



Laborers' International Union of North America

Midwest Regional Office

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Federal Legislative Update

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2+-Year Highway Bill Passes Congress

Congress waited until nearly the last possible moment to pass a highway bill last week. After nine extensions, Congress finally passed MAP-21, a long-term transportation bill that will give state departments of transportation some stability in funding through September 2014.

The \$105 billion bi-partisan bill, a deal struck between both chambers in a conference committee, passed the House 373-52 and the Senate 74-19. Without it, collection of federal gas taxes would have stopped and federally-funded road projects would have been shut down, putting tens of thousands out of work. The bill maintains Fiscal Year 2012 federal funding levels for two years, combines 90 different federal transportation programs into 30 and streamlines environmental processes to speed up construction. The final package also included extensions of current student loan rates for one year, direction of the bulk of penalties from the BP oil spill to Gulf Coast states and extension of the federal Flood Insurance Program until 2017. It did not, as Republicans had wanted, force Presidential approval of the Keystone XL pipeline project.

Davis-Bacon and PLA Attacks Continue

Conservative attacks on community-supporting Davis-Bacon wage requirements and Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) have continued in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Conservative Republicans have attempted to eliminate Davis-Bacon wage protections from various federal construction programs six times since taking control of the U.S. House. Davis-Bacon requires payment of the wages that prevail in the county where federally-funded construction occurs. Every anti-Davis-Bacon amendment failed so far because every Democrat and more than four dozen Republicans voted to protect wage requirement.

The difference between victory and defeat remains razor thin in the case of PLA votes. There have been five votes on federal PLAs in the U.S. House this Congress. One anti-PLA amendment lost on a tie vote while another was adopted with only a two-vote margin. Again, all Democrats except one, Cong. Dan Boren (D-OK), supported the union position on PLAs while typically fewer than 30 Republicans voted with Labor. Please see the attached voting record to see how your Representatives and Senators on all Davis-Bacon, PLA and other votes this Congress.

NLRB Forges Ahead to Educate Workers' on Their Rights Despite Road Blocks

In December of last year we reported that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a final rule requiring most private sector employers, including labor unions, to notify employees of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act by posting a notice similar to those required by other laws protecting workers. Employers were required to begin posting the notice by January 31, 2012. However, because district courts have made conflicting decisions in cases regarding the new requirement, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals has temporarily enjoined the NLRB's rule. The NLRB, therefore, will not be implementing the new rule until the Court makes a decision.

Despite this road block the Board has forged ahead with other methods to educate workers about their rights in the workplace. In mid-June they launched a new webpage describing the rights of employees to act together for their mutual aid and protection, even if they are not in a union. You can visit the interactive map that includes examples of protected concerted activity at this address: nlrb.gov/concerted-activity.