO and the Montana Unified table has swamped the comment

line at the Montana Legislature, with calls and emails opposing anti-worker bills outnumbering proponents 7-to-1. The sponsors of the anti-worker bills from the state House and Senate, including bills targeting prevailing wages for the building and construction trades (H.B. 289), dues deduction for public sector workers (S.B. 89 and H.B. 168), and right to work (H.B. 251), have scrambled for time to keep the bills alive, postponing committee and floor votes and canceling hearings.



In the past two weeks, on H.B. 168 in the House Business and Labor Committee, the Legislature tallied 660 phone calls against the bill versus 97 phone calls in favor. That tally does not capture additional phone calls and emails to the legislators themselves.

Scores of union members have testified against the bills that have gone before a committee. In every case so far, the sole voice for these bad bills has been a lone Montana lobbyist from Americans for Prosperity.

The state federation and advocacy group have organized grassroots action against these bills, including calls and emails to legislators. Montana Unified is also airing radio ads, buying billboard space, running an online ad campaign and placing full-page ads in daily newspapers statewide.

A campaign to print letters to the editor in newspapers has created a near-constant flow of letters opposing right to work. Allies have placed opinion pieces in daily newspapers as well. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

## Hero/Hazard Pay Moves Forward in Oakland, San Jose, Seattle and King County



Local labor bodies across the Western Region have successfully advanced hazard pay ordinances for grocery workers. The Oakland City Council on Tuesday voted 8-0 to require major grocery chains in the city to pay workers \$5 per hour more during the pandemic, despite the mayor asking to delay the vote. The **Alameda Labor Council** lobbied in support of this ordinance, speaking to elected officials about workers' experiences on the front lines. The Alameda Labor Council represents hundreds of grocery workers in

Oakland who work for retail chains. The hazard, or hero, pay ordinance in Oakland goes into effect immediately and applies to chains with 500 or more employees nationwide. It will remain in effect until Oakland reaches the yellow tier, the lowest level of California's COVID-19 restriction system. Read more [here](#).

After mobilization and pressure from the **South Bay Labor Council**, the San Jose City Council voted 6-3 Tuesday to draft a measure requiring large grocery stores to pay their employees an extra \$3 per hour in hazard pay. The hazard pay applies only to grocery stores with 300 or more employees. The council could approve the ordinance as soon as Feb. 8. The wage increase would last until the county's stay-at-home order lifts.

The measure is far more controversial in San Jose, amid fears the city may be sued. After Long Beach passed a similar measure in December, the California Grocers Association [sued](#) the city over the \$4 per hour hero pay mandate. The association said the wage increase was illegal because it interferes with the collective bargaining process. San Jose lawmakers will discuss the possible legal risks in a closed session next week.

In Washington over the past few months, UFCW 21, the **MLK Labor Council** and other allies have been winning hazard pay for grocery store employees. In late January, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed an ordinance requiring \$4 per hour in hazard pay that would benefit thousands of grocery workers. This week, Burien, a midsize city in South King County, mandated \$5 an hour in hazard pay.

This comes after months of grassroots campaigning by members of UFCW 21, with the support of the labor community, with MLK Labor Council at the center coordinating actions. Following Seattle and Burien, workers plan to continue pushing for hazard pay in other cities and municipalities. Talks are beginning about doing something at the county level that would cover unincorporated areas in King County.