

A LABOR MOVEMENT LOOK AT THE 2020 ELECTION RESULTS

This edition went to the printer before polls closed. For a run-down of how labor-backed candidates and ballot measures fared locally and nationwide, look to our Nov. 20 issue or visit us online at nwlaborpress.org/electionresults2020

JOB

Is municipal broadband feasible in Multnomah County? Maybe

Multnomah County last month announced the release of a feasibility study of municipal broadband. The idea—endorsed in principle by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council—is that county and local jurisdictions would install a fiber-optic network and offer affordable high-speed internet access to homes and businesses, just like they offer water and sewer service. Sandy, Oregon, has such a network, and Hillsboro is building one. Fiber is up to 40 times faster than cable, but cable and phone monopolies have balked at making the investment to install a fiber network. Public bond financing would make capital costs cheaper. The 281-page study, produced by CTC Technology & Energy, reported that:

- Building a county-wide, fiber-to-the-premises network would cost \$966 million. The financial viability of such a network would be very price sensitive. At \$80 a month, it would pay for itself if 35% of households signed up. At \$50 a month, 70% of households would have to sign up. Market research showed that consumer interest falls off considerably above \$50 a month.
- 56% of households in the county currently get internet access via coaxial cable (chiefly Comcast), 17% via phone line (Centurylink DSL), and 17% through fiber optic cable. Of the remaining 10% that have no home-based internet connection, 6% have some internet access through their phone, while 4% have no internet access at all.
- 53% of respondents support a publicly financed fiber network, while 21% oppose such a thing. Support drops as the price of switching to a new provider increases beyond \$50 a month.

IBEW Local 48 offers a \$1,000 bounty for new members

There's so much work right now for members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48 that the union is offering a bounty for qualified electricians who sign on with the union. Licensed journeyman electricians who join can get \$1,000. And any Local 48 member who refers a new member can get \$500.

There are also opportunities for apprentices: Find out more about the NECA/IBEW Local 48 Electrical Apprenticeship Training Program at nietc.org.

WHAT'S IT LIKE IN IBEW 48?

Are you or someone you know thinking a career as an electrician? The NECA-IBEW Local 48 Electrical Training Center put together an eight-minute video with personal testimonials from over a dozen members about why they love the career the apprenticeship program made possible for them: <https://vimeo.com/338055919>

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