

# Labor to join rally to demand action on climate change

The Oregon AFL-CIO and other labor organizations will take part in Portland's People's Climate March Sunday, Sept. 21, at Waterfront Park. The march will coincide with a much larger march in New York City, and other demonstrations around the world.

Organizers in New York City are expecting the demonstration to be the largest political rally in that city in over a decade, and the biggest demonstration for climate action ever held.

The march will be notable not only for its size, but for its diversity. More than 1,100 organizations have endorsed the march, including more than 60 labor organizations, and six international unions: Amalgamated Transit Union, Communications Workers of America (CWA), National Education Association, National Nurses United, Office and Professional Employees International Union, and Service Employees International Union. The unionists will assemble in a several block area next to Central Park and march together.

Celebrities also have begun showing support, including model Helena Christensen, musician Peter Gabriel, actor Susan Sarandon, Argentine footballer Lionel Messi and actor Edward Norton.

The New York City Council endorsed the march, passing a resolution encouraging people across the

city to take part in the mobilization.

The worldwide actions will take place just two days before President Obama and other world leaders are set to attend a Climate Summit at the United Nations hosted by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. The summit is designed to build momentum for national and international climate action, including a new global climate treaty that will be finalized in Paris next year. March organizers say they are looking for "action, not words" at the summit.

"Let's be clear, climate change is the most important issue facing all of us for the rest of our lives," said John Harity, president of the Connecticut State Council of Machinists, which endorsed the march.

"Climate change is threatening our environment and our economy, and we must address it immediately, and do so in a way that builds a stronger economy and creates new jobs across the country," said Kim Glas, executive director of the BlueGreen Alliance, a national partnership of labor unions and environmental organizations uniting nearly 16 million members and supporters. "As world leaders gather for the UN Climate Summit, we urge immediate action to address the threat of global climate change."

In Portland, organizers are asking union members to wear their union colors and to bring their

union banners.

Oregon AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain will represent organized labor at the microphone. The Portland march also has union endorsements from AFSCME Local 3336, CWA Local 7901, Musicians Local 99, Oregon AFSCME Green Caucus, Oregon BlueGreen Apollo Alliance and Oregon Tradeswomen.

The labor contingent will gather at 2:45 p.m. just south of the Hawthorne Bridge in Tom McCall Waterfront Park. The march begins at 3 p.m.

Leading up to the Portland event, the Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) at the University of Oregon will hold a two-day conference entitled "Searching for consensus: The Climate Policy Debate in Oregon." The conference will include workshops on economic harm from inaction on climate change; how carbon taxes, cap-and-trade and other systems operate; what Oregon unionists can learn from the experiences of other states and countries; and whether carbon pricing is feasible in the 2015 legislative session.

It takes place at the UO Portland White Stag building, 70 NW Couch St. and runs from 2 to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 19, and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 20, just before the Portland climate march. The conference fee is \$40. Call 503-412-3721 for more information.



After an SUV slammed into their motorcycle in the early morning of July 5, fired phone fundraiser David Neel (right) and his fiancée Stephanie Castillo have months of recovery ahead of them. The accident prompted Neel to settle his National Labor Relations Board case against Fund for the Public Interest, the non-profit fundraiser for PIRGs, which fired him in November 2012 after he emerged as a union leader.

## ... PIRG settlement

(From Page 1)

ancee Stephanie Castillo were heading home on his 1982 Yamaha motorcycle after a night out watching fireworks. As they stopped for traffic on Southeast Milwaukie Boulevard and Ochoco, a Ford Explorer SUV plowed into them. Neel and Castillo survived the crash, but suffered significant injuries. Castillo stayed in the hospital 10 days with a shattered pelvis, a broken ankle, and two fractured vertebrae. Neel was in the hospital three days with a concussion, four fractured ver-

tebrae, and head lacerations. On release, she's in a wheelchair, and he's walking with a cane, and they have months of recovery ahead of them. Pondering medical bills and lost wages, and with two teenage sons to support, Neel decided to accept the settlement.

The terms of the settlement, approved in mid-August by the NLRB and CWA Local 7901, are that the Fund pay Neel \$19,088 of backpay and interest, plus \$7,000 for waiving his right to reinstatement.

"David would be coming back to work if it weren't for that horrific accident," said CWA Local 7901 President Madelyn Elder. "The NLRB found the Fund in the wrong. They wrongfully fired him, and they need to stop discriminating against union people."



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