

CWA

NEWSLETTER

Communications Workers of America
AFL-CIO, CLC
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CWA: House Gets It Right on Health Care Reform CWA Fights Back Against Proposed Tax on Health Care; Follow the campaign on Facebook, Twitter CWA, California Splicing Techs Win AT&T Arbitration CLUW Elects Two CWAers to National Office CWAers Work to Get Out the Vote for Election Day Budget Rental Car Workers at Logan Airport Join CWA Greedy Bankers Hear from Chicago CWAers, 5,000 Other Protesters

CWA: House Gets It Right on Health Care Reform

CWA commended House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the House leadership as they introduced a comprehensive health care reform bill today.

"The House of Representatives health care proposal gets it right. Rather than making those employers that already pay toward their workers health coverage pay more, it requires employers that don't pay to pay their fair share. There is no tax on workers' health care plans in the House bill, unlike the Senate version which currently is asking working and middle income families to finance health care reform," said CWA President Larry Cohen.

The House bill will:

- Require most employers – with an exemption for small businesses -- to share in the responsibility for financing health care coverage.
- Help continue coverage for pre-Medicare retirees.
- Extend health insurance coverage to millions of uninsured persons, guaranteeing that most Americans have quality, affordable coverage.
- Provide substantial subsidies to help make coverage more affordable for middle income families, and expand Medicaid to guarantee that coverage will be affordable for lower income persons.
- Implement insurance market reforms to prevent individuals from being denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions.
- Reduce costs for individuals and small businesses by eliminating uncompensated care, reforming the delivery and provider payment systems, and establishing a

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national exchange to facilitate cost effective coverage.

- Establish a robust public insurance option to ensure there is adequate competition in all areas of the country, thereby holding down rates charged by private insurers.

CWA Fights Back Against Proposed Tax on Health Care;

Follow the campaign on Facebook, Twitter



As the Senate prepares to take up its health care reform bill, CWA members are making tens of thousands of phone calls to lawmakers and holding events across the country, telling Congress that taxing middle class benefits is no way to pay for health care.

News and events are updated regularly on CWA's health care

pages at Facebook.com and Twitter.com. Go to either site and search for "CWAHealthCare," all one word. You can visit the sites without registering, but you'll need to sign up to get automatic updates.

Lots of locals are posting their activities -- for example, CWA Local 9421 reported on Facebook that it partnered with local activists "in an overnight vigil, fast and phone bank for health reform in front of the federal building in downtown Sacramento."

On Oct. 28, CWA members held another national call-in day to Capitol Hill, making 3,282 calls telling senators that real reform shouldn't include a tax on health care plans. In recent weeks, CWA members have made nearly 19,000 calls.

The tax would be devastating for working families, CWA Executive Vice President Annie Hill said. Employers will cut benefits or otherwise pass the tax onto workers.

CWA stresses that the House version of health care reform has it right. The House bill, H.R. 3200 calls for all employers – with an exemption for small business -- to cover their workers or pay an 8 percent payroll tax. The Senate version makes those employers that already pay, pay more. Instead, those that don't pay should pay their fair share, CWA said.

For the latest developments, go to www.healthcarevoices.org.

CWA, California Splicing Techs Win AT&T Arbitration

In a big victory for CWA in California and Local 9421 splicing technicians who lost hundreds of hours of overtime to contractors hired by AT&T, an arbitrator has ruled that the company violated its bargaining agreement with CWA.

"This is a magnificent win for us," CWA District 9 Vice President Jim Weitkamp said in a letter to CWA locals. "It is your win, due in large part to the district-wide mobilization on the contracting issue that we started after the 2006 convention."

A monetary award is yet to be determined but Weitkamp said it could exceed \$1 million. Arbitrator Barry Winograd directed the union and company to meet and negotiate over the amount owed.

"Monetary relief is justified to compensate for the company's failure, well into 2006 and 2007, to utilize employment options under the labor agreement as alternatives to its excessive reliance on contractors," Winograd wrote in his 72-page decision.

The subcontracting mainly involved work on AT&T's Project Light Speed, the company's fiber-optic network. The company tried to claim that past practices made its contracting legal.

Winograd placed a conditional order on AT&T requiring it to "cease and desist" subcontracting on the splicers' work for Project Light Speed. If the company decides to resume contracting out, it must give CWA at least 60 days notice and promptly "negotiate over the effects of that decision, including the prospect of hiring regular, term, temporary and occasional employees, undertaking internal upgrades and transfer, and increasing overtime opportunities for company employees."

CLUW Elects Two CWAers to National Office

Delegates to the 15th convention of the Coalition of Labor Union Women elected new officers, including two CWAers as national vice presidents.

Elisa Riordan, CWA District 1 area director, and Brenda Savoy, CWA Local 2336's secretary-treasurer, will serve four-year terms.

CWA's General Counsel, Mary O'Melveny, also serves as general counsel for CLUW.

Learn more about CLUW at www.cluw.org.

CWAers Work to Get Out the Vote for Election Day

CWA members in Virginia and New Jersey are making thousands of phone calls, knocking on thousands of doors and handing out flyers supporting pro-worker candidates in Virginia and New Jersey.

CWA members were on hand as President Obama rallied Virginia voters in Norfolk, urging them to vote for Democrat Creigh Deeds. Obama heads to New Jersey this week for a rally in Newark with incumbent Democratic Gov. Jon Corzine.



CWA members joined a packed crowd in Norfolk as President Obama urged Virginians to elect Creigh Deeds governor on Nov. 3.

In New Jersey, nearly 350 CWA members have visited union households the past two weekends and another 400 are heading out for labor walks this weekend. On Election Day, 1,000 members are signed up for Get-Out-the-Vote walks, said Hetty Rosenstein, CWA state director for New Jersey.

CWA President Larry Cohen will kick off this weekend's labor walk in northern Virginia. The event begins at 9 a.m. at the Northern Virginia Area Labor Federation office in Annandale at 4536 "B" John Marr Drive. Meanwhile, CWA member and staff volunteers have been calling every CWA family in Virginia this week.

Budget Rental Car Workers at Logan Airport Join CWA

A tremendous degree of unity and commitment by workers at Budget Car Rental at Logan Airport in Boston, Mass., overcame management's anti-union campaign last week. The 60 workers won their union voice by a 33-17 vote; they will be represented by IUE-CWA Local 81201.

The workers' organizing committee united the workers around workplace issues and successfully countered management's efforts to divide them. IUE-CWA organizers said Budget management was forced to cut short many of its captive audience meetings because the organizing committee kept taking them over. The workers were assisted by IUE-CWA Local 81201 organizer Sheila McGillicuddy, President Jeff Crosby, local organizing committee member Mark Whelton, and Jorge Rivera, the local's chief steward at Avis.

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Greedy Bankers Hear from Chicago CWAers, 5,000 Other Protesters



Calling for financial reforms, Chicago CWA members march in Tuesday's huge protest downtown outside a national meeting of bankers.

Joining more than 5,000 other protesters in the streets of downtown Chicago, CWA members demonstrated against banks and financial institutions that are fighting financial reforms while spending taxpayers' money on billions of dollars in executive bonuses.

Officers and members from CWA Local 4250 joined the crowd of AFL-CIO members outside meeting of the American Bankers Association.

"We came with a purpose and left energized," said Ron Honse, CWA representative and political

coordinator for Illinois. "The speakers did a good job getting the message across about how the average working man and woman is affected. Union members turned out in force, but it wasn't just unions. It was a good microcosm of what the community looks like."

Honse said the huge protest was good practice for what he expects will be an even bigger turnout in mid-November when the organization of health insurers, AHIP, meets in Chicago.