

Jobs

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has protested unfair hiring policies in public projects.

Under the agreement, minority contractors would not have to join the union or pay union dues – a long-term stumbling block. It also would create targets for minority participation and monetary sanctions when targets are not met.

“Our intention, our hope is to get a lot of different government entities to use this document,” Tweedie says. “We have to provide continuity of opportunity. It doesn’t do anybody any good, whether part of the workforce, or a minority contractor, to get one job. They need continued opportunities to grow and progress in the industry.”

Living-wage jobs are exactly what African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans in the Portland-metro region need. Struggling with unemployment rates 37 percent higher than Whites, according to Portland State University’s recent Communities of Color report, the poorest Portlanders have been hardest hit with unemployment rates of above 30 percent.

Yet historically, African Americans, in particular, have been locked out of construction opportunities. Public works proj-

ects in Oregon have a dismal record for diversity in hiring and contracting. As previously reported in The Skanner News, for example, Oregon Department of Transportation awarded just three contracts to African American firms over a seven-year period from 2000-2007. So far, the Columbia Crossing project has done no better – with just 1 percent of contracts awarded to Black-owned businesses, so far.

“African American contractors face barriers gaining access to government contracts because of racial bias, as documented in the Oregon Regional Consortium Disparity Study, conducted on behalf of 10 government agencies during the mid-1990s,” concludes Karen Gibson, a professor in Portland State University’s Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning. “And the effect trickles down; African American contractors are more likely to hire workers of color, so a barrier to the contractor has a broad impact.”

Barriers also have prevented young people of color from entering the industry. Unions were slow to welcome Blacks into skilled trades, either as apprentices or as contractors. One AFL-CIO affiliate had a stated whites-only policy until 1964. Jobs and contracts went to a predominantly white circle of insiders.

‘We have to provide continuity of opportunity’

—Doug Tweedie



Maurice Rahming (right) and Kenny Owens

Tweedie said the Carpenters and Engineers are now committed to diversifying their ranks and making sure everyone has an equal opportunity to enter the construction trades. Simply because it’s the right thing to do, he says.

“It’s very important to the Carpenters to grow the diversity of our contractor base and the diversity of our membership.

“This is something we should have done a long time ago. There certainly are a lot of people of color out there who are very capable of doing well in our industry if they understand the opportunities out there and have a fair shot at getting into it.”

The agreement sets ambitious targets for apprenticeship programs: All contracts over

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Violence

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whether violent rhetoric fueled the carnage — or it was just the work of one mentally ill person.

Jared Lee Loughner, 22, now in custody killing six people including a child and a federal judge – and gravely wounding Rep. Gabrielle Giffords – is not cooperating with Pima County officials, who say he has yet to talk about the attack.

While numerous interviews with Loughner’s former classmates at Pima Community College draw a picture of a severely unbalanced young man, powerful conservative media figures including Sarah Palin have been accused of inciting violence with website postings and heated language.

Palin, during the midterm elections, posted a graphic on her Facebook page depicting a map of the United States with 20 gun sight-shaped images over states where Democratic incumbents who voted for the Health Care Reform Act were “targeted” for defeat by conservative voters. The image listed the 20 candidates below it, including Giffords.

“We’ll aim for these races and many others,” Palin wrote on the page. “This is just the first salvo in a fight to elect people across the nation who will bring common sense to Washington. Please go to sarahpac.com and join me in the fight.”

The online activist network CREDO on Sunday started circulating an online petition directed at Palin, calling for her to “Renounce Violent Political Rhetoric.”

“But only Sarah Palin put 20 Democratic members of Congress in her crosshairs, and only Sarah Palin bragged that 18 are now gone, leaving Rep. Giffords and Rep. Nick Rahall of West Virginia,” the activists wrote.

Giffords herself, in a television news interview last March, directly criticized Palin’s “crosshairs” poster on MSNBC during an interview about her Congressional

offices being vandalized.

“We’re on Sarah Palin’s targeted list, but the thing is that the way that she has it depicted has the crosshairs of a gun sight over our district, and when people do that, they’ve got to realize there are consequences to that action,” Giffords said.

White Aryan Resistance

The court case against the Metzgers hinged on a witness who approached The Anti-Defamation League with direct evidence linking the Metzgers to the skinheads who killed Seraw, an Ethiopian immigrant and student who attended Portland State University.

That witness, Dave Mazella, had been a “recruiter” for WAR who had traveled between Metzger’s home in Northern California and personally met with the East Side White Pride members later convicted of killing Seraw: Kenneth M. Mieske, Kyle H. Brewster, and Steven R. Strasser.

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Metzgers were responsible for acts committed by their followers. The jury found for Seraw’s family, awarding them a record-setting \$12.5 million judgment that forced Metzger out of his home.

In 1991 he was back in hot water for copyright infringement for selling a line of Nazi-themed Bart Simpson t-shirts.

Doctor Murders

The 1980s and 90s in Portland saw many incidents of violence linked to the anti-choice movement, including a local clinic bombing and an attempted assassination by a Portland woman who traveled to Kansas in 1993 and succeeded in shooting Dr. George Tiller – but failing to kill him.

Tiller was serving as an usher during services at his church when he was killed by avowed anti-abortion activist Scott Roeder

ices. Arson fires were set repeatedly.

At the same time, a local group linked to Operation Rescue, called Advocates for Life Ministries, staged weekly clinic blockades, physically preventing women from entering birth control facilities, at times leading to physical confrontations and tussles in doorways and on sidewalks.

Lawyers for Planned Parenthood called as witnesses four doctors who testified they feared for their lives after appearing on the “Nuremberg Files” list: Dr. Warren Hern of

Boulder, Colo.; Dr. Robert Crist of Kansas City, Mo.; Dr. Elizabeth Newhall of Portland; and Dr. James Newhall of Portland.

Defendants included a core group of Portland residents as well as others convicted of bombings around the country, including Maryland resident Michael Bray, author of a book arguing for the murder of abortion providers to save the lives of unborn children, called, “A Time to Kill.”

The Nuremberg Files court case took years to resolve, with verdicts flip-flopping repeatedly on the issue of whether the “wanted” posters were protected speech or not. Ultimately the defendants were found guilty of making “illegal threats” against the doctors and care providers.

In a separate case, Advocates for Life Ministries member and Portland homemaker Shelly Shannon went on to be convicted of dozens of clinic bombings and other attacks, as well as the shooting of Tiller. She was given 31 years and is slated for release in 2018, The Oregonian reported.

When Tiller was assassinated a year and a half ago, The Oregonian quoted Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry as calling Tiller a “murderer,” and denying that his group had any responsibility for the killing. “Horribly, he reaped what he sowed,” Terry said.

Ultimately the defendants were found guilty of making ‘illegal threats’ against the doctors

in May, 2009.

The “Nuremberg Files” case was based on a Federal law against inciting violence against or threatening abortion doctors, as well as racketeering laws designed to prosecute organized crime.

Oregonline.com’s detailed archive of the Oregonian’s coverage of the trial boasts a timeline, lists of the “players” in the case, and many editorials and articles dating from that time.

Oregon voters legalized abortion in 1969, but rebuffed initiatives to curtail the procedure in 1978, 1986, and 1990. In 1993, on the other hand, after years of increasingly violent anti-abortion protests at clinics across the state, the state legislature declared it a felony to “interfere with a medical facility.”

Starting in 1984, and through 1990, firebombs were mailed to several abortion clinics as well as the Bour’s Center, a men’s health clinic that provides sterilization serv-