

Union foes file initiative petition to ban card-check

Two union foes may try to get a measure on the 2010 Oregon ballot that's aimed at banning the "card check" method of unionization. With card check, workers unionize when a majority sign cards asking for it. It's favored by unions because it's simpler and faster than the alternative method — a workplace union election.

Russ Walker, vice chairman of the Oregon Republican Party, and Kim Thatcher, a Republican member of the Oregon House from Keizer, are chief petitioners for a proposed constitutional amendment that would establish a "right to a secret ballot" in public and private elections. Scott Moore of the labor-supported watchdog group Our Oregon said it's one of numerous attacks on working families that are planned for the 2010 ballot.

Elections for public office and ballot measures are already conducted by secret ballot (and there's no move to change that), so the relevant part of the proposed amendment is its requirement

...Tackett to run for NOLC job

(From Page 1)

the Labor Day picnic at Oaks Park in September, but after that, it's goodbye.

Her outer-Southeast Portland home is for sale, and as soon as it's sold she and her husband Tony will be moving to Billings, Montana. O'Connor grew up in Kalispell.

Nominations to fill her unexpired term will be held at NOLC's monthly meetings July 27 and Aug. 24.

O'Connor told the Northwest Labor Press that she will nominate Bob Tackett, the Oregon AFL-CIO's Workforce Investment Act labor liaison. Tackett, a member of Steelworkers Local 330, confirmed that he is seeking the post.

that elections for "designation or authorization of employee representation" be conducted by secret ballot.

In an interview with the Labor Press, Thatcher confirmed the measure is intended to eliminate card check.

"It doesn't seem right to have somebody breathing down your neck wanting you to sign something," Thatcher said. "You might just do it to get them off your back."

Thatcher said she didn't know of any cases in Oregon where workers were intimidated into signing union cards.

"All I know is, the thought of it bothers some of my constituents, family members and friends who I've discussed it with," Thatcher said. And for her, that's apparently enough to justify amending the Oregon Constitution.

But it's not actually clear the constitutional amendment would have the intended effect. The amendment says all elections have to be conducted by secret ballot. But card check, arguably, isn't an election. If the amendment did end up being interpreted as banning card check, it would likely be challenged in federal court, at least as it applied to the private sector workers who are covered under the National Labor Relations Act. That federal labor law, which permits employers to recognize unions on the basis of card check, also pre-empts states from modifying the rules that govern how workers unionize.

Walker and Thatcher's campaign turned in the necessary 1,000 valid signatures June 23 to get the process started, and the initiative is now before the attorney general's office awaiting a ballot title. Once a ballot title is issued, it would be approved to circulate. The measure would then need 110,358 valid signatures to get on the ballot.

Thatcher has filed anti-union initiative petitions before, including a "pay-check protection" proposal for the 2006 ballot, and a "right-to-work" measure for the 2008 ballot.

Chamber averse to Buy American

By TULA CONNELL
National AFL-CIO

There they go again. Those running the show at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are attacking again the Buy American provision in the economic stimulus package.

Ignoring, once more, that Buy American makes fundamental economic sense by ensuring at least some of our taxpayer bailout money is invested in American-made productions, the Chamber is siding with foreign embassies battling the Buy American provisions. In a June 2 letter to lawmakers, Bruce Josten, the Chamber's executive vice president for government affairs, asked Congress to exclude Buy Amer-

ican provisions from all legislation.

More recently, the Chamber held a joint press conference June 11 with the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters to decry the Buy American provisions in the stimulus. For a trade association with "U.S." in its name, siding with foreign corporations against those in the United States is, well, you fill in the word that best describes it.

The Chamber's anti-Buy American stance, which undermines the interests of America's workers, also isn't amusing for the millions of jobless workers in this nation.

In fact, the Chamber's false argument that Buy America provisions will start a "trade war" is a tired one. The

Open Forum

stimulus requires that U.S. material be used in projects funded by the bill, but also states that the clause should not override U.S. international trade commitments.

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative spokeswoman Deborah Mesloh said the Obama Administration is committed to ensuring that the Buy America requirements in the stimulus legislation are applied in a manner that is consistent with U.S. obligations under international agreements.

Politicians: Trade unions are good for America

To The Editor:

It has been my observation that for years the labor movement has blindly endorsed Democrats.

Recently, the labor movement has been slapped in the face by Democratic politicians in Washington State.

In Oregon, labor endorsed Gov. Ted Kulongoski and U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, among others. These people have turned out to be no friends of unions.

Wyden's proposed health care plan is no benefit to union members.

It is obvious to me that the majority of Democrat and Republican leaders in Congress are wealthy men (and many lawyers) who care zero about anyone

else. It has become a government of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich.

Why do we not look carefully at a man's or woman's character; what they believe in; what their life has been and make a recommendation based on the quality of the person instead of blindly endorsing candidates that strongly support abortion and gay rights and do not support the people's constitution of these United States?

Why do we not constantly put out the information that unions are for the middle class to be able to have a fair share of the American dream.

My union membership has given me a decent life, health benefits, a pension,

protection for my seniority rights and much, much more.

I say we need to examine the character of those we endorse based on their intelligent appraisal that trade unions are good for the workers and good for America.

And don't forget to tell those who we endorse that they need to study labor history, and not just the propaganda against unions from all the media controlled by big business.

Wayne Johnson
ATU Local 757
(Retired)
Gresham



THE MARCO CONSULTING GROUP

INVESTMENT CONSULTANTS TO
MULTI-EMPLOYER BENEFIT FUNDS

PLEASE CALL JASON ZENK AT 253-376-3391

MIDWEST OFFICE
550 W WASHINGTON BLVD
NINTH FLOOR
CHICAGO, IL 60661
P: 312-575-9000
F: 312-575-9840

EAST COAST OFFICE
1220 ADAMS ST
FIRST FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02124
P: 617-298-0967
F: 617-298-0966

WWW.MARCOCONSULTING.COM

SERVING UNIONS FOR OVER 25 YEARS



QUALITY, AFFORDABLE FAMILY DENTAL CARE

- ☞ General, cosmetic, and specialty care
- ☞ Most insurance and union plans accepted
- ☞ Easy credit and low monthly payments, O.A.C.
- ☞ Evening and Saturday appointments
- ☞ Ask about our **Confident** Dental Discount Program

1-888-BRIGHT NOW

www.BRIGHTNOW.com



© 2007 Bright Now! Dental, Inc.

BEAVERTON, OR
(503) 644-1400

GRANTS PASS, OR
(541) 479-6696

GRESHAM, OR
(503) 492-8487

HILLSBORO, OR
ORENCO STATION
(503) 640-9999

MILWAUKIE, OR
(503) 659-2525

PORTLAND, OR
(503) 777-0761

SALEM, OR
(503) 362-8359

WILSONVILLE, OR
(503) 682-8552

Northwest Dental Associates, P.C.

VANCOUVER, WA
FISHER'S LANDING
(360) 891-1999

Sarah Barber, D.D.S.
Charles Stirewalt, D.D.S.
Chau Ngo, D.D.S.

VANCOUVER, WA
SALMON CREEK
(360) 574-4574

Phong Bui, D.M.D.
Charles Stirewalt, D.D.S.
Chau Ngo, D.D.S.

Stirewalt, P.C.

Protecting Union Member
Smiles and Wallets.

ORTHODONTICS AVAILABLE!

\$100 OFF
NON COVERED
DENTAL SERVICES

There may be future costs based on diagnosis. Limit one per person. Not valid on diagnostic or preventative services. Not redeemable for cash or credit. Must surrender at time of service. Valid for cash, PPO, indemnity patients only. Can't be combined, subject to change, expires 12-31-2009

Bright Now! Dental
Smiles for Everyone!