

Teachers union backs Obama

CHICAGO (PAI) — As expected, the National Education Association (NEA) endorsed Democratic President Barack Obama for re-election — but not until it blasted many of his education policies, as carried out by Education Secretary Arne Duncan, a close personal friend of Obama's.

The 3-million-member union's 9,000 delegates — meeting here July 5-8 — voted for the endorsement by a 72 percent to 28 percent margin.

And even though it endorsed him, NEA views Obama's support for public school teachers as lukewarm. That showed in a long denunciation of Education Secretary Duncan and his policies — criticisms similar to ones the union leveled at the Bush Administration. But NEA leaders made clear that whatever his flaws, Obama still believes in public education, unlike any of his Republican foes.

The July 5 endorsement came after Vice President Joseph Biden addressed delegates, declaring: "We should be listening to you, not lecturing to you! We should be embracing you, not pushing you aside! You are not the problem!"

In other political action, delegates approved a \$10 annual dues increase for the next four years to fend off GOP attacks on public schools nationwide.



New officers at Painters Local 10

Newly-elected officers of Painters and Drywall Finishers Local 10 were sworn in at the June 15 union meeting. From left to right are Trustee John Madewell; Vice President Wyatt McMinn; Treasurer Tom Williams; Trustee Kim Hartke; President Roben White; Warden Kevin Davis; Trustee George Ranum; and Recording Secretary Jack Johnson. Not pictured is Financial Secretary Johnny Chris-Lawson. Terms are for three years. The local, which is part of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 5, represents 800 painters and drywall finishers in Oregon and Southwest Washington. White said after years of high unemployment, work, especially in the industrial sector, is starting to pick up. "We're making progress," White said. "We are looking forward to the future."

Oregon AFL-CIO confab Sept. 25-28

The 52 biennial convention of the Oregon AFL-CIO will be held Sept. 25-28 at the Hilton Eugene & Conference Center, 66 East 6th Ave., Eugene.

Registration opens Sunday, Sept. 25. That evening a Welcome Party will be held. Convention business gets under way Monday morning Sept. 26.

The popular Union Label Show is

scheduled Tuesday evening, Sept. 27.

For more information, call the Oregon AFL-CIO at 503-224-3169 or from Salem call 503-585-6320.

Local Motion

June 2011

A list of Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces deciding whether to be union-represented — as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Voting in union elections

Date	Workplace (Location) Union	Yes	No	
6/7	Ridgeline Montessori Charter School (Eugene) AFT DECERT	6	8	👉
6/7	LaPine Water District (LaPine) Teamsters 962	1	0	👍
6/7	LaPine Special Sewer District (LaPine) Teamsters 962	3	0	👍

Requesting a union election

Workplace (Location) Union	Number of workers in unit
First Student school bus drivers (Gresham) Oregon School Employees Assn. DECERT	110
Milton-Freewater Police Dept. (Milton-Freewater) MFPA vs. IBEW 125	17

LEGEND

👍 : workers will be union-represented 👉 : workers will be on their own
DECERT : unionized workers vote whether to go non-union

...Rep. Witt announces bid for Congress

(From Page 1)

has been endorsed by the AFL-CIO in each of his seven campaigns. He has a 94 percent Committee on Political Education voting record as tracked by the national labor federation.

But Wu has been under media scrutiny since his re-election last November for erratic behavior that led to several key members of his staff resigning. Some constituents and party insiders have questioned whether he is fit to serve, and have called for his resignation. Wu explained that he was under severe stress during the campaign, that he sought professional help, and is

fully capable of serving in Congress. He has raised more than \$219,000 for his re-election, which isn't until next year.

In an interview with the Labor Press prior to the press conference, Witt acknowledged Wu's favorable labor voting record, but said, "There is more to it than just voting right. Folks that have encouraged me to run say they want competent leadership. They want someone in Washington who represents them — not issues entirely unrelated to their needs."

Responding to some critics who have said the Democratic Party should-

n't have a contested primary against an incumbent, or that any challenge should be limited to one candidate, Witt said, "This election is too important to be about incumbency or who gets into the race first. This Congressional election is about the opportunity for voters to determine which of the candidates best represents their views and priorities," emphasizing that victory won't necessarily go to the candidate who raises the most money, but rather "to the candidate who works the hardest and gains the voters' trust."

Witt is known for his long-term commitment to sustainable forestry, worker safety, and the rights of injured and dislocated workers. He says that his background and focus on business, the economy, and workforce development appeals to both labor and management, which sets him apart from the other candidates.

A resident of Clatskanie, Witt has served in the Oregon House since 2005. House District 31 runs some 90 miles along the Columbia River in Northwest Oregon from Sauvie Island to Astoria.

He has worked in sawmills, has served in a variety of staff capacities at the national AFL-CIO, the Western Council of Industrial Workers (now the Carpenters Industrial Council), and UFCW Local 555. He was first elected secretary-treasurer of the Oregon AFL-CIO in 1991, where he served for 14 years.

He is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and received his master's degree in labor relations from the University of Oregon.

Witt's campaign website is: WittforCongress.com.



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- Construction Injuries
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- Workers' Compensation Injuries
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