

Smith feeling pressure to support Free-Choice Act

Union members are putting pressure on Oregon's Republican U.S. Senator Gordon Smith to support the Employee Free Choice Act, which would make it easier for workers to unionize and get their first union contract.

"This is *the* issue for the labor movement," said Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain. "It's about workers' ability to join a union and collectively bargain, and it's how we save the middle class in America."

The House passed the bill 241-185 on March 1. National AFL-CIO officials think the Senate will vote on it as early as mid-June.

So far, 47 Democratic U.S. senators have signed on as sponsors of the bill, including Oregon's other senator, Ron Wyden. No Republican senator has yet signed on as a co-sponsor of the bill, but with Smith facing re-election in 2008 in a state that is trending Democratic, the national AFL-CIO hasn't written him off.

In mid-April, the federation set up a toll-free hotline — 1-800-774-8941 — for union supporters anywhere in America to call their senators about the bill. Callers hear a short message, enter their zip code, and are connected to the office of one of their senators. In Oregon, that's Smith, because Wyden is already on board. Oregonians have made about 900 calls to the hotline, more than residents of any other state.

That may be in part because the Oregon AFL-CIO has assigned politi-

cal organizer Elana Guiney to work on the issue. Guiney also collected about 4,000 post cards signed by union members supporting passage of the bill, and planned to deliver them to Smith and Wyden this week.

To argue for the bill, Chamberlain visited Smith in Washington, DC, May 16. Smith told Chamberlain he agrees the system is broken, but doesn't think the Employee Free Choice Act is the best way to fix it; he's opposed to the bill's requirement that employers recognize unions on the basis of majority sign-up (card-check) and the requirement that the first contract be established by binding arbitration if workers and employers can't reach agreement.

"I'm discouraged by what he [Smith] said, but I don't think working people in Oregon should let him off the hook," Chamberlain said. "The worst thing that could happen right now is for him to say 'I'm not voting for it' and then not get phone calls from people about it. He needs to hear from working people."

Leave a message for Sen. Smith by calling 1-800-774-8941. His Portland office phone number is 503-326-3386. His Portland address is One World Trade Center 121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 1250 Portland, OR 97204.

Swanson, Thomas & Coon

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Since 1981

James Coon Ray Thomas Kimberly Tucker
Jacqueline Jacobson Margaret Weddell Cynthia F. Newton

Tip of the week: You have only one year after your doctor has told you that you suffer from an occupational disease to file a workers' compensation claim.

We represent people on all types of injury and disease related claims.

- Workers' Compensation
- Construction Injuries
- Asbestos/Mesothelioma
- Personal Injury/Product Liability
- Death Claims
- Social Security Disability

We provide straight answers at no cost on any of the above areas of law.

CALL US or VISIT OUR WEB SITE

(503) 228-5222 <http://www.stc-law.com>

Carpenters, Electricians, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floorcoverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Family, Mill Wrights, Painters, Elevators, Plasterers

Turn your beater in for something sweeter.

New and used auto rates
as low as 5.99%*

Drive home a new or used vehicle
today! Flexible terms up to 84
months.

Visit us online at
ibewwfcu.com or call us at
800-356-6507 ext 340
to apply today.

*Includes .50 % reduction of rate with automatic payment
from IBEW & United Workers FCU account.



PO Box 16877
9955 SE Washington St
Portland, Oregon 97292
www.ibewwfcu.com



Electricians, Carpenters, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floorcoverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Family, Mill Wrights, Painters, Elevators, Plasterers

Electricians, Carpenters, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floorcoverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Family, Mill Wrights, Painters, Elevators, Plasterers

Danner
Rain Forest Boots
Made in America!
Try a pair on, you'll like them.
Tough boots for the Northwest.
AL'S SHOES
5811 SE 82nd, Portland 503-771-2130
Mon-Fri 10-7:30 Sat 10-5:30 Sun 12-6

NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS
(International Standard Serial Number 0894-444X)
Established in 1900 at Portland, Oregon
as a voice of the labor movement.
4275 NE Halsey St., P.O. Box 13150,
Portland, Ore. 97213
Telephone: (503) 288-3311
E-mail: Michael492@comcast.net
Editor: Michael Gutwig
Staff: Don McIntosh, Cheri Rice
Published on a semi-monthly basis on the first and third Fridays of
each month by the Oregon Labor Press Publishing Co., Inc., a non-
profit corporation owned by 20 unions and councils including the
Oregon AFL-CIO. Serving more than 120 union organizations in Ore-
gon and SW Washington. Subscriptions \$13.75 per year for union
members.
Group rates available to trade union organizations.
PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID
AT PORTLAND, OREGON.
CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICE: Three weeks are required for a
change of address. When ordering a change, please give your old
and new addresses and the name and number of your local union.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS, P.O. BOX 13150-0150,
PORTLAND, OR 97213
ILCA IBEW 25