

## Teachers' unions file new lawsuit against Sizemore

The Oregon Education Association (OEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT)-Oregon filed a civil lawsuit in Multnomah County Oct. 29 against Bill Sizemore, Loren Parks and his organizations for racketeering. The claim is that Sizemore and Parks, a Nevada millionaire, conspired to set up a sham charitable organization to cover up their political activities.

In 2002, the unions won a civil racketeering judgment against Sizemore's Oregon Taxpayers United and the OTU Education Foundation.

"It's unbelievable that Sizemore continues to engage in racketeering and that Parks continues to illegally funnel money into sham charities to support Mr. Sizemore in his unlawful efforts," said OEA President Gail Rasmussen. "Their intolerable actions have perverted Oregon's citizen initiative system."

The lawsuit centers on Sizemore and Parks' use of a charitable foundation to gather signatures for, and to promote, four ballot measures during the 2008 general election campaign. The unions allege that the foundation was utilized to funnel money for Sizemore's political activities. Many of the allegations made in the plaintiffs' suit were referenced and substantiated in a 2008 ruling issued by Multnomah County Judge Janice Wilson in which she found Sizemore in contempt of court.

"It's clear that Sizemore and Parks have teamed up in order to subvert the initiative process," said AFT-Oregon Executive Director Richard Schwarz. "It's time they were held accountable for corrupting Oregon's initiative system. Anyone wanting to make laws ought to live by those we already have."

The suit alleges the racketeering conspiracy between Sizemore and Parks was so prevalent that it required Sizemore to commit perjury on multiple occasions to cover up their activities. There are 33 different and separate instances of Sizemore's alleged perjury included in the plaintiffs' suit.

The suit seeks \$18 million in damages — three times the amount the unions spent to defeat the Sizemore measures last fall.

## Pacific NW Regional Council

# Savage resigns from Carpenters

Longtime Carpenters leader Pete Savage resigned his staff position at Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters (PNWRCC) Oct. 9 — at the request of Executive Secretary-Treasurer Doug Tweedy.

The position was at-will. Savage told the Labor Press he had differences with the PNRCC leadership over the direction of the union, including the way contracts were negotiated. PNWRCC had just concluded a new agreement with Associated General Contractors (AGC) covering general construction carpenters.

"The only reason [Tweedy] gave me when he asked me to resign was that the AGC contractors weren't happy with me," Savage said.

PNWRCC spokesperson Eric Franklin confirmed that was one factor, but said another major factor was Savage's support earlier this year for a bill in the Oregon Legislature that the Carpenters Regional Council opposed. The bill would have expanded — to mixed commercial-residential projects — an affordable housing exemption from the requirement to pay prevailing wage to construction workers. The bill was spon-



PETE SAVAGE

sored by the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council, but building trades unions were divided on it.

Savage said he was vocal in his disagreement with PNRCC's decision to oppose it.

Franklin also said a PNWRCC restructure was a tough transition for Savage. State-level Carpenters councils had greater autonomy prior to the restructure, which put PNRCC leaders in Kent, Washington, in charge of staff in five states. Savage, who had been Car-

penters regional manager for Oregon and Southwest Washington, was given a new job as "lead representative," with a stripped-down set of responsibilities.

As regional manager, Savage had overseen business representatives, led contract negotiations, handled pension trust issues, and run steward meetings. The new position confined his role to public relations and community outreach, and managing three outlying representatives.

Savage won't be replaced, Franklin said, because most of his responsibilities had already been shifted to other staff.

Savage, 49, has been a member of Portland-headquartered Carpenters Local 247 since 1988, when he tested in as a journeyman carpenter. He worked as a construction superintendent for eight years, and came on staff with the union in 2003, becoming regional manager in 2004.

Savage said he will continue to serve as conductor of Local 247 and as a delegate to PNWRCC, and will return to work in the carpentry trade. Savage was working as a trade show carpenter as of press time.



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