

L.A. workers set 'Fight for Good Jobs' agenda as 350,000 face contract negotiations in '08

LOS ANGELES — Union members here gathered Dec. 6 to set a "labor agenda" for 2008, when 350,000 workers belonging to 30 local unions will re-negotiate their union contracts — the largest number of workers in the history of the Los Angeles labor movement.

A Delegates Congress to discuss issues and strategy was hosted by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO. About 1,000 workers including nurses, janitors, actors, firefighters, longshore and teachers attended the Congress.

"In 2008, when it comes to contract fights, organizing and politics, L.A.'s workers are combining their resources in a single 'Fight for Good Jobs,'" said Maria Elena Durazo, executive secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

According to figures released in a new report by the Economic Roundtable, the economic impact of workers bargaining for new contracts on Los Angeles is immense. The earnings of these workers alone supported

126,700 additional jobs in 2007, according to the report, "The Economic Footprints of Unions in Los Angeles."

"This is as a result of having more money to spend on housing, dining out, health care, shopping, transportation, entertainment and savings," Durazo said.

According to the report, this is 26,700 more jobs than would be supported in the local economy if these workers did not earn union wages. In addition, the spending of money by these same workers stimulates \$21 billion in sales annually and \$3 billion in taxes to all levels of government.

The labor council is planning "Hollywood to the Docks," 28-mile march in the spring. The march will make its way from Hollywood, where the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) contracts expire in June 2008 to the docks of the harbor of L.A., where Longshore and Warehouse Union contracts are set to expire in July 2008.



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