

...Kulongoski is labor's choice

(From Page 1)

before and after work to remind workers to vote. "I talk to both the union and nonunion workers," said Jim Anderson, president of Operating Engineers Local 701. "I let the nonunion guys know that if Ron Saxton is elected governor, he'll come after state prevailing wage laws — and that will affect their pocketbooks."

Building trades union leaders point to a series of large public works projects that Kulongoski helped shepherd through the Legislature as a key reason for their endorsement.

One bill introduced by Kulongoski put the state to work fixing bridges using \$2 billion in bonds that will be repaid with an increase in the drivers' license fee. Another dedicated \$100 million in lottery-backed bonds for improvements to railroads, airports and other non-highway projects. A higher education construction bill put \$400 million of money into expansion at university campuses. All those amounts will be spent over a period of years.

Kulongoski also stuck by building trades unions in behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Warm Springs Tribe over a proposed casino in Cascade Locks: The governor's influence helped get the tribe to commit to build the casino with union labor if it wins federal approval for an off-reservation casino.

Don Loving, communications director for Oregon AFSCME Council 75, said the the governor's race is their top priority because he is, after all, the ultimate boss for most AFSCME members. "There's still some frustration over the PERS issue, and we're continuing with litigation," Loving said, referring to Kulongoski's signing of a bill that cut pension benefits for public employees. "But we have to have some perspective: While this governor did modify PERS, the other fellow wants to eliminate it."

The Oregon Supreme Court has since struck down part of the changes to PERS on the grounds that it violated a union contract the state had bargained with its employees.

In an interview with the NW Labor Press during the Democratic primary election, Kulongoski defended his shift on PERS as a tough decision he had to make if he was to protect government services from cuts *and* protect public employees from plans by some Republican leaders to terminate their defined benefit pension and turn it into a 401(k).

While public employees may disagree with the PERS reforms, Joe DiNicola, a corporate tax auditor who serves as president of SEIU Local 503, points out on that union's Web site that Kulongoski's actions pale when compared to what Saxton says he would do. "If

elected, Saxton will dismantle the services Oregonians rely on," DiNicola said. "When it comes to affordable health care, education for our children, economic fairness and workers' rights, Ron Saxton plans to send Oregon backwards."

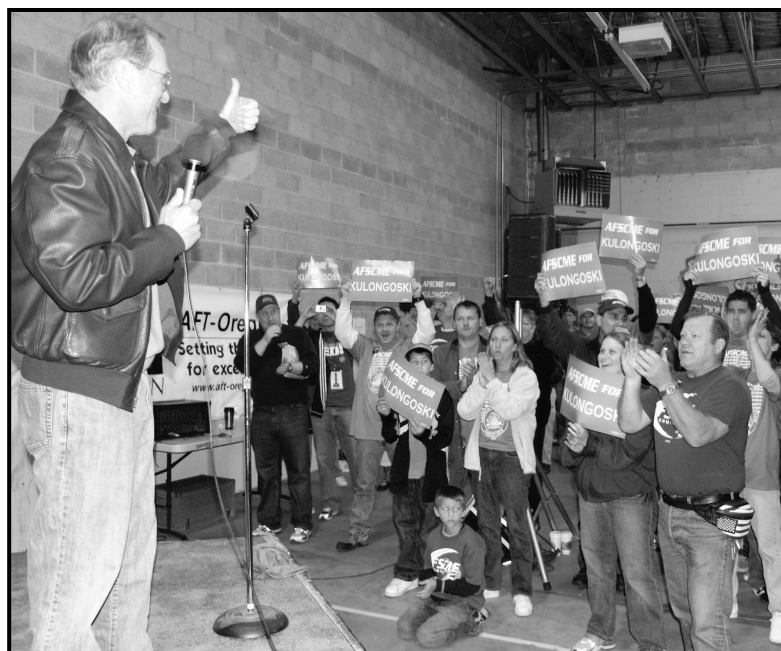
Kulongoski is not bashful describing himself as a "labor Democrat." At a Pillars of Oregon business dinner earlier this year, the former Teamster and Steelworker opened his remarks by saying just that.

"I am and always will be a labor Democrat," Kulongoski later told the NW Labor Press.

It was Kulongoski who wrote the 1973 law that allowed public employees to unionize: As a Eugene labor lawyer, he was asked to write the Oregon Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act, which passed a Democratic Legislature and was signed by Republican Governor Tom McCall.

From 1975 through 1981, Kulongoski served four terms in the Oregon Legislature, where he compiled a 96 percent Committee on Political Education (COPE) voting record as tracked by the Oregon AFL-CIO.

He has also served the state as attorney general, as the state insurance commissioner and as a justice on the Oregon Supreme Court.



Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski is greeted by supporters at labor rally in Northeast Portland on Oct. 14.

As governor, he was one of the first to sign on to the Employee Free Choice Act, a legislative proposal pending in Congress that calls for card-check elections and employer neutrality during organizing campaigns.

He rallied with union members when they called on the National Labor Relations Board to hold hearings before ruling on three cases affecting how workers are classified as supervisors.

He pledged to veto a bill that would have undermined Oregon's minimum

wage for tipped employees.

Recent polls indicate the election will be a close one. A national AFL-CIO poll of union households showed Kulongoski with a 45-27 percent lead over Saxton, with the remainder undecided. That's an unusually low number for union households.

There is no magic formula for winning this election. The key to victory is voter turnout. "If union members and their families vote, we will win — it's that simple," Chamberlain said.



These Portland-area locals of Oregon AFSCME Council 75 would like to encourage our union brothers and sisters to consider the following recommendations as you cast your ballots in this important Nov. 7 election.

Local 88

Multnomah County
Central City Concern
Transition Projects, Inc.
American Friends Service Committee

✓ Jeff Cogen for Multnomah County Commissioner

✓ YES on Measure 26-81 (County Library Levy)

✓ NO on Ballot Measures 41 & 48

Local 350

Clackamas County &
Various Local Jurisdictions
in Clackamas County

✓ Lynn Peterson for Clackamas County Commissioner

✓ Norm King for Mayor of West Linn

✓ Graig Chaimov for Milwaukie City Council

✓ Don McCarthy for Rockwood Water District Commissioner

Local 3580

Metro

✓ Kathryn Harrington for Metro Council District #4

✓ YES on Measure 26-80 (Natural areas, parks & streams)



Union voters make the difference!
Please be sure to get your ballots turned in by Nov. 7