

## UFCW's Gillispie tapped to chair school board

Longtime labor leader Sam Gillispie, grievance director of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, has been elected chair of the North Clackamas School District board of directors. Gillispie has served on the board for 18 years.



Gillispie worked as a business representative for Oregon AFSCME Council 75 prior to joining the staff at Local 555.

His first meeting as chair was July 3.

## Machinists' Guide Dog Dash Aug. 24

The 7th annual Guide Dog Dash motorcycle poker run will be held Saturday, Aug. 24. Starting this year, the event will be re-named the Richard Martin Memorial Guide Dog Dash in remembrance of the longtime union Machinist who died last year.

The Guide Dog Dash is sponsored by Machinists Lodge 63 and IAM District W24.

Registration is at 9 a.m. at the IBEW Local 48 Union Hall, 15937 NE Airport Way, Portland. The last ride out is at 10:30 a.m. The ride will finish at Lewisville Regional Park, 26411 NE Lewisville Hwy, Vancouver (Ponderosa area).

Registration is \$25 per rider and \$10 per passenger and includes a T-shirt, food after the ride, and raffle prizes. All proceeds benefit Guide Dogs of America.

For more information, contact John Hall at 503-449-0969 or go online to [www.iamw24.org](http://www.iamw24.org).

# IBEW latest union to oppose Obamacare

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), one of the nation's largest construction unions, is calling for changes to the Affordable Care Act so that workers covered by multi-employer plans don't get hurt or lose coverage.

In ads running July 26 in Washington, D.C.-based publications, the union says the health insurance revision law, dubbed Obamacare, would leave multi-employer plans jointly run by unions and management in construction and other industries with disadvantages, and would let most construction firms opt out of covering workers altogether.

IBEW said 95 percent of construction contractors would be exempt from

the law because they employ fewer than 50 people. Many of those contractors join multi-employer plans, which cover workers who move from firm to firm, where the jobs are.

IBEW International President Ed Hill said the way Obamacare is being interpreted, many contractors would have an incentive to drop out of covering workers, and low-road contractors would get an advantage over those who provide their workers benefits.

Besides the ads, the union published a detailed four-page white paper on the problems facing workers covered by multi-employer plans, asking readers to contact lawmakers about the problems.

IBEW's objections are important because Hill — like four other union presidents who have raised concerns —

point to President Barack Obama's promise that anyone with insurance who wants to keep it can do so.

United Food and Commercial Workers President Joe Hansen, Teamsters President James Hoffa, and UNITE HERE President D. Taylor took their concerns public in letters to congressional leaders in mid-July, adding that the White House "stonewalled" them.

Kinsey Robinson, president of the Roofers Union, was the first to cite problems facing multi-employer plans under Obamacare. He called for the Administration to fix the problems, otherwise, repeal the law.

Until now, Hill privately lobbied lawmakers to make changes to the law.

"I said three years ago the Affordable Care Act was a major step in health care coverage, but not the last step," Hill said in a video on IBEW's website. "That's why IBEW is urging the president and Congress to take steps to ensure the future of multi-employer plans," which cover 26 million workers and retirees.

IBEW, like the other unions, wants the federal government to change Obamacare rules so firms participating in multi-employer plans, and workers the plans cover, would be eligible for federal insurance subsidies and tax credits. IBEW also wants to reduce the no-coverage exemption for businesses, now 50 people, but did not say how far.

## Delay of employer mandate in Obamacare chafes AFL-CIO

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — The AFL-CIO is not happy with the Obama Administration's recent announcement to postpone for one year the employer mandate provision in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

In a statement, national AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka called the postponement "troubling" and implied the Obama Administration bowed to business pressure. The health care reform, dubbed Obamacare, passed in 2010.

Obama announced the postponement earlier this month, citing the complexity of instituting the mandate in 2014. The mandate orders all employers with more than 50 workers to provide health care coverage or pay a tax per worker to cover costs of care for the uninsured. The uninsured would get care through state- or federally-run health care exchanges. Many GOP-run

states are resisting the exchanges.

"In the health reform debate, we fought to ensure employers have a responsibility to provide affordable, comprehensive health benefits to their workers and their families," Trumka said, noting that private-sector health care coverage has been declining for years as employers shift its costs onto workers or dump it entirely.

"The employer responsibility provision in the ACA, while not as strong as we asked for, was designed to give large employers an incentive to offer or continue offering affordable, comprehensive health care coverage to some of their employees. Dropping the mandate ends that incentive," Trumka added.

The nation's largest private-sector employer, anti-union Walmart, is an example of what Trumka was talking about and what the mandate is supposed to fix.

Walmart health care is expensive — especially given its low wages — and available only to full-time workers. And Walmart carefully curbs workers' hours to keep them part-time. More than 40 percent of Walmart workers and their families depend on Medicaid or public programs for health care.

"The Administration's announcement that it is delaying employer responsibility assessments until 2015 is troubling because it removes that incentive for next year," Trumka said. "In light of this decision, we believe it is even more urgent for Congress and the Administration to reaffirm their commitment to employer responsibility."

The ACA still needs some improvements, Trumka said. Notably, its requirements must be rewritten to make multi-employer plans — jointly run with unions in industries such as construction and food manufacturing — viable.

"We hope the Administration will address these concerns just as they have the concerns voiced by employers," he concluded.

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