

OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 701 PAYS TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S WORKERS THIS LABOR DAY 2009

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Obama to address AFL-CIO convention in Pittsburgh

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — President Barack Obama will address the AFL-CIO convention in Pittsburgh on Sept. 15.

Obama's address will again mark the change in the relationship between organized labor and the White House occupant. Union leaders, including retiring AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, have already met privately with the president and have been invited to bill signings and other ceremonies.

By contrast, under the eight-year reign of George W. Bush, the only time Sweeney got in the White House was for a late 2008 dinner in honor of Pope Benedict XVI — and that was only be-

cause prominent Catholics were invited.

The White House did not say what Obama will discuss, but the economy and health care should be high on his agenda. And he will in all likelihood reiterate his strong support for the Employee Free Choice Act, though he has yet to say what he will do to help get the 60 votes it needs to overcome a planned Republican filibuster in the Senate.

The president's speech will come just after delegates elect Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka as president of the national labor federation. Sweeney, 75, has led the AFL-CIO for 14 years. He is retiring. Trumka is running unopposed.

Union leaders react to Kennedy's death with sadness and praise

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — Union leaders reacted with deep sadness and huge praise to the Aug. 25 death of longtime labor ally Sen. Edward M. Kennedy. Kennedy died of brain cancer. He was 77.

Several unionists, including Communications Workers of America President Larry Cohen, said workers could best memorialize him by enacting his last two great causes: Universal affordable health care and the Employee Free Choice Act. Excerpts of national union leaders' statements follow:

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney: "He was our senator — a senator for working people, for poor people, for the old and the vulnerable. For all those who needed a champion, he was our

champion. He personified a sense of aspiration that has become America's aspiration — to make things better, to make them more fair, to make our nation more compassionate and hopeful, to make life work for working men and women. He has left an enormous footprint on America."

Change To Win Chair Anna Burger: "He was a stalwart — lion of the Senate — giving a voice and hope to all working families. He led the fights that have the biggest impact on providing greater economic security and opportunity for all. The most fitting tribute to honoring the life and legacy of this great statesman is for Congress to pass quality affordable health care for all this year."

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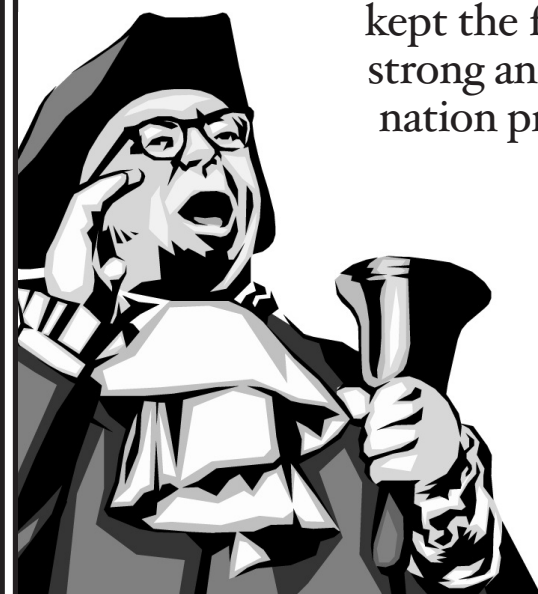
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Here's to you on Labor Day!

Your labor has
kept the family
strong and this
nation proud.



Plasterers Local 82

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