

Washington State Labor Council endorses Gregoire for governor

SEATTLE — The Washington State Labor Council's Committee on Political Education (COPE) has endorsed Gov. Chris Gregoire for re-election.

About 350 delegates attending the AFL-CIO convention May 3 at the Machinists District Lodge 751 hall voted unanimously to back Gregoire, a Democrat. AFL-CIO political endorsements require a two-thirds majority vote.

"She's been a great governor for Washington's working families," said WSLC President Rick Bender. "She

has overseen the creation of more than 220,000 new jobs, has doubled the number of apprenticeship opportunities in the state and is presiding over the lowest unemployment rate in the history of our state."

Under the state's new "top two" primary system, the two candidates with the most votes — regardless of their party affiliation — will square off in the general election in November.

Washington's primary election is Aug. 19.

There are no other Democrats running for governor, but two Republicans and one Libertarian have filed. Among the Republicans is former State Sen. Dino Rossi, whom Gregoire defeated four years ago in what was recorded as the closest governor's race in United States history.

It took seven months for the election to be certified following recounts by both machine and by hand and a court challenge. Rossi had the lead on Election Day, but Gregoire's final margin of victory was 133 votes.

In other statewide endorsements for the primary election, COPE backed Democrat Brad Owen for lieutenant governor and Republican Sam Reed for secretary of state. Both are incumbents facing no opposition.

For state treasurer, the WSLC endorsed Jim McIntire; delegates supported John Ladenburg for attorney general; and they backed Peter Goldmark for public lands commissioner. All three are Democrats and have primary opponents.

WSLC backed the re-election of Democrats Brian Sontag for auditor and Mike Kreidler for insurance commissioner. Both are running unopposed.

For the Washington State Supreme Court the council supports Mary

Fairhurst for Position 3; Charles Johnson for Position 4, and Debra Stephans for Position 7. It is backing Kevin Korsmo for the Court of Appeals.

In contested congressional races the labor federation endorsed Democrats Brian Baird in District 3 and Darcy Burner in District 8.

In State Senate and House races representing Southwest Washington, WSLC endorsed Timothy Probst and Deb Wallace in House District 17, and Don Benton in Senate District 17.

In District 18 delegates backed VaNessa Duplessie and Jonathan Fant in the House and Jon Haugen for the Senate.

In District 49 the AFL-CIO supports James F. Jacks II and James C. Moeller in the House and Craig Pridemore in the Senate.


The Washington State Labor Council only makes election endorsements for statewide ballot measures and in races for statewide office, state legislative and certain judicial races.

Local Motion

April 2008

Union activity in Oregon and Southwest Washington, according to the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board

Election results

Employer	Date	Union	Location	Results:	
				Union	No Union
Umatilla County (deputy district attorneys)	4/23	Oregon AFSCME	Pendleton	card check, unit of 7	

Representation petitions

Employer	Location
Union	# of employees
City of Baker City (City Hall & Public Works)	Baker City
Baker City Employees Assn. vs. SEIU Local 503	29
Marion County Juvenile Department	Salem
Marion County Juvenile Employees Assn. vs. SEIU Local 503	39

CORRECTIONS

An article in the May 2 issue of the Northwest Labor Press listed six active ballot initiatives that long-time union adversary Bill Sizemore is working to get on the November 2008 ballot. The Labor Press reported that Sizemore turned 120,000 to 130,000 signatures for each of the six in December 2007 and January 2008. In fact, signatures were submitted for five of the six from July 2007 to January 2008, but the last one on the list has not yet turned in signatures. That measure would require a legislative super-majority to make laws take effect immediately upon the signature of the governor.

A caption accompanying a photo in the May 2 issue incorrectly identified registered nurse Christobal Mazingo as an employee of Legacy Health Systems. Mazingo is an employee of Kaiser Permanente.

In an article about union activist Michael Dembrow running for a seat in the Oregon House, the name of Dembrow's campaign manager, Logan Gilles, was spelled incorrectly.

The Labor Press regrets the errors.

McCain refuses to meet with Oregon workers

Presidential hopeful spends evening with donors who can pay more for dinner than some working folks earn in a year

Oregon's working men and women waited ... and waited ... and waited just steps away from presidential hopeful Sen. John McCain's \$33,100 per couple fundraiser May 12 to tell their stories of health care crisis and struggle to the presumptive Republican nominee. But McCain never showed.

In fact, when Oregon AFL-CIO

President Tom Chamberlain offered to approach his campaign team with one last polite, in-person request to see him, Chamberlain was threatened with arrest.

"Senator McCain had an unprecedented opportunity today to show that he is as concerned about working folks as he is about his wealthy friends," Chamberlain said. "Instead, he reaffirmed that he doesn't share the priorities of working folks and he is not the candidate to turn around America."

The event was attended by more than 20 working men and women and their children. One Oregonian who hoped to share her story with McCain

was Nancy Cochran: "For someone who claims to be a straight talker, I feel like we got the run around," Cochran said. "With his plan, we're basically on our own. It feels like we've been forgotten. He wants us out of sight and out of mind."

Cochran, a 51-year-old wife and mother, said her family can't even afford to use its employer-provided health insurance because they can't afford the 20 percent of medical costs that the insurance doesn't pay.

Brandy Benedict, an emergency room nurse who also attended the event knows Cochran's situation all too well.

"I see people every day who work full-time, work two jobs, who don't have insurance, and even if they have insurance they can't afford health care or prescriptions because their premiums and out-of-pocket costs are too high," she said. "Health insurance is expensive, and it is a luxury that is already out of reach for many individuals and families. Further shifting the cost burden from employers to workers, as the McCain health care proposal outlines, will increase the number of uninsured patients I see. There is a solution to our health care problems, but we will not find it in McCain's plan."

Monday's event in Portland was the first event of its kind in the nation where union workers were available to meet in a conference room in the same venue that McCain had scheduled an event, making it possible for him to walk only a few steps to meet.

For more about McCain's anti-worker record and policy proposals, go to www.mccainrevealed.com.

From the Oregon AFL-CIO Weekly Update

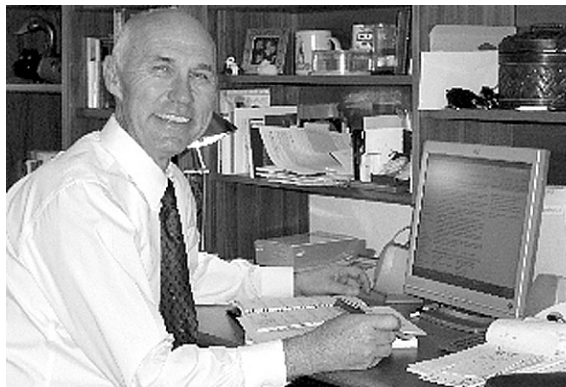
Earl FISHER

Columbia County Commissioner

Position 1

Proudly Endorsement By:

- United Food & Commercial Workers Local 555
- Tualatin-Valley Firefighters Association, Local 1660 (representing Scappoose and Clatskanie firefighters)
- Teamsters Joint Council No. 37
- OSEA, St. Helens Chapter 31; Clatskanie Chapter 53
- IBEW Local 48
- Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian
- Labor Commissioner (2003-08) Dan Gardner



'Earl Fisher is a person of integrity and vision. His ideas to bring living-wage jobs to Columbia County are fresh and original. I'm endorsing Earl Fisher.'

Rita Bernhard
Columbia County Commissioner