

# Labor-environmental group calls Merkley a 'green jobs' champion

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley received a Green Jobs Champion award Feb. 11 from the labor-environmental group BlueGreen Alliance. The award is given to elected leaders who have contributed greatly to creating good jobs that help the economy and the environment.

The award was presented to Merkley and to U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) in Washington D.C., where hundreds of labor, environmental, business, non-profit and civic leaders were gathered for a three-day "Good Jobs, Green Jobs" conference.

"Sen. Merkley's unwavering championship of American manufacturing

and dedication to fighting climate change and protecting our environment is an inspiration to the blue-green movement," said David Foster, president of the BlueGreen Alliance.

The Alliance was co-founded by the United Steelworkers Union and the Sierra Club.

Participants at the conference launched "Repair America," a campaign to fix the country's more than 2.5 million miles of deficient pipelines and crumbling infrastructure in a sustainable way to create family-wage, green jobs. Their goal is to convince citizens and Congress to back funding to make it happen.

The centerpiece of the plan is cre-

ation of a National Infrastructure Bank to use public dollars to leverage private investment in such repair and replacement projects.

"We have a D+ infrastructure," said Steelworkers President Leo Gerard, referring to a recent report card put out by the American Society of Civil Engineers. ASCE estimates it will take an investment of \$3.6 trillion by 2020 to get the country's infrastructure to a "state of good repair," or a 'B' grade.

Gerard said if Congress invested enough money to attain a 'B' grade, "we'd have 11 million more jobs and put those Americans back to work."

A bill written by Merkley — the Job Creation through Energy Efficient Manufacturing Act — would provide grants to states to establish or expand programs to finance energy efficiency retrofit, onsite clean and renewable energy, smart grid, and alternative vehicle fleet projects for industrial businesses.

Oregon AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Byrd and Washington State Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Lynne Dodson headed a workshop on climate policy and labor in the Western region. And Alan Hickenbottom of Christenson Electric participated in a roundtable discussion, where he talked about how green jobs have benefited NECA/IBEW Local 48 members and the Oregon economy.



Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, a keynote speaker at the Good Jobs, Green Jobs national conference of the BlueGreen Alliance, received a Green Jobs Champion award from the labor-environmental group Feb. 11 in Washington, D.C. (Photo courtesy of Keith Mellnick.)

## IAM reform slate clears second hurdle

A slate of reform candidates vying for the national leadership of 577,000-member International Association of Machinists (IAM) has cleared a second electoral hurdle. Because the slate headed by Connecticut railroad mechanic Jay Cronk received the required endorsement of at least 25 local lodges at special endorsement meetings held Feb. 8, it will face off against a slate of incumbents led by international president R. Thomas Buffenbarger on nationwide ballots.

Both sets of candidates will appear on the ballots that members will receive at the first regularly scheduled meeting in April of each local lodge in

the United States.

Cronk's slate includes two Boeing workers: Gresham plant worker Pat Maloney of Lodge 63, and union business representative Jason Redrup of District 751 in the Puget Sound.

The contest is a do-over, conducted under the terms of a voluntary compliance agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor. DOL investigated complaints filed after national IAM officer elections in January 2013, and concluded that the election rules outlined in the IAM constitution violate a federal law governing union elections.

## Unionists to bowl for Muscular Dystrophy Association on April 13

The 25th annual Labor Bowl Challenge for the Muscular Dystrophy Association will be held Sunday, April 13, at Sunset Lanes in Beaverton.

The Labor Bowl Challenge consists of four-person teams that compete for prizes. Money is raised through pledges and from a silent auction, and goes to buy wheelchairs and braces for children, as well as for research and summer camps.

Muscular dystrophy is a hereditary condition marked by a progressive weakening and wasting of the muscles over time.

Since its inception in 1989, union members have donated \$351,025.75 to MDA.

The event is coordinated by the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Branch 82 and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

For more information, or to sign up and receive fundraising packets and instructions, call Jim Falvey, president of Letter Carriers Branch 82 at 503-493-5903. To donate silent auction items, call NALC's MDA Coordinator Debby Burbank at 971-404-5384.

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