

# IOWA AFL-CIO NEWS



Volume 17, Issue 1

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June 2017

## The Secretary-Treasurer's Notes . . .



**IFL Secretary-Treasurer  
Charlie Wishman**

It was clear to us very early on this legislative session what the nasty and disrespectful tone towards workers was going to be. The very first week of session, I approached the Iowa House Labor Committee chair along with a lobbyist for an IFL affiliate union, and said, "We know and understand there are going to be changes to collective bargaining. Would you be willing to sit down and discuss some of these concepts that we know have been talked about or have happened in other states?" Representative Dave Deyoe (R), adjusted his glasses, laughed, and said "No, I don't think we need to do that. I already know what you're going to say." He then had a "meeting" to be at, checked his phone, and walked off.

I have not, and certainly no one I have spoken to has ever seen such an anti-worker legislature in our lifetimes. That doesn't just go

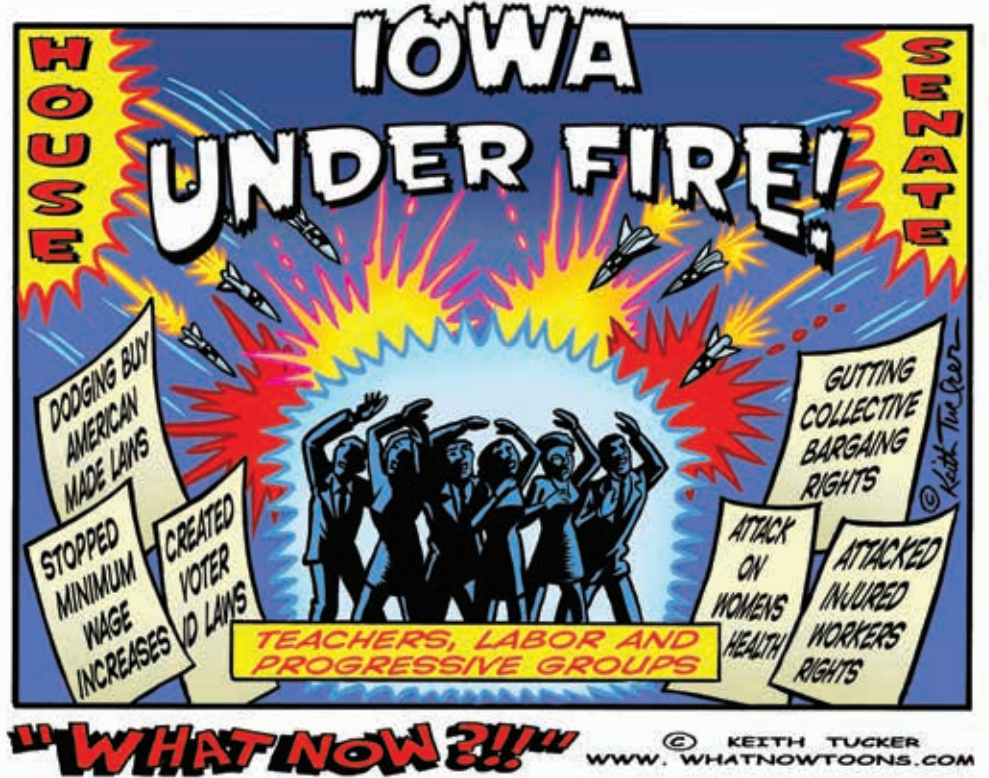
# Legislative Roundup

for the policy decisions that have very real life consequences, but the process in which these bills were drafted and presented to the public. Extremely important and far reaching legislative initiatives were introduced, given 24 hours for a public sub-committee, passed in committee and debate time was limited in many cases. To add insult to injury, Republican leaders and floor managers claimed they consulted with unions and "brought them to the table," or sometimes claimed that unions refused to meet with them. Both of these claims are at odds with each other, and neither is true.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

On February 7, the Republican House and Senate released their bills to destroy collective bargaining for public sector workers in this state. This bill contained some of the most sweeping changes to labor law in this state, and was signed into law on February 17<sup>th</sup>, just 10 days later. To sum up this bill - almost all subjects of bargaining are illegal, except bargaining on base wages. That amount cannot exceed 3% or the consumer price index, whichever is lower. There are now just three permissive subjects of bargaining, which are seniority, release time, and grievances. The transparent union busting provisions in the bill are terrible as well.

Before each contract negotiation, the union must pay for a recertification election that must be won for the union to exist, and the union must get 51% of the votes of the entire bargaining unit, not just those voting. In addition, payroll deductions are now banned, so every public sector union must find new ways of collecting dues for representation. Obviously these provisions were meant to reduce union membership, and to set such a high bar for a recertification election it will be hard for many bargaining units to remain organized and represented. After cutting de-



bate short, the legislation passed on a party line vote. There have been several lawsuits filed challenging different sections of this re-write of the law, and more are expected to be filed. As we've seen this play out in Wisconsin, major damage is likely to result from this legislation.

### BAN ON PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

When Governor Branstad was re-elected in 2010, one of his first acts was to ban project labor agreements on projects that use state resources using an executive order. This year, anti-union groups pushed their agenda further with the help of the new Republican House, Senate, and Governorship under their thumb by banning PLAs by local governments. In addition to banning project labor agreements by local jurisdictions, the legislature also banned the ability of a local jurisdiction to even ask questions such as "have you been found guilty of a felony," or "do you have a qualified workforce for this project," to a contractor to receive the bid. While Project Labor Agreements can and still do exist in the private sector, they are now banned for local governments

in law. This legislation was passed on party line votes in the House and Senate. This was yet another blow to labor in this state, this time aimed at building trades.

### ROAD FUND SWAP

The new Republican majority in the Senate was helped tremendously in the election by a message of Buy America, hire America, and an economic message that rural America was left behind. In what can only be seen as now legalized money laundering by our states' DOT and rural counties, Republicans passed a law that would let rural areas swap federal funds for state funds to use on road and bridge projects. Why would they do that? Federal funds for these projects require that American made steel be used on projects, and that workers are paid based on federal Davis-Bacon prevailing wages. So, this law was passed solely to skirt the very promises they were swept into office on. This law skirts buy American laws and pays workers in rural areas less, despite what they campaigned on. Again this was passed on a party line vote in both chambers.

*continued on page 7*

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**Where to Find Them:  
Iowa Area Labor  
Federations & Chapters**

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Working Iowa  
Neighbors (WIN)**

.....Page 8

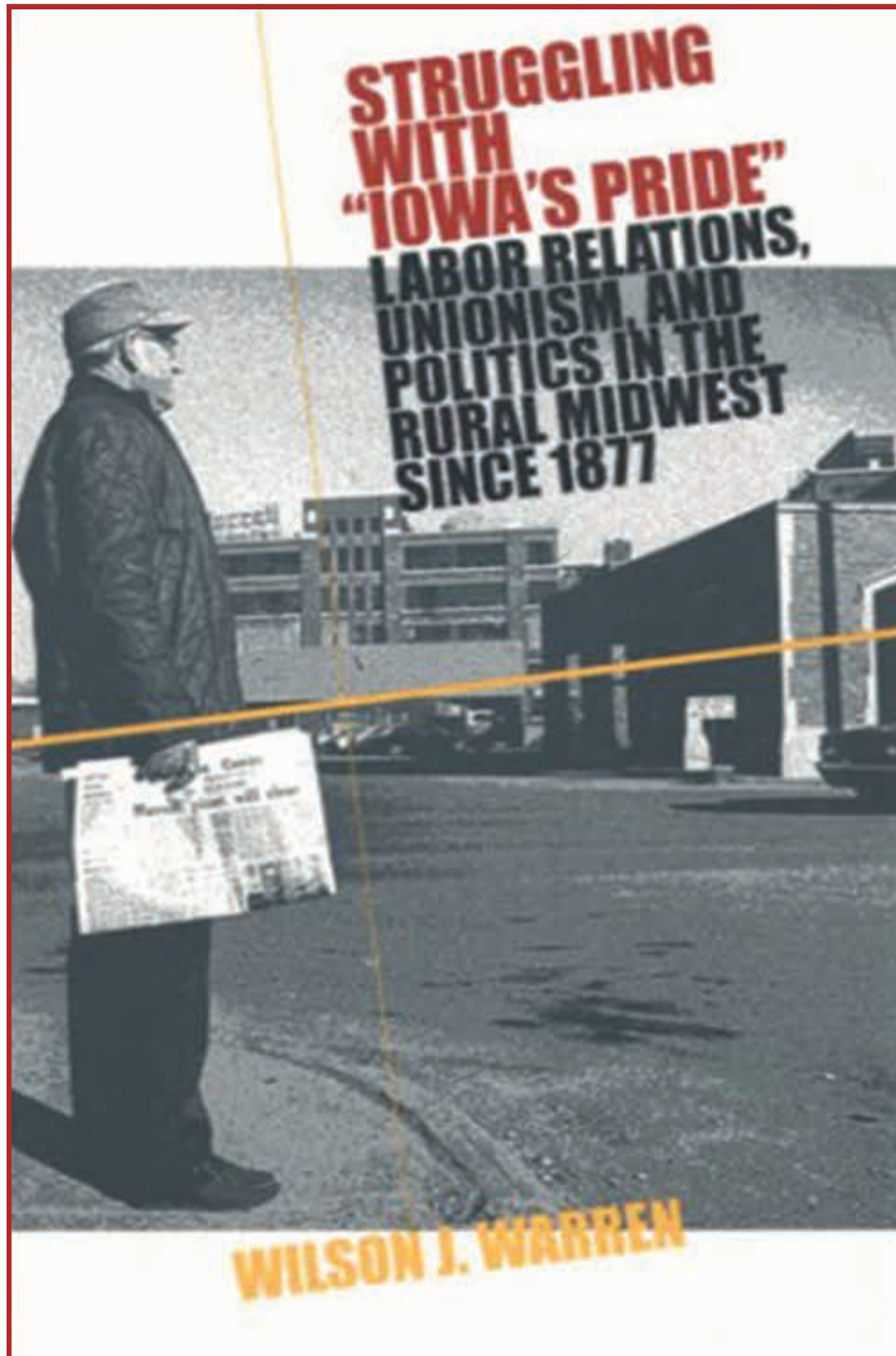
# Ottumwa – Rich With Labor History

In early May, Southern Iowa Labor Council and South Central Iowa Area Labor Federation, hosted a solidarity event, Working Families Celebration, that drew hundreds of people to march from downtown to a city park where they help an open festivity recognizing the impressive labor history of Ottumwa.

Many of the speakers at this event told stories about the labor movement in Ottumwa, and encouraged people to find out more by reading some books that expand on this history.

According to the University of Iowa Labor Press there is a great book about Ottumwa's Labor History:

"Struggling with 'Iowa's Pride' represents local history at its best. It's rare to find a historian who so thoroughly exhausts and so effectively uses such a broad range of the available primary resources and at the



Pride," John Morrell and Company is best known for contributing one of the most important local unions to the progressive United Packinghouse Workers of America. During the 1930s and 1940s, its members pursued a militant brand of unionism. By the early 1950s, the local's militancy became a source of contention among the membership. By explaining the effect of Morrell-Ottumwa's union leaders on local and state Democratic politics, especially in the development of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' Iowa State Industrial Union Council and the AFL-CIO's Iowa Federation of Labor, Wilson Warren makes an important contribution to the literature on labor's involvement in the Democratic party's ascendancy across much of the industrial North following World War II.

This history of Ottumwa's meatpacking workers provides insights into the development of several forms of labor relations, including the evangelical Christian paternalism, welfare capitalism, and unionism that were distinctive to one blue-collar community but that also reflected workers' experiences in many other rural midwestern industrial communities. By carefully analyzing all relevant labor and industrial sources and by revealing the deeply held aspirations and concerns expressed by both workers and managers, Warren constructs a window through which Iowa's industrial and labor history over the past 120 years can be viewed

This book is available at the University of Iowa Press [iupress@uiowa.edu](mailto:iupress@uiowa.edu)

Check out the Iowa Labor History Oral Project at <https://www.iupress.uiowa.edu/books/pre-2002/warstrwit.htm>.

Listen to audio interviews at <https://soundcloud.com/ilhop>

same time understands and conveys so well how the results of that research fit into and complement the most recent and most relevant secondary literature." —Marvin Bergman, editor, *Annals of Iowa*

"... this is a good book deserving of a wide readership. Ottumwa's packinghouse workers, unfortu-

nately, serve as an example of the once vibrant blue-collar culture that America had and lost. By telling such and important—and global—story through the lens of one small city, Warren makes it accessible." —*Labor History*

Recognized between 1880 and 1910 by its trademark label "Iowa's

## New Iowa Laws Affect Your Rights To Workers' Compensation

The Iowa Legislature recently passed new laws that apply to all injuries that occur after July 1, 2017.

You need to know how these new laws can affect you. At a minimum, every employee should know the following basic rules.

1. If you sustain an injury before July 1, 2017, give your employer notice of the injury now, and certainly before July 1, 2017.

2. After July 1, 2017, report any and all injury, ache or pain to any part of your body which you believe is work-related to your employer as soon as it occurs. Report the physical problem immediately – even if you do not lose any time off work due to it yet and even if you do not receive any medical care for it yet.

3. Both before and after July 1, 2017, make sure to report all work-related injuries within ninety (90) days from the date of injury.

4. If you do not know how to re-



port a work-related injury, if your employer refuses to accept an injury report from you, or if you have any other problem reporting an injury, contact the Union right away.

5. If you have sustained a work-related injury and your employer offers to return you to a job at your normal place of employment, ac-

cept the offer, take whatever steps are necessary to return to work and be sure to ask your Union if you have any questions about the offer or returning to work.

6. When you return to work, you may still be entitled to additional workers' compensation weekly benefits. You should consult legal counsel to determine whether you are entitled to additional weekly benefits.

7. Consult legal counsel if you have sustained a work-related injury within the last two years but have received no workers compensation benefits for the injury other than medical care, or if you have received weekly compensation benefits within the last three years for a work-related injury.

IN UNITY THERE IS STRENGTH

**IOWA AFL-CIO NEWS**

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[sue.iowa.alliance@gmail.com](mailto:sue.iowa.alliance@gmail.com)



(812) 923-1111

# Cradling New Life Helps Premature Babies

When these union brothers and sisters are not building power lines or are not hanging out with saws in hand maneuvering around high power electrical wire, they are raising money for pre-mature babies.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 55, in the Des Moines, Iowa area, voted overwhelmingly to donate \$20,000 to help start a non-profit organization to help families that have babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Cradling New Life is the 2014 inspiration of Shane Nelson, a Journeyman Lineman and assistant Business Manager with IBEW Local 55. The mission statement of the Cradling New Life states "The Cradling New Life mission is to address the needs of families enduring the struggles of pre-term labor, premature birth, or other ill little ones in Iowa Hospitals' Neonatal Intensive Care Units. Raising awareness and establishing a unified footprint toward their needs."

The charity is made up of a seven-person (unpaid) board, headed by a nurse, and the rest of the board are wives of Local 55 members.

Cradling New Life began with an open meeting on the idea of helping families with babies in Iowa Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Units in January 2015. At this meeting 7 volunteers agreed to become board members for this organization and Shane agreed to be an honorary member from Local 55. It was decided at this point we would hold regular meetings monthly and things progressed from there.

Cradling New Life helps families who have infants in Iowa hospitals' Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) and those addressing antepartum issues. Assistance is provided financially and by raising awareness. Babies are admitted to NICUs due to premature birth, complications arising during delivery, or signs of ill health which occur within the first few days of life. One of every nine expectant mothers do not carry their babies to full term. Nearly 450,000 infants in the United States are admitted to a NICU annually. In Iowa, approximately 11.3% of babies born are premature.

Infant stays in the NICU are vital to survival. Emotional and economic distress are often compounded as these tiny miracles encounter the ups and downs of progress. Alleviating just a small part of a family's concerns can truly make a difference. Cradling New Life is not an income based charity. Its purpose is to provide assistance in the most fulfilling situations. The charity gives such items as gas cards, grocery gift certificates, rent/mortgage assistance, lodging funds, and child

care money. It donates Kindle Fires, books, games, crafts, and computers to hospital NICUs for family usage. Something as simple as a restaurant gift card so parents can just take a little time for them -

difficulties faced by these families and I want to help other in similar situations. This charity is near and dear to my heart."

Business Agent, Rusty McCuen, said that NICU's are one

workers at the hospital will contact the Area Director of Cradling New Life about a need. The board will meet with the families, to get to know and what their needs are, and the donations will usually go towards those needs.

Since they are a non-profit organization they have to raise money to continue to help these families. They have held golf tournaments, dunk tanks, Wrap it Up at Bass Pro Shops, Pedal to the Metal at MB2 Raceway, and YOUNIQUE by Ashley Ross a social media fundraiser. They hope to raise enough money this year to expand the program to Iowa City and Sioux City Hospitals.

They have held two golf tournaments, and this year (2017) they will be hosting their 3rd event at Terrace Hills Golf Course, (8700 NE 46th Ave, Altoona, IA). on Sunday June 11th. Registration is at 7 am. Pre-registration is due by June 2nd. Pre-registration can be done at [cradlingnewlife.org](http://cradlingnewlife.org), events. Registration if \$90 per golfer or \$360 per team. Which include, Golf fees, cart, gift, lunch and door prize.

If you want to donate to this charity, you can go to [cradlingnewlife.org](http://cradlingnewlife.org), and click on donations, and/or for more information, call Carrie McCuen, 515-249-6800. Cradling New Life PO Box 3407, Des Moines, IA. 50316.

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

— Dr. Seuss



selves can be extremely meaningful.

All circumstances differ as do the emotions endured. Many go home while their baby remains hospitalized for days, weeks, and even months. The Cradling New Life goal is to show an expression of concern which in turn makes the parents' experiences a little better until their little ones are able to go home.

"My husband and I endured our own financial struggles during my pregnancy with our twins. I was on bed rest for three and a half months with six and a half weeks requiring hospitalization," said Mindy Nelson, Second Vice President, Des Moines Area (Coordinator). "I am involved in this charity because I have first-hand knowledge of the

of the least funded areas in Iowa hospitals.

"Most of the time, a baby's NICU admission is totally unexpected by their family. Emergency needs arise for food, personal care items, short term housing, gas money, baby items (diapers, preemie clothing, special equipment), and cost of daycare for other siblings while parents are in the NICU. Most of our families are without immediate resources to help them respond to these burdens while trying to manage the frightening NICU world. The relief your organization has brought to these families is unimaginable and so deeply appreciated. Thank you for helping them when they have nowhere else to turn and may, themselves, have little left to cope for these very pressing needs."

— Terri Simms, LISW

According to McCuen, social

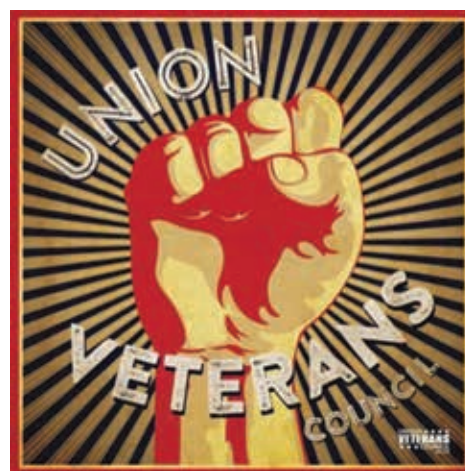
## Exciting Times At The Union Veterans Council

As you may have heard, Will Fischer moved on from the Union Veterans Council. He's now at VoteVet.

Will did an outstanding job bringing the Veterans Council to the forefront of the labor movement, and new director Will Attig has plans to work with every union veteran to take us to the next level.

Will Attig is a combat Army Veteran who served several tours in Iraq with the First Infantry Division. Upon returning home, like a lot of other Veterans, Attig found that a civilian job wasn't easy to land. In 2010 he was introduced to the Helmets to Hardhats program, which helped him become a UA Pipefitter.

Rest assured, the Union Veterans Council program is in good hands. Attig knows how to organize. He has a strategic plan to unite our vets into a powerful movement. He has already begun a large scale mem-



bership drive with a mission to dramatically grow the number of veterans in the organization. Attig will also work to create state and local level veterans councils and committees, all with the aim of supporting the veteran community through legislation and policy advocacy on a local, state and federal level.

"I am proud and honored to be able to lead this movement. Together we can support the veter-

ans programs of organized labor and build more. I talk to veterans and union members all the time, and we're ready to train a lot more new motivated leaders to shape the future of the labor movement and improve the lives of America's veterans," Attig said.

Attig also wants to make sure that the story of veterans in labor is being told.

"No group in America that does as much as the labor movement to make sure veterans get on track with sustainable careers, the kind where you can raise a family if you want one and retire someday with dignity."

The Union Veterans Council needs your help to get the word out. If you are or know a veteran who is a union member, please reach out and ask them sign up. The application process is easy, you can find it on our website [www.unionveterans.org](http://www.unionveterans.org).

# Iowa Area Labor Fed

## GRALF – Great River Area Labor Federation

**President:** Brad D. Greve – USW Local 105, 880 Devils Glen Rd, Bettendorf, IA 52722.  
 Phone: Office – 563-355-1182 Cell – 563-343-7652 Email – greatriveralf@gmail.com

**Community & Field Engagement Coordinator:** Julia McMeekan  
 Address: Email – juliamcmeekan@yahoo.com Cell – 309-738-1446. 4600 46th Ave. Suite 4, Rock Island, IL. 61201.

**United Way Labor Liaison: United Way of the Quad Cities Area.** Tyler Power tpower@unitedwayqc.org. (UA Local 25) 563-344-0319 or 563-355-4310. 852 Middle Rd, Suite 401, Bettendorf, IA. 52722. (for Quad Cities area)

**GRALF Meetings:** In conjunction with Chapter meetings.

### GRALF Chapters:

**Dubuque:** (IA) Allamakee; Winneshiek, Fayette, Clayton, Dubuque and Jackson. (IL) Jo Daviess. Meeting: 4th Wednesday of the month 6 PM. GRALF 6:30 PM. Dubuque Labor Temple, 1610 Garfield Ave, Dubuque, IA . Chapter VP: Tom Townsend, 563-543-4708. tom@ibew704.com.

**Clinton:** (IA) Clinton (IL) Whiteside. Meetings: 1st Monday of the month at 6 PM. GRALF 7 PM Clinton Labor Congress 226 22nd Place, Clinton, IA. 52701. Chapter VP: Dave Keefer, dkeefe@lu25.org, 309-230-6476. PO Box 461, Clinton, IA 52701

**Quad Cities:** (IA) Scott, Muscatine, Louisa, (IL) Mercer, Henry and Rock Island. Meetings: Third Monday QC Fed Eboard 5:15; Delegate Meeting at 6 PM. GRALF 7 PM. UA 25 Hall, 4600 46th Ave, Rock Island, IL. 61201. Chapter VP: Dino Leone, dleone@afscme31.org. 309-738-3193.

**Des Moines/Henry:** Des Moines and Henry. Meetings: Second Monday 6 PM. GRALF 6:30 PM. Machinists 1010 Hall, 16452 US 34, West Burlington 52655. Chapter VP: Ryan Drew, rdrew@local150.org, 319-759-3188.

**Lee County:** Lee. Meetings: First Thursday 6 PM. GRALF 7 PM. Lee County Labor Temple, 301 Blondeau St, Keokuk, IA 52632. Chapter VP: Michael Bennett dasparky76@iowatelecom.net. 319-795-2131.

## HALC – Hawkeye Area Labor Council

**President:** Kelly Steinke – NALC 373 President, 1211 Wiley Blvd, SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404 319-396-8461 kellysteinke@ymail.com

**Executive Vice President:** Cal Eckhoff IAMAW 1728. Cal.eckhoff.ia@gmail.com

**Executive Director:** Rick Moyle 1211 Wiley Blvd, SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404 319-396-8461 rmoyle@hawkeyelabor.us

**Field Organizer:** Jerry Hageman CWA 319-230-3757 slinky1.jh@gmail.com

**Office Staff:** Rachelle Deuster, rdeuster@hawkeyelabor.us

**United Way Labor Liaison: East Central Iowa.** Jason “Jay” Larson, (IAM) jlarson@uweci.org, 319-398-5372 Ext 16. Cell – 319-431-0184. Fax 319-398-5381. 317 7th Ave. SE, Suite 401, Cedar Rapids, IA. 52401.

**United Way Labor Liaison: Cedar Valley.** John Padget, (IBEW/UAW) john.padget@cvuw.org. 319-235-6211 Ext 12. Fax 319-233-6963. 425 Cedar Street, Suite 300, Waterloo, IA. 50701.

### HALC Meetings:

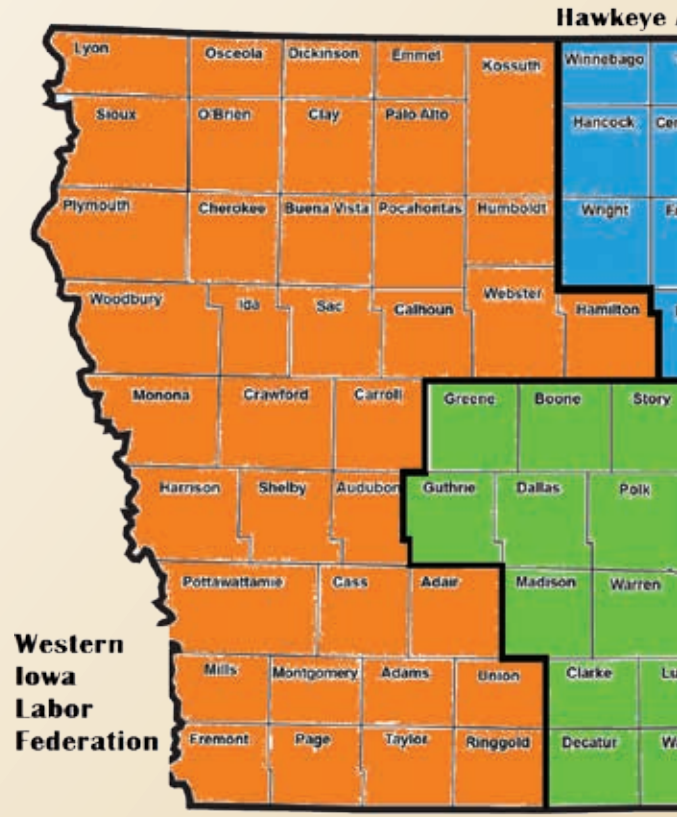
**E Board:** Second Tuesday of the month, 5:30 PM, IBEW 405 Hall 1211 Wiley Blvd SW, Cedar Rapids, IA. 52404

**Delegate:** 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30 PM. IBEW 405 Hall, Wiley Blvd SW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52404

### HALC Chapters:

**North Iowa Nine Assembly:** Daryl Erickson, bub1164@yahoo.com. Winnebago, Worth, Mitchell, Hancock, Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Wright, Franklin and Butler. Meetings: 4th Thursday of the month. 6 PM Labor Temple 510 South Pennsylvania, Mason City, IA. 50401. Area VP: Daryl Erikson.

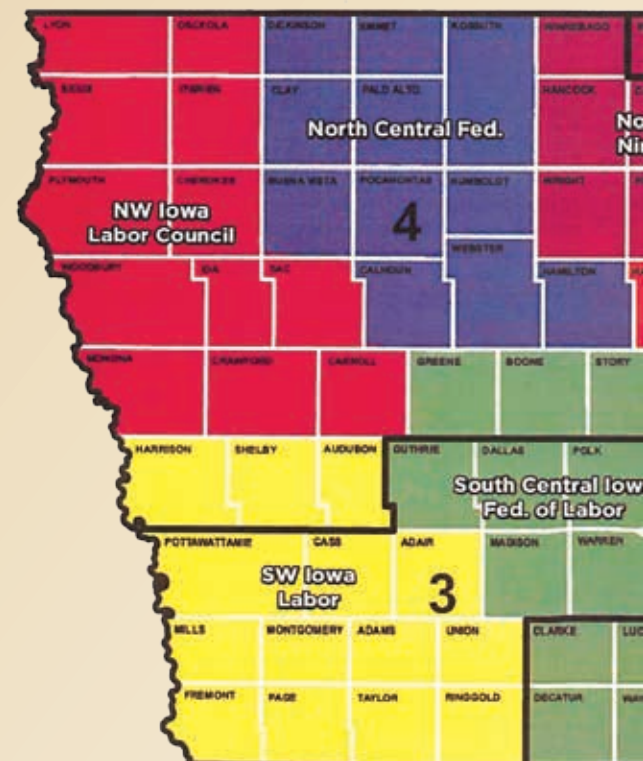
## Iowa Area Labor



## Iowa Area Organiza



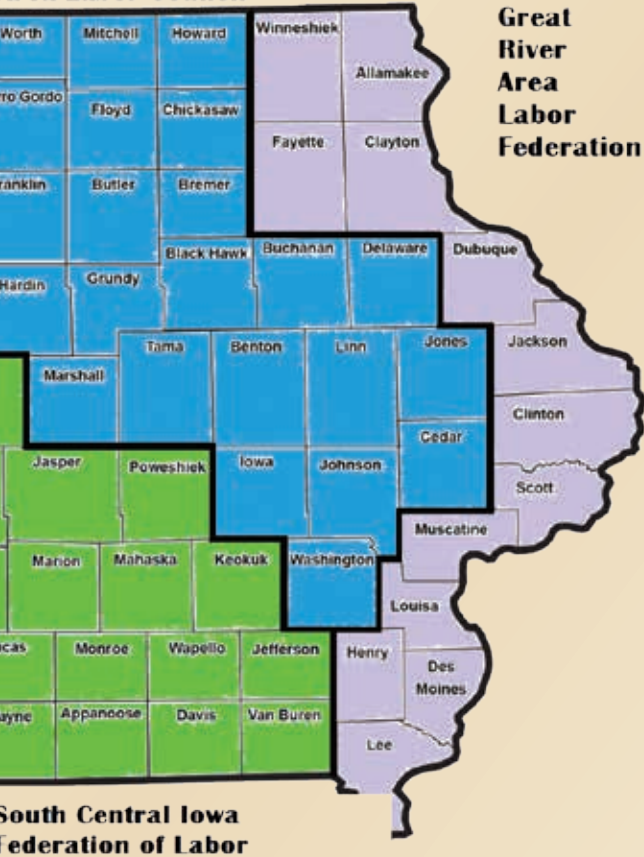
## Iowa Area Labor Federatio



# Federations & Chapters

## For Federations

### Area Labor Council



**Black Hawk Assembly:** Cal Eckhoff: cal.eckhoff.ia@gmail.com. Howard, Chickasaw, Bremer, Black Hawk, Tama and Marshall. Meetings: 1st Wednesday of the month 6 PM. Labor Temple, 1695 Burton Ave, Waterloo, IA 5070

**Hawkeye Labor Council:** Buchanan, Delaware, Benton, Linn, Jones, Iowa and Cedar. Meetings: Delegate: 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30 PM. IBEW 405 Hall, Wiley Blvd SW. Cedar Rapids, IA, 52404. Kelly Steinke, NALC 373 President, 1211 Wiley Blvd, SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404 319-396-8461 kellysteinke@ymail.com

**Iowa City Federation Assembly:** Johnson and Washington Counties. Meetings: 3rd Thursday of every month 7 PM. 940 South Gilbert Court, Iowa City, IA 52240. Greg Hearn, GHearn@iowalabor.com. 319-361-2374.

## SCIAFL – South Central Iowa Area Federation of Labor

**President:** Mark Cooper – GCIU/IBT, 2000 Walker, Suite H, Des Moines, IA 50317. 515-265-1862 mark@scifl.org

**Office Manager:** Heidi Miller, 2000 Walker, Suite H, Des Moines, IA 50317. 515-265-1862. heidiunion14@gmail.com

**Field & Community Engagement Coordinator:** Sandy Opstvedt 2000 Walker, Suite H, Des Moines, IA. 50317. sandy.scifl@gmail.com 515-291-0093 or 515-262-9571.

**United Way Labor Liaison:** United Way of Central Iowa. Holly Sagar, (AFSCME Local 3861) hollysagar81@gmail.com 515-265-1862. Cell: 515-326-0856. 2000 Walker, Suite I, Des Moines, IA. 50317

## Regions & Chapters

### Hawkeye Area Labor Council



**SCIAFL Meetings:** 2nd Wednesday of the month. 6 PM. 2000 Walker, IAM Hall. Des Moines, IA.

**SCIAFL Chapters:**  
**South Central Iowa Federation of Labor:** Greene, Boone, Story, Guthrie, Dallas, Polk, Jasper, Poweshiek, Madison, Warren, Marion, Clarke, Lucas, Decatur and Wayne. Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm. 2000 Walker, Des Moines, IA. Mark Cooper, President. 2000 Walker Suite H, Des Moines, IA. 50317. 515-262-1862. Mark@scifl.org. Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 5:30 PM, 2000 Walker, Des Moines.

**Southern Iowa Labor Council:** Mahaska, Keokuk, Monroe, Wapello, Jefferson, Appanoose, Davis and Van Buren. Steve Siegel, Retired AFSCME 641-799-2569 siegel@yahoo.com. Meetings:

## WILF – Western Iowa Labor Federation

**President:** Ernie Colt, 3038 South Lakeport, Suite 100 Sioux City, Iowa 51106. 712-223-9423. ecolt@ncsrcc.org

**Field Organizer:** Scott Puntaney, BCTGM Local 433 402-657-1007, spuntaney@wilfaflio.org

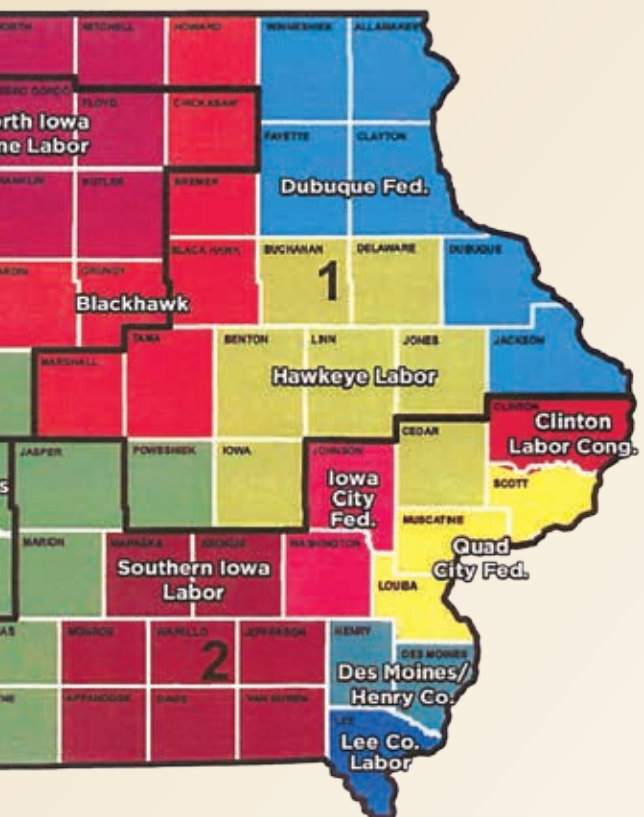
**United Way Labor Liaison:** Bryan Marshall (AFT) bmarshall@unitedwaysiouxland.com. 712-255-3551. Fax. 712-255-3028. PO Box 204, Sioux City, IA, 51102.

**WILF Chapters:**  
**North West Chapter:** Lyon, Osceola Sioux, O'Brien, Plymouth, Cherokee, Woodbury, Ida, Sac, Monona, Crawford and Carroll. Ernie Colt, Carpenters 948, President. ecolt@ncsrcc.org. 712-223-9423. Meetings: 3rd Monday 6 PM at UFCW #222 Hall, 3038 Lakeport, Sioux City.

**South West Chapter:** Harrison, Shelby, Audubon, Guthrie, Pottawattamie, Cass, Adair, Mills, Montgomery, Adams, Union, Fremont, Page, Taylor, and Ringgold. Chris Merk, Carpenters Local 427, Chapter VP. 402-670-4488, cmerk@ncsrcc.org. Council Bluffs, IA 51503. Meetings: 3rd Monday at 6 PM, at IAFF #15 Hall, 1827 S 8th St, Council Bluffs, IA.

**North Central Chapter:** Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Clay, Palo Alto, Buena Vista, Pocahontas, Humboldt, Calhoun, Webster and Hamilton. Dale Struecker Chapter VP. NALC Branch 645. 515-955-8301. Sandy\_struecker@yahoo.com . PO Box 387, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. Meetings: 1st Tuesday, 6 PM at UFCW #6 Hall, 1200 3rd Ave NW, Fort Dodge, IA.

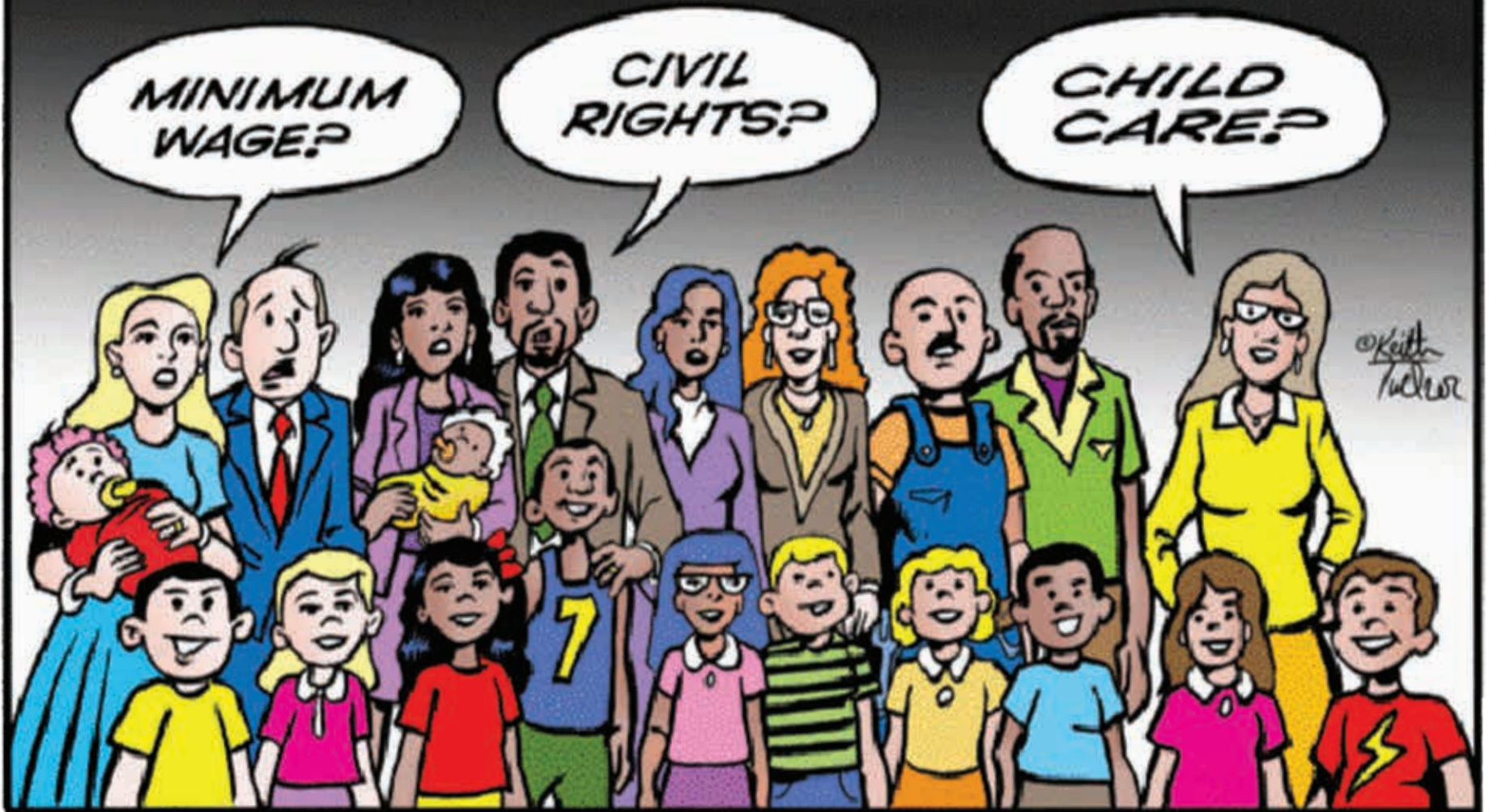
## Regions Congressional Districts



# WORKING FAMILIES SUMMIT



# WORKING FAMILIES



**Saturday, June 10**  
**9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**at the Scheman Building in Ames (on the ISU campus)**

The event features speakers, a full day of action, break-out sessions, and discussion on issues like Building a movement, Raising Wages, Protecting Civil Rights, and Making Work Family Friendly.

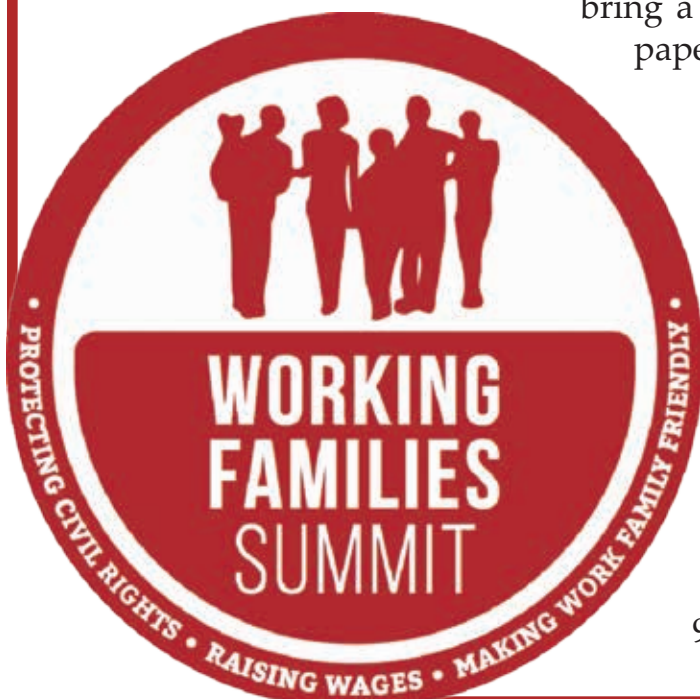
The event is **FREE and open to the public**. Lunch Provided. We are asking that you bring a donation of: Crackers, soups, ramen noodles, rice, hamburger helper, toilet paper or hygiene products, that will be donated to a charity.

For many Iowan's the recent legislative session was devastating. Economic recovery is still a distant dream. Minimum wage jobs taken away, student loan debt and rising health care costs are just a few of the everyday factors that keep families from getting ahead. Bringing a coalition of progressive organizations together for a day of discussion and action to work together to help strengthen working families, determine a road map to change, and work toward effective legislative remedies is a step in the right direction.

If you want to see change and a better future for the 90 percent of Iowans who are not positively affected by economic gains, come to the summit and find out how to make a difference.

Go to [iowaworkingfamilies.com](http://iowaworkingfamilies.com) to register or call 1 515-262-9571 for more information. Space is limited, so register now. Registration ends June 5th.

To be a sponsor and/or have a table the day of the event—call 515-262-9571 or email [Lance@iowaafclcio.org](mailto:Lance@iowaafclcio.org).



# Legislative Roundup

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## PREEMPTION OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGE LAWS

The minimum wage in Iowa was last raised in 2007 to \$7.25/hour. In fact, at the time it was higher than the federal minimum wage, and Iowa was a leader. After 10 years, the state has not raised the minimum wage, and not only that, every single state except Wisconsin that borders Iowa has a higher minimum wage. Because of inaction on the part of the state, several counties raised the minimum wage to higher levels than the state wage. Johnson, Polk, Linn, Wapello, and Lee Counties all voted to increase the minimum wage, and this year, the state legislature voted to wipe out all of those increases. To put a finer point on it, the legislature of the state of Iowa actually voted to lower the wages of its own poorest citizens. This cruel and unnecessary legislation was passed on party line votes in the House and Senate.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

This year also saw the most harmful re-write of worker's compensation laws in the entire history of the law. The initial proposal was even worse, but the final product that the Governor signed did a number of things. It automatically presumes that any trace of drug or alcohol is the cause of an accident, and the burden of proof to say it wasn't is now on the worker. Perhaps the main and most harmful changes to workers compensation law is how shoulder injuries are treated. What was once considered a body of the whole industrial injury now is only covered for 400 weeks and reduces compensation for those injuries as well. This bill made it difficult to object to light duty work, so if your employer wants to punish you for being injured by counting paper clips or staring at a wall, they can. Much of the bill was targeted at workers compensation attorneys, with the major unspoken goal to drive them out of business (so workers won't have the ability to get representation in court). Other provisions included lowering interest payments on insurance companies, which has been an incentive for them to not delay payments to workers. The one provision put into the bill to make it seem slightly less heartless was to enable an injured worker to attend a community college for a short period of time to learn a new skill. At the rate we are underfunding our community colleges, this is a hollow promise.

The stated reason for this bill was to lower workers' compensation rates for businesses, even though they have dropped recently. The problem is that health

care costs are increasing, and that is not about it end. Nothing in this bill does anything to actually lower health care costs, except for making it harder for workers to obtain benefits. It should be no surprise that this carnage was pushed by such corporate bad actors like Tyson Foods, the trucking industry, and of course the Association of Business in Industry.

## UNEMPLOYMENT CHANGES

There were several changes to Unemployment Law this year as well. HF 542 raised from \$250 to 8x the weekly benefit for earnings to qualify for a second year of unemployment. This only applies to the second year. The bill started out at 10x the amount earned in the first year, but was improved thanks to the work of Democratic

*"Until this state gets serious about making sure we are positioned for the future, we will continue down a dark road that leads to a race to the bottom."*

House Labor Committee members. Another troublesome unemployment bill was HF 533, which as originally drafted made it so that if you were incarcerated and are terminated as a result, you automatically lose access to unemployment benefits. This bill was amended so that if you are found not guilty or charges against you are dropped, you would still qualify for benefits. While that is an improvement, a potential loophole would be that if you notify your employer that you have a scheduled period to serve a sentence and take vacation or another form of leave, that employer could still then fire you and it would be allowable to disqualify you from benefits.

## DRUG TESTING

This year, SF 32 added hair follicle testing to the employer list of acceptable drug testing options for employees. As of now, the many other tests are available, and are much more reliable. While proponents of this suggested this was for workplace safety, hair testing also does not detect intoxication at the worksite but can "look back" many months. Obviously, no one wants to work near someone who is intoxicated but this had more to do with an out of state drug testing company looking to expand into Iowa. As a result, this bill was amended to only allow hair testing for pre-employment screening.

## OTHER CHANGES OF NOTE

HF 572 is a product of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, expanded the Iowa Workforce Development Board to 33 people, and greatly reduces the voting

strength of labor on that board as a result. This is a federal requirement passed during the Obama administration. These federal requirements also require that a business representative be the chair at all times, opposed to alternating as it currently stands. Many on the IWD board including the state federation worked to grandfather the existing board with the federal government to leave it as is, however that was rejected by the Obama Administration.

## SUPPRESSING DEMOCRACY

While much of the discussion around voting changes this year revolved around a new requirement to show identification, many other provisions were enacted to make it harder to vote. On that first point, you must now have a driver's li-

cense, non-operator ID, military ID, or voter verification ID to cast a ballot now. What is infuriating about this entire identification initiative is that there is no evidence of voter impersonation, or voter fraud in Iowa (or anywhere else). Last year, only one person was caught and charged, because our system works. That voter was trying to vote for the current President two times. Now, the state is going to waste \$700,000 on printing IDs for people who do not have an ID listed above, at the same time we are underfunding just about every single essential function of government.

In addition, you must provide signature verification that matches what the state has on file for you. This provision is especially difficult for the disabled and elderly. Any poll worker can challenge any voter that they decide doesn't have a matching signature. Not only will this slow down voting times it also could open our voting system for abuses and discrimination.

The ability to request a ballot to vote by mail or early vote has been reduced by 11 days in this legislation, and it reduces the ability to vote by mail by 29 days. No matter how you slice it, the goal of the majority party and Governor this year was to find ways to make it harder to vote. These provisions will take effect for the 2018 election.

## AND FINALLY, THE BUDGET...

What an absolute mess this state is in fiscally. There are a number of factors that go into why, and most of them have to do with poor choices made by the legislature in previ-

ous years relating to tax policy.

The year started with the Republican legislature cutting \$118 million out of the current year's budget, forcing education, health care, corrections, and other vital services to be cut even more. Hardly any part of the budget was left un-slashed. The targets slash resources from Governor Branstad's already-scarce budget by an additional \$38 million. The proposal cuts the FY2018 budget by \$14 million compared to FY2017. This comes after horrible budget mismanagement resulted in \$120 million being cut in the current budget year.

It is time to finally examine tax credits that have been on auto-pilot for years, that we don't know what benefit they are providing, and many of these tax credits amount to corporate welfare handed out to companies that have no tax liability. Commercial and Industrial property tax cuts are going to start hitting our budget in an even more serious way in future years.

The Governor says the problem is the "farm economy." That may be a factor amongst many, but runaway tax cuts are to blame. There is no way that Iowa can cut its way out of this mess. Until this state gets serious about making sure we are positioned for the future, we will continue down a dark road that leads to a race to the bottom.

## NEXT YEAR

There are many opportunities for the Republican majority to inflict more pain on workers next year. There is talk of IPERS and other pension "reforms" which could seriously damage the retirement security of workers. There are still many more unemployment, workers' compensation, and other worker protections that can be stripped from law. Medicaid privatization is still a disaster, and the state continues to ignore it.

Despite the adversity that we all faced, we are still incredibly proud of what union members stepped up and did this year. Thousands of calls were made to legislators, people agitated at forums and asked tough but fair questions of their elected officials. We were ignored and called liars and greedy and thugs, yet we persisted. When the Governor wanted a draconian workers' compensation law on his desk in less than a week, we persisted and helped remove some of the worst parts of the law. When the state was going to wipe out minimum wage ordinances, counties like Lee County persisted anyway.

wRepublicans may believe they have buried us, but perhaps instead they just buried the seeds of a newer, stronger, labor movement ready to help turn this state around and restore it to the progressive leader it once was. The choice as always, is ours.

# Had Enough?

WE are the people we have been waiting for to save us from this disaster.

Across this state and nation, many have a sense that something is not

right and we are being pulled down the wrong path. Too much of our work has been undone in too short a time. What can be done?

You can run to make a difference.

We are seeking individuals who have an interest in serving on school boards. The election is in September of 2017. If you have children, know children or even like children, maybe

you can make a difference in their lives and the lives of the teachers and workers who make their education possible.

See our WIN program and engage.

## WORKING IOWA NEIGHBORS in your neighborhood

*"The WIN Committee has been essential in the progressive gains made in Johnson County. These natural allies were always there, but we didn't really coordinate until the WIN Committee started meeting."*

— Rod Sullivan,  
Johnson County Supervisor



*"Working with WIN helped me connect with others who care about working families and better understand how important local elections can be."*

— Maria Dickmann,  
Davenport City Council

The Iowa Federation of Labor, AFLCIO, established the WIN Program in 2011 to help make working families a priority for local and state elected officials.

In the aftermath of the 2010 Election, members of the Iowa legislature went after education funding so they could instead hand out corporate property tax cuts and other tax giveaways to large profitable businesses. In subsequent years, we have seen these attacks increase and the state's budget suffer. This past

legislative session, some members declared war on working families, passing legislation that rolls back decades of progress.

Workers, however, can come together to fight back against these attacks. WIN Committees have already been established in several locations around the state, and new ones are forming. WIN Committees focus on local elections such as city council, school board, and college trustee elections in odd years and county races in even years. WIN

also works together to build a "farm team" of experienced candidates ready to run for higher office when the opportunity or need presents itself. Below is a list of places where WIN Committees are already active. Let us know if you want to set up a WIN Committee in your area.

Contact Ben Murry ([Ben@IowaAFLCIO.org](mailto:Ben@IowaAFLCIO.org)) for information on Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Ft. Dodge, Mason City, and Waterloo.

Contact Tracy Leone ([Tracy@IowaAFLCIO.org](mailto:Tracy@IowaAFLCIO.org)) for information on Burlington, Clinton, Davenport, Dubuque, Iowa City, Lee County, and Muscatine.

### WIN Committee Meetings

**Burlington:** 2nd Monday of each month @ 6PM at IAM 1010 Hall: 16282 Highway 34, West Burlington.

**Cedar Rapids:** 4th Monday of each month @ 6PM at IBEW 405 Hall: 1211 Wiley Blvd SW

**Clinton:** 4th Monday of each month @ 6PM various locations

**Council Bluffs:** @ IAFF 15 Hall: 1827 S. 8th Street / Dates & Times Vary

**Davenport:** 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 6PM at UFCW 431 Hall: 2411 W. Central Park Ave.

**Dubuque:** 3rd Thursday of each month @ 6PM at ISEA Dubuque Regional Office: 3430 Dodge St. (lower level)

**Ft. Dodge:** 1st Tuesday of each month @ UFCW 6 Hall: 15 N. 12th Street (starting July 2017)

**Iowa City:** 3rd Tuesday of each month @ 6PM at the Iowa City Fed Hall: 940 S. Gilbert Court

**Lee County:** 4th Tuesday of each month @ 6PM at Keokuk Labor Temple: 301 Blondeau, Keokuk

**Mason City:** 4th Thursday of each month @ 6PM at North Iowa 9 Labor Temple: 510 S. Pennsylvania (starting July/August 2017)

**Muscatine:** 1st Tuesday of each month @ 6PM at the South Fire station community room: 2124 S. Stewart Road

**Sioux City:** 1st Monday of each month @ 6PM at UFCW 222: 3038 S. Lakeport

**Waterloo:** 4th Wednesday of each month @ 6PM at UAW 838 Hall: 2615 Washington St.

### 2017 Iowa AFL-CIO 61st Annual Convention

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 23-25, 2017 will be the dates for the IFL annual convention. The event will be held at Prairie Meadows Convention Center, the only union hotel in the Des Moines area.



There will be mailings of credentials to affiliated local unions in June. Please take time to review the mailing and consider sending delegates as we plan for the future.

Monday, August 21st, the Iowa State Council of Machinists will be hosting a Manufacturing Technician school at the Machinist Hall. The school will describe how this apprenticeship is being used as a new tactic to strengthen labor's position with employers and in organizing.

Tuesday, August 22nd, the Iowa Labor Liaison's will be hosting a Community Services Conference at Prairie Meadows to bring people up to date on their efforts to engage and involve labor in the community. A banquet and speakers will be held Tuesday evening.

IFL Convention will start on Wednesday morning. Highlights include nomination of officers, speakers and open evening.

We will continue on Thursday with the day capped off with the IFL Hall of Fame.

Friday will conclude the election with speakers and installation of officers.

Educate yourselves for the coming conflicts.

**For more information call 515-262-9571**