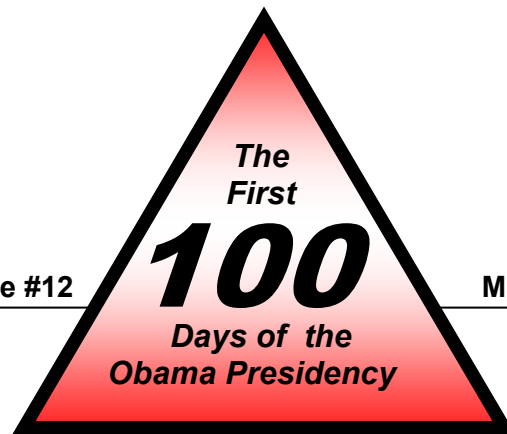


Battleground Bulletin

CWA Dist. 4, AFL-CIO

Labor 2008 Update #12

May 1, 2009



***Please Post this
Notice on Union
Bulletin Boards!***

At AT&T Mobilization Never Stops!

Yes, thousands of us are engaged in the fight of our lives at AT&T. Yes, we have to focus on winning a fair contract at AT&T first. But while we're mobilizing for our contract, we can't miss the opportunity to educate each other about the bigger picture.

We should ask ourselves *why* is AT&T pushing so hard to gut our contract now? *Why* do they think they can cut our health benefits so drastically? There's really three reasons:

- 1) Workers at Comcast, Time Warner, etc. are non-union
- 2) We don't have a sensible health care system in the U.S.
- 3) AT&T thinks we don't have the power to fight back

They're right about the first one. The fact that AT&T's competitors can make people work with expensive and inadequate health care, no pension, and lower wages, puts competitive pressure on AT&T who puts it on us!

Secondly, we need a sensible health care system that doesn't essentially reward companies that don't provide decent health care while penalizing those that do. We need health care reform that takes health insurance out of the bargaining equation.

They're dead wrong about the third thing. But they'll only believe it when we show them. In other words, we have to mobilize like never before!

It also means after we win, we must fight for real health care reform and organize the cable industry—and the fastest way to do that is by passing the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)!

What a Difference 100 Days Can Make!

In the last issue of the *Battleground Bulletin*, we checked off several pro-working-family actions of the new Administration. That was only a few weeks into it! Now after 100 days, still a short period of time to accomplish so much the list has grown. President Obama has:

Created the Task Force on Middle Class Working Families, so workers have a direct input into policy making;

Appointed Hilda Solis, a champion for workers, as Secretary of Labor; nominated former AFA, President, Linda Pachula, to sit on the National Mediation Board (NMB); nominated labor attorneys Craig Becker and Mark Pearce (who has handled many cases for CWA in New York) to the National Labor Relations Board; and appointed Mary Beth Maxwell, Executive Director of American Rights at Work (a key Labor ally) to Senior Advisor to Secretary Solis and as a member of Vice President Biden's Middle Class Task Force.

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Go to: www.standupforworkers.org
& sign the letter of support
for AT&T workers

100 Days

(Continued from page 1)

Protected America's workers by rescinding some of the most damaging anti-worker executive orders put in place by former President George W. Bush.

Signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to ensure that women earn equal pay for equal work;

Expanded the State Children's Health Insurance Program to cover an additional 4 million children;

Expanded FMLA benefits to Flight Attendants;

Signed an Executive Order which promotes the use of Project Labor Agreements on Federal construction projects—which means Union members in the Building Trades will have greater bargaining power and access to jobs;

Extended Unemployment benefits and discounted COBRA health insurance coverage for laid-off workers; and,

Signed the Economic Recovery Act which provides funding for the rebuilding of infrastructure, state and local governments, so they can avoid layoffs and continue to provide essential services, and for development of "green technologies" that will create good-paying jobs while protecting our environment; and set aside resources for real health care and education reform, among other things.

It's an impressive list of accomplishments for such a short period of time! There's obviously plenty more that needs to get done, primarily the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) and real Health Care Reform.

The business and insurance lobbies have stepped up their campaign against the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) and Health Care Reform, so we must step up our campaign for their passage.

Go to: www.freechoiceact.org/cwa and www.healthcarevoices.org to find out what you can do to help.



AT&T Bargaining Highlights Need for Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)

One of AT&T's retrogressive demands is to eliminate the card check and neutrality provision in our contract. That provision is based on the same principle as the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA): *The decision to organize a union and how to go about it must rest with workers, not with their employers.*

AT&T *had* been held up as an example of how the process should work—the employer stays out of it. Now the company wants to alter the contract so they can *reinsert* themselves into *our* decision. The ability for workers to form a union cannot be left to employers...We need the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) more than ever!

Spector the Defector

Is There Hope for the Guy After All?

A few weeks ago there was great shock and disappointment in Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) when he announced that he no longer fully supported the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)—a bill he helped write!

Earlier this week however, Sen. Specter announced that he was switching parties because he finally had to acknowledge that his philosophy was closer that the Democrats than the Republicans. Theoretically, Specter's switch would give the Democrats a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate once Al Franken (D-MN) is finally seated.

Since the Democrats overwhelmingly support EFCA, the hope would be Specter would once again follow his conscience (not his old party) and support EFCA. So far, he has indicated that he will not. It's our job to convince him that the Employee Free Choice Act is the only way to rebuild the middle class—and it doesn't cost a penny of tax dollars.