

March, 2006

President's Column

Politics

The Senate Republicans in the Missouri Legislature are at it again. This time they have launched a full frontal assault on the working men and women of Missouri. The modus operandi is Senate Bill 849. There's been a lot of hype about this over the last few weeks.

Fifteen Republican Senators were involved with this low-life attempt to harm working families of Missouri. Some of the sorry souls that authored and submitted this Bill are not representatives in our jurisdiction, but the ones that are include:

- Jason Crowell, Dist. 27 - Madison and Perry Counties
- Kevin Engler, Dist. 3 - Washington, Jefferson, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Iron and Reynolds Counties.
- Charles Purgason, Dist 33 - Laclede, Texas and Wright, Shannon, and Oregon Counties.
- Carl Vogel, Dist. 6 - Cole and Miller Counties.
- John Greisheimer, Dist. 26 - Franklin and Warren Counties.
- John Cauthorn, Dist. 18 - Audrain, Monroe, Pike and Ralls Counties.
- John Loudon, Dist. 7 - St. Louis County.

This gang of 15 is trying to do for working men and women what they did for our poorest citizens on State Medicaid: turn the clock back 100 years. Please contact any of these politicians for an explanation. Call us here at the hall if you need contact information.

What is Senate Bill 849? This new legislation would add 9 new sections to existing public contract law. There are 3 main thrusts to this scandalous attempt to undermine decent, good paying jobs. The first would be Project Labor Agreements (PLA's), that's where the owner agrees to a 100% Union Labor force and we agree to no work stoppages for the duration of the job.

849 would also restrict targeting State Projects. You might ask why we would target prevailing wage jobs. The answer would be that, #1, there's no compliance oversight from the state, and #2, non-union contractors tend to lump a lot of hours under the

Laborer, misclassifying job titles with a lower wage trade from the appropriate trade with a higher wage.

Lastly, 849 would make it illegal to make an agreement on a State job with a bidder that is required to adhere to agreements with one or more labor organizations: become members of or affiliated with a labor organization; or force an employee to pay dues or fees to a labor organization (sounds a lot like "Right to Work" doesn't it?)

You might be thinking "Hey, we have to vote on something like that! The answer unfortunately is no... no we don't There are enough Republicans in our State to make any Legislation a reality without voters' approval.

Luckily for us the Democratic side of the Senate aisle filibustered the process leading up to the vote on the full 849 measure. The filibuster went from about 4:30 p.m. on February 21st until 2:00 a.m. on the 22nd.

We can thank Senators' Tim Green (Dist. 13), Harry Kennedy (Dist. 1) and Victor Callahan (Dist. 11), all of St. Louis County. They were the main gears that brought this appalling, would-be law to a grinding halt. A thank you also goes out to all the Ironworkers that went to the Feb. 21st State Senate late night session in Jefferson City to protest, including Local 396 Cope Committee Chairman Bill Trendley.

This bill and the perverse logic behind it may not be dead... but it is for this session in the senate.

Web Site

An idea that's been talked about for years will become a reality in the next few months. Your Executive Board is working on a Local Union web site that will be a huge improvement for member communications. The Newsletter, Special Notices, Important Links and more will be a part of this new tool. Moving with the times, it's another progressive step to make us a better organization and deliver the best service we can to our members. Watch for the start-up in an up-coming Newsletter.

A reminder: Safety is #1; Productivity is #2. Have a safe month.

- Chuck Decker

Business Manager's Column

Work remains fairly slow. We worked a total of 176,276 man-hours for the month and we dispatched 10 men to 9 jobs. Even though the man-hours remain about average, there is not much work coming through the Hall.

Some of the bigger jobs that are winding down are the Stadium, Highway 40 retro fit, City Place and Olive & 270.

Projects that have started are the Pinnacle Casino on the Landing, McCarthy Brothers is the General Contractor. In St. Charles, Rebar Specialist has the rebar in the footings and Weaver Steel has the miscellaneous steel at the Ameristar Casino Hotel and parking garage. At the St. Louis University Research Building on Chouteau and Grand, Clayco has the structural, Engineered Glass Systems has the panels and glass. Big Boy's Steel has the structural and K. Bates has the rebar at Express Scripts in North County.

Jobs that are coming later this year are: Pfizer Pharmaceutical in West County, Chrysler, St. Joseph Hospital in Fenton, River Cement in Festus and the Holcim Concrete Plant in Ste. Genevieve County.

There will be some requirements at a few of these projects. At River Cement and Holcim you will be required to have MSHA (Mine Safety) Training. We will be offering these classes on Saturday, March 18 and Saturday, March 23. Also, starting September 1 at all Ameren U.E. Power Plants, all employees will have to have an OSHA 10 card. We will also have these classes available for our members to take at the Apprentice School as part of our Journeyman Upgrading.

Politics

There will be a Labor Rally on Tuesday, March 28 in Jefferson City. We need to get as many members as we can to attend the rally to show our strength to the legislators, especially the Republicans. We are hoping to have at least 75 Ironworkers represent us.

I would like to have as many retired, laid off or working Ironworkers taking a day off to attend. It is of utmost importance that we get over 2,000 members of the Building Trades throughout the state to represent us. Our message will be heard effectively if we have a large crowd. I would just ask if you are planning on attending, contact the Hall so we can put you on the list and make arrangements for transportation.

Work safe.

- Tom McNeil