

MAY 12, 2010

UNION UPDATE



Bills to protect members



Legislation affects our jobs, wages & benefits

Local 1000's daily focus at the state Capitol is to support legislation that has a direct impact on the wages, benefits, working conditions and quality of life of state workers.

A growing number of members up and down the state are saying "politics matter" and are taking action to support Local 1000's efforts to pass legislation to increase the transparency of government contracting, reduce outsourcing, and improve the working conditions of members in specific departments.

At the same time, we're opposing a number of bills that would circumvent collective bargaining, hurt our benefits or reduce workplace rights.

Here is a brief summary of some of the main bills we're following. To see a complete list, go to seiu1000.org and look under "Politics and Legislation."

Stop SCIF sale

AB 1897 would protect member jobs and improve training and career options at the State Compensation Insurance Fund. The bill repeals the authority of the governor's Director of Finance to sell SCIF, and requires Senate confirmation for the governor's nine appointments to the SCIF board.

EDD Services

AB 1827 allows the Employment Development Department to adjust its existing resources to give out-of-work Californians the option of in-person Unemployment Insurance assistance in one-stop career centers.

Outsourcing & Contractor Transparency

AB 2494 would increase the effectiveness of Local 1000's legal challenges to wasteful private vendor contracts. It would require a state agency to immediately discontinue a contract disapproved by the State Personnel Board (SPB) and would prohibit departments from circumventing or disregarding SPB action by entering into a new contract for the same or similar services.

AB 1899 would allow the general public to see how private contracting usually costs more than having state workers perform the same work. The bill requires state agencies to post audits and contracts, in an easily searchable format, to the state's public website.

Continuous Salary Appropriations

AB 790 and AB 1699 are two bills that will continuously fund state employee payroll regardless of budget status.

Rural Health Care

AB 2608 would continue equitable health care coverage for state workers, regardless of geographic region, by extending the Rural Health Care Equity Program until Jan. 1, 2012. Last year legislators ended this program as part of a budget deal.

Ask Nancy



Send your questions about legislation to Legislative Director Nancy Farias. Go to seiu1000.org, click "Politics and Legislation," and go to "Ask Nancy."

Resource Center

Monday-Friday
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
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Hundreds participate in endorsement process



During the past three months Local 1000 opened its endorsement process to all union members through town halls, open meetings and satellite conferences with political candidates throughout California.

The focus is to find candidates who not only support state services and the workers who deliver them, but who also oppose furloughs and reducing our salaries to federal minimum wage.

“I’m sick of having a boss – the governor – who attacks us instead of listening to us,” said Tamekia Robinson, a tax technician at the Board of Equalization who attended several candidate forums with other Local 1000 members. “We need leaders who believe in the work we do and treat us with respect.”

At these meetings, candidates discussed plans for state services and answered questions posed by hundreds of members. Many of the candidates discussed their ideas about state government in great detail and even mentioned specific departments.

Republicans invited too

Local 1000 invited dozens of candidates, including all Republicans and Democrats. But most Republicans, including the two leading contenders for the governor’s office, refused to participate. No Republican in the Legislature voted for our contract bill in 2009.

“When candidates are willing to listen to members and hear our concerns, it’s likely they’ll work with us once elected,” said Leonard Seitz, an operations research specialist for Caltrans who walked precincts in support of Assemblymember Alyson Huber in 2008. “We need to actively elect and support political leaders who value California state services and workers.”

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—Leonard Seitz
Operations Research Specialist,
Caltrans

Members debate choices

After the candidates made presentations and answered questions, Local 1000 members met and discussed the merits of different candidates, often holding lively debates at each meeting. In some cases, Local 1000 members voted to endorse more than one candidate.

Districts targeted

Local 1000 members are also targeting several seats in the state Assembly and Senate now held by candidates who opposed our contract. We are also working to protect several seats where, in 2008, we helped elect new legislators who are strong supporters of state services.

To view a list of candidates endorsed by Local 1000 for the June primary, go to seiu1000.org and look under “Politics and Legislation.”

GET INVOLVED!

If you’d like to volunteer with Local 1000’s political team, visit seiu1000.org/politics-legislation/ and click on “become a member political organizer.”