

# Labor-endorsed charter change passes in Clark County, Wash.

## Otherwise, it was a tough night for labor unions in Southwest Washington

VANCOUVER, Wash. — Election night was mostly disappointing for labor unions in Southwest Washington.

The Southwest Washington Central Labor Council scored one big victory in Clark County, where it helped pass Proposition 1 to create a new home rule charter. The measure passed with 53 percent of the vote.

But voters didn't feel the same about labor's candidate for county commissioner. In that race, Craig Pridemore, a former Democratic state senator, was defeated by right-wing Republican Jeanne E. Stewart. He lost by 772 votes on a night when only 50 percent of county residents cast ballots.

Stewart will succeed former IBEW Local 48 business manager Ed Barnes on the county commission. Barnes was appointed to the post earlier this year to fill the unexpired term of Steve Stuart.

The new charter will expand the County Council from three commissioners to five, and it puts the county under a council-manager form of government. This means commissioners will hire/fire a professional manager who has the responsibility and authority to implement policies adopted by commissioners, and to manage the administrative branch. The county council will serve as the legislative branch:

setting policy, adopting the budget and representing the County on various boards.

Four members of the new five-person council will be elected by district. The fifth (the chair) will be elected at-large. Salaries will be reduced from \$102,000 to \$53,000 a year. The chair will make 20 percent more (\$63,600). Future salary adjustments will be based on percentage changes established for state legislators by the Washington State Salary Commission.

The new charter goes into effect Jan. 1, 2015. On that day the legislative and administrative powers will be separated into two branches. The charter calls for the election of two additional council members during 2015 who will be seated on Jan. 1, 2016. The salary decrease will occur over two years.

Other labor-endorsed winners were Tony Golik, who was re-elected prosecuting attorney; and Doug Lasher, who was re-elected county treasurer.

The Southwest Washington Central Labor Council worked with the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, to actively support Democrat Bob Dingethal for U.S. Congress and Monica Stonier for re-election to the Washington House of Representatives in the 17th District. Both lost.

Republican Congresswoman Jamie Herrera Beutler was re-elected to District 3, with 59 percent of the vote. Herrera has a 17 percent voting record on workplace issues tracked

by the national AFL-CIO.

Stonier, a former public school teacher who earned an 85 percent pro-labor voting record in her first term, lost to Tea Party Republican Lynda Wilson, 51.5 percent to 48.5 percent.

Labor-endorsed Democrat Maureen Wittingham also fell short in District 18, Position 2, losing to GOP Liz Pike 59 percent to 41 percent.

On the winning side, Democrats Sharon Wylie and Jim Moeller were re-elected by wide margins in the 49th legislative district (Vancouver).

Democrats will retain the House majority, but its numbers will shrink from 55 seats last session to 51 in January 2015. The GOP's ranks grow to 47 — the most seats since the party had 48 in 2002. Republicans also captured an outright majority in the Senate with 25 seats — plus Sen. Tim Sheldon, the conservative Democrat from the 35th District northwest of Olympia, who caucused with the GOP in a coalition majority the past two years.

A statewide ballot measure to reduce classroom size to less than 18

students per class in kindergarten through third grade, and less than 26 students in fourth through 12th grade, was defeated 53 percent to 47 percent. Initiative 1351 was supported by organized labor.

All of labor's endorsed candidates for state Supreme Court were victorious. Mary Yu in Position 1, and Mary Fairhurst in Position 3 ran unopposed. And Charles Johnson in Position 4, and Debra Stephens in Position 7, each won with more than 70 percent of the vote.

## ...AFL-CIO not far from election sweep

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was defeated 68 percent to 32 percent.

The Oregon AFL-CIO missed on **Measure 88**, the driver card for immigrants. It was defeated, 66.4 percent to 33.6 percent.

One of labor's highest priority races was in **state Senate** District 8, where labor-endorsed Democrat Sara Gelsler of Corvallis unseated Republican incumbent Betsy Close of Albany. Close was appointed to the Senate seat in 2012 to succeed moderate Republican Frank Morse, who stepped down mid-term. Prior to that Close served in the state House from 1999 to 2005. Gelsler, who has served as a state representative for District 16 since 2005, won handily, capturing 56 percent of the vote.

In another priority race in the Senate, the AFL-CIO helped re-elect Alan Bates in District 3, Medford. The race

was a re-match from 2010, pitting Bates, an osteopathic physician who has represented the Southern Oregon district since 2004, against Republican challenger Dave Dotterer, a retired Marine Corps colonel. In 2010 Bates was re-elected by fewer than 300 votes. On Nov. 4 he won by more than 3,700 votes.

Other labor-backed senators included Floyd Prozanski in District 4, Eugene; Lee Beyer in District 6, Springfield; Chris Edwards in District 7, Eugene; Peter Courtney in District 11, Salem; Elizabeth Steiner-Hayward in District 17, Northwest Portland; Michael Dembrow in District 23, Portland; and Rod Monroe in District 24, Portland.

Two union-endorsed challengers — Jamie Damon in District 20, Oregon City, and Robert Bruce in District 26, Hood River County — fell short in their Senate races. Damon, a former Clackamas County commissioner, was a priority race for labor. But she faced an uphill battle against first-term Republican Alan Olsen. That's because redistricting by the Legislature in 2011 gave Republicans the advantage in District 20 based on voter registration.

The Oregon AFL-CIO backed 32 winners in the **Oregon House of Representatives**. Top priority races were Democrats Joe Gallegos in District 30, Hillsboro; Brent Barton in District 40,

Oregon City; and Shemia Fagan in District 51, East Portland. All won by comfortable margins.

Other labor-endorsed winners were Democrats Caddy McKeown in District 9, Coos Bay; David Gomberg in District 10, Lincoln City; Phil Barnhart in District 11, Eugene; John Lively in District 12, Springfield; Nancy Nathanson in District 13, Eugene; Val Hoyle in District 14, Eugene; Dan Rayfield in District 16, Corvallis; Paul Evans in District 20, Monmouth; Betty Komp in District 22, Woodburn; Tobias Read in District 27, Beaverton; Jeff Barker in District 28, Aloha; Susan McLain in District 29, Hillsboro; Brad Witt in District 31, Clatskanie; Mitch Greenlick in District 33, Portland; Ken Helm in District 34, Beaverton; Margaret Doherty in District 35, Tigard; Jennifer Williamson in District 36, Portland; Ann Lininger in District 38, Lake Oswego; Kathleen Taylor in District 41, Milwaukie; Rob Nosse in District 42, Portland; Lew Frederick in District 43, Portland; Tina Kotek in District 44, Portland; Barbara Smith Warner in District 45, Portland; Jessica Vega Pederson in District 47, East Portland; Jeff Reardon in District 48, Southeast Portland; Chris Gorsek in District 49, Troutdale; Carla Piluso in District 50, Gresham; and Republican Greg Smith in District 57, Heppner.

Three incumbent legislators who were re-elected had conditional endorsements from the AFL-CIO. That's because none of them completed a policy questionnaire, which is a required part of the endorsement process. They were Democratic Rep. Brian Clem in District 21, Salem; Republican Rep. John Huffman in District 59, The Dalles; and Democratic state Sen. Betsy Johnson in District 16, Scappoose.

Union-endorsed candidates who lost Nov. 4 included Sign Painters and Paint Makers Local 1094 member Scott Mills, running against a Republican incumbent in House District 18, Aurora; Independent candidate Chuck Lee in District 25, Keizer; Stephanie Nystrom in District 52, Hood River; and Craig Wilhelm in District 54, Bend.

Several union activists were among the endorsed winners Nov. 4, including Dembrow, Barker, McLain, Witt, Nosse and Gorsek.

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