



# CWA District 6 Retiree Informer

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA



## The Civil Rights Act of 1964 a Fifty Year Anniversary

By Virginia Anderson-Dunbar, Chair CWA National Women's Committee

# Retiree Outreach

July 2nd marks the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by President Lyndon Baines Johnson; it was not the first attempt as there was the Civil Rights Act of 1957 September 9, 1957, which was primarily a voting rights bill. Although passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 seemed to indicate a growing federal commitment to the cause of civil rights, the legislation was limited. Because of the ways in which it had been changed, the government had difficulty enforcing it. Passage of the bill showed the willingness of national leaders to support, to varying degrees, the cause of civil rights. At the time, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was 28 years old and a developing leader in the civil rights movement; he spoke out against white supremacists.

Segregationists had burned African-American churches, centers of education and organizing related to voter registration, and physically attacked African Americans, including women, who were activists. King sent a telegram to President Eisenhower to make a speech to the South, asking him to use "the weight of your great office to point out to the people of the South the moral nature of the problem". Eisenhower responded, "I don't know what another speech would do about the thing right now."

The Civil Rights Movement continued to expand, with protesters leading non-violent demonstrations to mark their cause. President John F. Kennedy called for a new bill in his televised civil rights speech of June 11, 1963, in which he

asked for legislation "giving all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public—hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores, and similar establishments," as well as "greater protection for the right to vote." Kennedy delivered this speech following a series of protests from the African-American community, most notably the Birmingham campaign, which concluded in May 1963. In the summer of 1963, various parts of the civil rights movement collaborated to run voter education and voter registration drives in Mississippi. During Freedom Summer in 1964, hundreds of students from the North went there to participate in voter drives and community organizing. The media cover-

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## We All Deserve to Breathe Free

By Claude Cummings, Jr., Vice President Communications Workers of America District 6



Claude Cummings Jr., Vice President, CWA District 6

*"We must be ready to fight discrimination"*

As the Calendar turns to July we celebrate the birth of our nation on Independence Day and the great struggle that took place for us to enjoy the freedom we do today. July 2<sup>nd</sup> this year marked another anniversary that went a long way in ensuring freedom for all American Citizens and that was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Johnson signing into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We all know this Country has come a long way in since 1964. Unfortunately as I write this article today there are those who would like to take us back to 1964 as we constantly see an agenda pushed to limit the rights of citizens to vote, and go back to the days of Jim Crow laws. As Union Members and Retirees we must be ready to fight discrimination in any form. Discrimination is a divisive tactic used to ostracize those of us who may be different than the main stream whether, if we join a union, or it is how we look, the God we worship, or who we choose to love to name just a few. As good unionist and good citizens we must remain ever vigilant of those who use the differences amongst us to cre-

ate power for the few who wish to pursue an agenda of greed and division, divide and conquer for their own purpose or agenda. As we celebrate the birth of our nation, the great melting pot, I am reminded of the inscription at the Statue of Liberty so eloquently penned by poet Emma Lazarus "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, Send these, the homeless, tempest tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door." I think of the excitement immigrants to this Country must have felt as they landed on our shores and started their new lives, yet we know that a large segment of our population did not come here of their free will and their descendants fought for the right to breathe free as described in the passage above. I also wonder if the Statue of Liberty was placed in Texas, New Mexico or Arizona if it would have the same inscription. We have certainly come a long way since the 1960's but to think the mission is completed and that we live in a perfect society free of intoler-

ance is certainly sticking your head in the sand. Civil Rights are not just an agenda for those amongst us who happen to be of African-American heritage it is a human rights issue. If we are to enjoy the freedom we celebrate on Independence Day than truly all of us must receive equal treatment and be allowed to partake in the freedoms of this great land. I am reminded of a speech given by Lyndon Johnson in 1972, just about a month before his death and an excerpt from that speech, "We know there's injustice. We know there's intolerance. We know there is discrimination and hate and suspicion. We know there's division among us. But there is a larger truth. We have proved that great progress is possible. We know how much still remains to be done. And if our hearts are right, and if courage remains our constant companion, then, my fellow Americans, I am confident, we shall overcome." Very well put by President Johnson and I believe the quote is as relevant today, we must never let our guard down and we must all truly breathe free.

Share the news and build the cause. If you know a CWA Retiree who does not have internet access please print them a copy of this newsletter.

## The American Dream and Middle Class Slipping Away

By Jim Kolve, CWA Retiree Activist

A global economy: three simple words uttered by business leaders today utilized for the soul purpose of business decisions that lead to outsourcing. In America today good jobs and the hope of the American dream find themselves drip, dripping away like a leaky faucet. The wrench needed to stop that leak seems to be missing. The cause is a business decisions to reduce costs at every turn by shipping away jobs overseas to low wage countries. Any jobs that could be outsourced seem to be headed to low wage countries. Drip, drip, drip each job lost fills the pool of unemployed and increases the number of Americans on food stamps. Workers getting food stamps have gone from 22 million Americans 10 years ago to 47 million Americans today. Wow what a leak; drip, drip, drip.

Let's look at the spigot that sent hundreds and hundreds of thousands of jobs overseas a trade deal called NAFTA. Yes the North American Free Trade Agreement sent jobs mostly in manufacturing to low wage countries turning workers into job seekers. As the success of business developed more trade deals, more jobs in the service sector flew the coop. Now one more trade deal is working its way through the system. The Trans Pacific Partnership or TPP for short is just another way to loosen the faucet dripping away good American jobs.

We must fix the leak that has drained America of middle class jobs. We must work to replace the faulty assumption that America cannot compete with our "high wages." Pure greed on the part of American business leaders must balance out the need for jobs in our

country. Granting high wages for business leaders who ship jobs overseas should not be rewarded. If we allow our politicians and business leaders to continue the race to the bottom on wages without the realization on the true cost to our nation our middle class will sink into the puddle of extinction.

I believe to fix the leak of middle class job loss, we must quit rewarding companies that ship jobs overseas and put incentives in place to bring those jobs back. Only then can most Americans again relive the dream of a strong mid-



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## Benefit Representative Phone Line Issues

### Attention All Retirees using the Retiree Benefit Representative Line

We have been experiencing some technical difficulties with the Retiree Benefit Representative telephone line in the last week. If you have tried to reach us and failed we ask that you

try again. If you have left a message and did not get a return call, please try again. We apologize for any difficulties this may have caused you and believe this issue has been cleared up.

**The number for the CWA District 6 Retiree Benefit Representative is 314-965-9024**

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For the latest breaking news that all CWA Retirees need to know follow us on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CWAD6RetireeOutreach/>

# Civil Rights Act of 1964

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age and violent backlash, with the murders of three civil rights workers near Philadelphia, Mississippi, contributed to national support for civil rights legislation.

After Kennedy's assassination, President Lyndon B. Johnson helped secure passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, making racial discrimination and segregation illegal, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which abolished the poll tax and other means of keeping blacks and poor people from registering to vote and voting, established record-keeping and oversight, and provided for federal enforcement in areas with documented patterns of discrimination. On June 11, 1963, President Kennedy intervened when Alabama Governor George Wallace blocked the doorway to the University of Alabama to stop two African American students, Vivian Malone and James Hood, from attending. Wallace moved aside only after being confronted by Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach and the Alabama National Guard, which had just been federalized by order of the President. That evening Kennedy gave his famous civil rights address on national television and radio, launching his initiative for civil rights legislation—to provide equal access to public schools and

other facilities, and greater protection of voting rights. His proposals became part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The day ended with the murder of a NAACP leader, Medgar Evers, in front of his home in Mississippi.

Earlier, Kennedy had signed the executive order creating the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women on December 14, 1961. Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt led the commission. The Commission statistics revealed that women were also experiencing discrimination; their final report documenting legal and cultural barriers was issued in October 1962. Further, on June 10, 1963, Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act of 1963, a federal law amending the Fair Labor Standards Act, aimed at abolishing wage disparity based on sex.

Over a hundred thousand, predominantly African Americans gathered in Washington for the civil rights March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963. Kennedy feared the March would have a negative effect on the prospects for the civil rights bills in Congress, and declined an invitation to speak. He turned over some of the details of the government's involvement to the Dept. of Justice, which channeled hundreds of thousands of dollars to the six sponsors of the March, including the N.A.A.C.P. and Martin Luther King's Southern

Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

To ensure a peaceful demonstration, the organizers and the President personally edited speeches which were inflammatory and agreed the March would be held on a Wednesday and would be over at 4:00 pm. Thousands of troops were placed on standby. Kennedy watched King's speech on TV and was very impressed. The March was considered a "triumph of managed protest", and not one arrest relating to the demonstration occurred. Afterwards, the March leaders accepted an invitation to the White House to meet with Kennedy and photos were taken. Kennedy felt the March was a victory for him as well and bolstered the chances for his civil rights bill.

Nevertheless, the struggle was far from over. Three weeks later, a bomb exploded on Sunday, September 15 at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham; by the end of the day, four African American children had died in the explosion and two other children shot to death in the aftermath. Due to this resurgent violence, the civil rights legislation underwent some drastic amendments that critically endangered any prospects for passage of the bill, to the outrage of the president. Kennedy called the congress-

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# One Women's Opinion on Hobby Lobby

By Sonja Gholston-Byrd, President St. Louis Chapter Coalition of Labor Union Women

After reading various articles since the Supreme Court decision in the Hobby Lobby case was announced complicity is and was the questionable and determining factor for the SCOTUS conclusion. I believe if the question was asked of Hobby Lobby "Do you think that it is wrong to provide health insurance?" I'm sure their response would be "No, however to provide contraceptives due to "their" religious beliefs this would be a sin." Hobby Lobby based its case on the ruling of **Thomas v. Review Board** (1981). Thomas worked in Machinery Company that produces tank turrets. Thomas refused to work on military tank production due to his religious beliefs and was terminated. When Thomas' unemployment claims were denied by the company the matter was decided by the Indiana Supreme Court in Thomas' favor. This was due to Thomas' beliefs that making steel that would go into a tank was in itself sinful act - complicity with sin. The argument before the court was that this logic applies to the Green family (owners of Hobby Lobby). However I would like to offer a different view of Hobby Lobby and their actions of the few years while reminding you that the employees' daily work offers no immoral, unethical or detrimental value to community or workers

as Hobby Lobby is a highly profitable retail chain that sells arts and crafts to its patrons. On the softer side of things, the Green family has no moral objection to the use of 16 of 20 preventive contraceptives (although emergency contraceptive pills Plan B and Ella and copper and hormonal intrauterine device are excluded from it's medical coverage plans) required in the Affordable Care Act mandate and they will continue to provide those contraceptives for its employees. Documents filed with the Department of Labor in December 2012 – three months after the company's owner filed their lawsuit – show that the Hobby Lobby 401(k) employee retirement plan held more \$73 million in mutual funds with investment in companies that produce emergency contraceptive pills, intrauterine devices and drugs commonly used in abortions. Hobby Lobby made large matching contribution to their company-sponsored 401(k). In a brief filed with the Supreme Court, the Greens object to covering Plan B, Ella, and IUDs because they claim that these products can prevent a fertilized egg from implanting in a woman's uterus—a process the Greens consider abortion. But researchers reject the notion that emergency contraceptive pills prevent implantation the implantation of a fertilized egg.

Instead, they work by delaying ovulation or making it harder for sperm to swim to the egg. The Green's contention that the pills cause abortions is a central pillar of their argument for gutting the contraception mandate. Yet, for years, Hobby Lobby's health insurance plans did cover Plan B and Ella. It was only in 2012, when the Greens considered filing a lawsuit against the Affordable Care Act mandate, that they dropped these drugs from the plan. It is certainly a point of extreme irony that the owners of Hobby Lobby believe it sinful to provide their employees with these medications yet take the profits from their investments in the Companies that produce them. I believe the Green's personally have right to their religious beliefs, but I also believe they have a corporate responsibility under the law, to abide by the provisions set forth in the Affordable Care Act. I think this is just another case of intrusion into women's reproductive rights. I think if it starts here with this decision where else might it lead? What if a Corporate Leader determines it is against their beliefs that visiting a doctor is a sinful act? Does that remove the employer from their obligation to provide healthcare coverage? I believe this decision may just be the beginning of an effort to overturn the Affordable Care Act and that truly may be the biggest sin of all.

*Problems or questions with your benefit plan?*

You can contact the CWA District 6 Retiree Outreach Benefit Coordinator at  
314.965.9024 or e-mail at [D6Retirees@gmail.com](mailto:D6Retirees@gmail.com)

## One Retirees Opinion

In my years of service to the Members of CWA I have had like most of you numerous opportunities to be involved in political campaigns. Some were successful while others not. Pretty much standard as to how our process works. What has always astounded me was the apathy of the American voter. In a day and age when 64% of eligible voters is considered a historic high turnout you can see why this may be seen as puzzling. I sometimes would joke around with my friends about this issue with a statement that I would wish I was the only person in the country who would vote on election day so that I would always get my way, but in reality you have to question is our democracy really strong when in the best case scenario 35% of our citizenship does not engage in the process. This month we celebrate our Independence Day and the birth of our nation yet one may wonder is our democracy safe if a large percentage of us choose not to participate. We may complain about our leadership and the direction our Government leads us yet one or two times a year when we are asked to do our civic duty in a best case scenario a little more than half of us choose to voice

our preferences. I believe citizenship in this Country comes with obligations and we all pay a "price" of sorts to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave. If you work you pay taxes, if you are retired and earn income you pay taxes, if you shop you pay taxes, if you own property you pay taxes, millions of our young throughout history have paid or were willing to pay the ultimate price for our democracy by serving our military, yet this one basic civil duty of casting our vote seems to be an obligation far too many of us choose to ignore. Now I know the targeted audience that reads this newsletter statistically votes at an exceptionally high rate in all elections and if you look at who is working the polls on election day at least in my experience it seems to be mainly retirees, so my question is where is the disconnect with younger voters? Are the lives of our young and working age citizens so complicated or so busy they cannot take the time to vote or is there a percentage of us who feel disenfranchised or feel their opinion will not make a difference? I suspect it could be a combination of those reasons and others we may not even consider. Yet I think as Re-

tirees if there is only one thing we can pass down to the generations behind us it is the importance of participating in our democracy at every opportunity. Far too often we learn these lessons later in life and many miss opportunities to weigh in on decisions of historic importance. I know of many families who go to the polls together and set the example for younger voters and I think this is just one way to stress the importance of doing this civic duty. Regardless of the method if we as Retirees can stress to our family and friends the importance of voting to the point where it becomes a habit and this is done everywhere I believe we may see the participation rate increase. At least that is my hope! My name is Kevin Kujawa and that is One Retirees Opinion.



## Editors Note

This newsletter is published for the purpose of keeping CWA District 6 Retirees informed and educated on issues you may face in retirement as well as to keep you current with CWA. IF you have an article or story you would like to see published please do not hesitate to contact us and we will do our best to meet your request. You can send your request or comments to [D6retirees@gmail.com](mailto:D6retirees@gmail.com) or you can leave a message on our phone line at 314-965-9024.

## Attention AT&T Medicare Eligible Retirees

In July, the AON Retiree Health Exchange will start with Education Calls. If you have not heard from AON and are 65 years of age or older please call and inquire about your eligibility to participate in this exchange. If you retired before September 1, 1992 you should be allowed to keep your current benefits as they exist today. If you are not sure

when your Education Appointment, need to re-schedule, or have not confirmed your appointment please call AON at 800-928-8027. From the information we were given this Education Appointment is an important part of the process and unless you have confirmed your appointment they will not attempt to call you which may jeopardize

your ability to enroll in the new benefit plan for 2015. Also, we have learned that the mailing which has your Education Appointment on it also states that this is an "advertisement". In the future to avoid any confusion I would recommend that you open and read all correspondence from AON. We will put forth more information as we receive it.

### News from around the web

#### Robert Reich Explains Americas Koch Problem

[http://front.moveon.org/robert-reich-explains-americas-koch-problem/#.U7LRH\\_ldWSq](http://front.moveon.org/robert-reich-explains-americas-koch-problem/#.U7LRH_ldWSq)

#### ATT/Directv face Congressional hearing doubleheader

[http://cwa-union.org/news/entry/att\\_directtv\\_face\\_congressional\\_hearing\\_double\\_header#.U7LRkfldWSo](http://cwa-union.org/news/entry/att_directtv_face_congressional_hearing_double_header#.U7LRkfldWSo)

#### The New Soft Money

[http://www.cwa-union.org/news/entry/the\\_new\\_soft\\_money#.U7LSXPldWSq](http://www.cwa-union.org/news/entry/the_new_soft_money#.U7LSXPldWSq)

#### U. S. Ranks Among the Worlds Worst Labor Violators

[http://www.cwa-union.org/news/entry/shame\\_us\\_ranks\\_among\\_worlds\\_worst\\_labor\\_violators#.U7LS8fldWSp](http://www.cwa-union.org/news/entry/shame_us_ranks_among_worlds_worst_labor_violators#.U7LS8fldWSp)

# Civil Rights Act of 1964

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sional leaders to the White House and by the following day the original bill, without the additions, had enough votes to get it out of the House committee.

The resulting law authorized federal action against segregation in public accommodations, public facilities, and employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. The law was passed

during a period of great strength for the civil rights movement, and President Lyndon Johnson persuaded many reluctant members of Congress to support the law.

Though I was only 7 years at the time of the first Bill in enacted 1957, and 13 years old when President Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963 I remember it like yesterday. He was what I felt to be the greatest President of my life

time. He attempted to make changes not only for people of "Color" but for all "Americans".

The most important thing for us to remember is we have the same rights' we all deserve the same respect.

We are one; America.

## STATEMENT BY THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA ON THE SUPREME COURT'S HARRIS V. QUINN DECISION

Jun 30, 2014

Washington, D.C. -- Today's Harris v. Quinn decision by the U.S. Supreme Court undermines the ability of direct care workers to collectively bargain, by determining that these workers are "partial public employees" and may not be required to pay representation fees.

This decision may affect hundreds of thousands of direct care workers from California to New York. The case was brought by the National Right to Work

Legal Defense Foundation, whose goal is to eliminate all bargaining rights for U.S working women and men. That's completely out of step with every other global democracy.

It's ironic. Two-thirds of all U.S. public workers currently have no collective bargaining rights. The public policy question we should be considering is 'why is the U.S. the only democracy in the world that is cutting workers' rights?'

In New Jersey, direct care providers,

employed by the New Jersey Department of Human Services, are represented by CWA Local 1037. This year workers bargained and ratified a new contract that compensates workers for mandatory trainings, defines an eight-hour day and provides additional pay for workers caring for children with special needs. These direct care workers will continue to work to join together, bargain collectively and improve their lives.

If you know a fellow CWA Retiree who is not receiving this newsletter please have them got to the District 6 Website at <http://district6.cwa-union.org/> and hit the For Retirees Tab to subscribe.

# Benefit Plan Contact Numbers

Verizon 855-489-2367

AT&T 877-722-0020

Avaya 800-526-8056

Lucent Aetna POS 800-872-7136

Blue Cross/Blue Shield (Oklahoma) 800-6610083

HMO Medicare Option 888-232-4111

Aon Hewitt Retiree Health Exchange 800-928-8027