

# Oregon unions join in push for energy independence

Representatives of union, environmental, business and community groups launched a new coalition May 15, known as the Oregon Apollo Alliance for Good Jobs and Energy Independence.

The group is one of 10 state chapters of a national coalition spearheaded by the Campaign for America's Future. The Oregon branch is the product of several years of local relationship-building. The group will promote energy efficiency, biofuels, solar energy, green building and consumer and business incentives to develop Oregon's clean energy economy.

The group is called the "Apollo" Alliance to invoke America's effort to put a man on the moon; a similar national commitment today, the group says, could create more than 3 million new jobs developing and building new energy technologies, and free America from dependence from foreign oil.

As its first act, the Oregon Apollo



Alliance urged members of the Oregon House of Representatives to pass a bill, SB 838, which would require that 25 percent of the state's electricity come from new renewable sources by 2025. The bill, introduced at the request of Gov. Ted Kulongoski, passed the Oregon Senate April 10, and is considered likely to pass the Oregon House.

"This bill is a huge opportunity for Oregon economic development," said Oregon AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Byrd. "It could really re-energize our manufacturing sector."

Oregon Apollo also pushed for passage of HB 2876, which would require energy efficiency retrofits for state buildings.

More information about the Apollo Alliance is available on the group's Web site, [www.apolloalliance.org](http://www.apolloalliance.org).

Thus far, 17 organizations have joined the Oregon Apollo Alliance: Oregon AFL-CIO; Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council; AFSCME Local 3336 (representing employees of DEQ); International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 280; Lane County Central Labor Council; American Federation of Teachers—Oregon; the Oregon Solar Energy Industry Association; Pacific Ethanol; Horizon Wind Energy; McKinstry Company;

EC Company; the Oregon Environmental Council; the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group; Portland Jobs with Justice; the Citizens Utility Board; Portland State Univer-

sity National Policy Consensus Center; and the Labor Education and Research Center of the University of Oregon.

## ...Right-to-work group targets card check

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law card check union recognition.

With the support of the National Right to Work Foundation, an SBM employee who was not part of the bargaining unit filed unfair labor practice complaints with the NLRB against SEIU and SBM.

Attorney Giles Gibson, who defended Local 49 on the SBM-Siltronic case, said he thinks the National Right to Work Foundation is practically running counter-organizing drives at each location where a card check campaign is under way — soliciting employees to repudiate cards and otherwise interfering with the campaigns.

"It's not surprising that since card check has become more successful, they're looking for ways to shut them down," Long, the organizer, said.

In Local 49's case, the NLRB judged the union to be a repeat violator, because of an earlier dispute at Kaiser Permanente, which has a nationwide multi-union partnership agreement. There, too, with the help of the National Right-to-Work Foundation, an employee at a Kaiser business office objected when Kaiser recognized SEIU in October 2005 without going through an election.

In July 2006, Kaiser and Local 49 agreed to rescind union recognition at the unit. There, at least, the union was vindicated when a majority voted to unionize in an NLRB-supervised union election in late April.

In the SBM-Siltronic case, on the other hand, the union and company agreed April 20 to the settlement.

In an April 24 press release picked up by the Oregonian the following day, the National Right-to-Work Foundation characterized the case as a victory against a "rampant abuse of

employees' rights" and said SEIU had been forced to "abandon the coercive 'card check' union organizing process."

The lesson for other unions, Long

says, is to know the law, and be aware that anti-union groups are prepared to get involved at any stage of a union campaign.

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