

Federation news

November 2011



JOBS
NOT
CUTS

A Better Idea

Unions turn up the heat in discussions about job creation and America's widening income gap



Chicago
Federation
of Labor

Aldermen, community call for living wages at airports

Twenty Chicago aldermen, area community leaders, and more than 300 O'Hare and Midway airport concessions workers and allies rallied at City Hall recently as aldermen introduced the Stable Jobs, Stable Airports Ordinance to ensure stability for O'Hare and Midway passengers, City revenue, and Chicago communities as Chicago puts airport concession contracts worth \$2.5 billion out to bid. Thirty one aldermen have signed on as cosponsors of the ordinance.

"The last thing the City of Chicago needs is another set of unemployed workers," said Ald. Jason Ervin (28th), lead sponsor of the ordinance. "With 84 million passengers passing through our airports in Chicago, with sales that

are six times as much per square foot as any other place in the City of Chicago, and with the bulk of these concessions controlled by multinational corporations that take profits away from the City of Chicago, we have to stand up and act."

In the coming months more than 1,500 Chicago residents could be thrown out of work at O'Hare and Midway airports as the City cuts multi-billion dollar deals with big multinational companies in the largest turnover of concessions in Chicago's history.

"I need my job. Where will I go? I need to support my family. I've worked here [at O'Hare] for 23 years. What will I do if I lose my job?" said Aida Olavarria, an O'Hare food service worker and resident of Chicago's Humboldt Park community.

While 70 percent of O'Hare and Midway concessions are controlled by multinational companies based overseas, they have used a loophole to evade Chicago's "living wage" of \$11.18 per hour for contractors, pocketing millions of dollars that should go to Chicago workers

and communities.

"It troubles me to see so many people struggling to pay for basic things like food or rent, while these big corporations are pocketing millions," said Jerry Ward, a retail worker at Midway Airport.

Around the country 18 other airports - including LAX, JFK, Miami, and Cleveland - have utilized standards to protect workers and communities, ensure smooth operations for travelers, and/or protect airport revenue from disruptions during big contract turnovers.

The Stable Jobs Stable Airports ordinance would close the loophole that has enabled airport contracts to evade Chicago's living wage, ensure job stability for thousands of workers, and protect airport revenue from disruptions as new contractors take over.

Aldermen Ervin, Thompson, O'Shea, Chandler, Maldonado, Pawar, Osterman, Cappleman, Pope, Sposato, Foulkes, Cochran, Moreno, Waguespack, Arena, Moore, Graham, Reboyras, Munoz, and Cullerton have voiced their support for the ordinance.

Watch workers speak at the City Hall press conference. Visit www.chicagolabor.org/video or scan this code using your smartphone's QR reader:



Chicago unions support 'Occupy' movements

The Chicago Federation of Labor and other Chicago area unions support the Occupy Chicago movement. Union members have been marching and rallying in solidarity calling for greater attention to the issue of wealth inequality in this country, an issue the labor movement has been passionate about as the middle class continues to get small and smaller.

Last year, the Chicago Federation of Labor and its affiliates led a massive march through Chicago's financial district calling for Wall Street to pay for

the damage it caused this country through recklessness and lack of regulation.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka issued a statement last month in support of the movement. "We support the protesters in their determination to hold Wall Street accountable and create good jobs," said Trumka. "We are proud that today on Wall Street, bus drivers, painters, nurses and utility workers are joining students and homeowners, the unemployed and the underemployed to call for fundamental change."

Watch AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka's video message about the Occupy Wall Street movement at www.chicagolabor.org/video or by scanning the QR code using your smartphone:



Jobs, not Cuts

Hundreds of union members rallied at Federal Plaza calling for “jobs, not cuts” on October 14th as part of a week of action across the country. They were joined by activists and members of MoveOn.org before marching over to join the protestors with Occupy Chicago in the financial district.

Earlier that week, thousands of working men and women rallied with “Take Back Chicago,” a grassroots coalition of community, religious, labor and other groups, calling for the banking industry to create jobs by lending to small businesses, and invest in communities and schools that are feeling the effects of the recession they caused.



Top: Union and community activists call for an end to corporate greed; Right: CFL Secretary-Treasurer Bob Reiter speaks to the crowd.



Joe Pijanowski (IAM 126) and Joe Notaro (IBEW 9) support the action.

For more photos visit www.chicagolabor.org/photos or scan the QR code using your smartphone:





Nearly 1 in 10 Chicago bridges structurally deficient

Robert Boskovich, Iron Workers, talks about needed bridge repairs across Chicago

On the heels of the sudden closure of a major commuting bridge in Louisville, KY, a new report shows that Chicago has some of the worst bridges among metropolitan areas its size, as determined by percentage of bridges rated as “structurally deficient,” according to a new report from Transportation for America.

In Chicago, an average of 71 drivers cross a deficient bridge every second, the study found. *The Fix We’re In For: The State of Our Metro-Area Bridges*, ranks 102 metro areas in three population categories based on the percentage of deficient bridges.

“Across the State of Illinois there are 2,239 deficient bridges with more than 8.1 million vehicles crossing those bridges every day. Meanwhile, 9.9 percent of Illinoisans are unemployed, with numbers far higher in the building and construction trades,” said Jorge Ramirez, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor. “We need a long-term commitment from the federal government to make our roads and

bridges safer and create jobs for people hit hardest by the recession.”

The report found that Pittsburgh, PA had the highest percentage of deficient bridges (30.4 percent) for a metro area with a population of over 2 million (and overall). Oklahoma City, OK (19.8 percent) topped the chart for metro areas between 1-2 million, as did Tulsa, OK (27.5 percent) for metro areas between 500,000-1 million.

At the other end of the spectrum, the metro areas that had the smallest percentage of deficient bridges are: New York, NY (9.8 percent) for the largest metro areas; Raleigh, NC (9.7 percent) for mid-sized metro areas; and Greensboro, NC (16.0 percent) for smaller metro areas.

“There are more deficient bridges in our metropolitan areas than there are McDonald’s restaurants in the entire country,” said James Corless, director of Transportation for America, 18,239 versus roughly 14,000 McDonald’s. “These metropolitan-area bridges are most costly and difficult to fix, but they also are the most urgent, because they carry such a large share of the nation’s people and goods.”

Nearly 70,000 bridges nationwide are rated “structurally deficient” and are in need of substantial repair or replacement, according to federal data. Metropolitan-area bridges carry 75 percent of the trips that are made on structurally

deficient bridges, he noted.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that the backlog of potentially dangerous bridges would cost \$70.9 billion to eliminate, while the federal outlay for bridges amounts to slightly more than \$5 billion per year.

Congress has repeatedly declared the condition and safety of America’s bridges to be of national significance. However, the current federal program falls short of the need, even as it allows states to shift funds from maintenance toward new construction, regardless of whether they can show progress toward rehabilitating deficient bridges.

Some states have worked hard to address the problem and have seen their backlog of deficient bridges shrink in number. However, two problems continue to persist: Existing federal programs offer no real incentives or assurances that aging bridges will actually get fixed; and the current level of investment is nowhere near what is needed to keep up with our rapidly growing backlog of aging bridges.

“The dangerous state of our bridges is a problem that is not going away,” said Brian Imus, State Director, Illinois PIRG “Most of the nation’s bridges were designed to last 50 years, and today, roughly a third are already 50 years or older, and the average age of bridges nationally is 42 years.”

Watch a video on Chicago’s bridges at www.chicagolabor.org/video or by scanning this QR code using your smartphone:



Labor Board blocks circumvention of CTU agreement

The Illinois Education Labor Relations Board (IELRB) struck a blow against the tactics used by the Chicago Board of Education to circumvent its collective bargaining agreement with the Chicago Teachers Union in its push for a “longer school day” by unanimously voting to seek injunctive relief. Members of the labor board voted 5-0 to seek an injunction blocking the program from taking effect this year. If granted, 9 schools that have currently extended their school day will revert to their previous schedule as outlined in the CTU contract and no other elementary school can amend its school hours.

The IELRB is the state agency administering the Illinois Education Labor Relations Act, which establishes the right of educational employees to organize and bargain collectively. The IELRB ruling now goes to the Illinois attorney general’s office which will petition a circuit court judge for injunction.

“This is a victory for labor and a

victory for the law,” said CTU President Karen GJ Lewis. “We have repeatedly asked them to settle this case; to sit down and discuss this process; and to help us plan for a longer, better school day next year when this program goes system wide for the 2012/2013 school year,” she continued. “Instead they engaged in illegal, immoral behavior that threatened the future of collective bargaining and of our union. I commend the teachers and school employees who took a stand against this behavior. Today, organized labor won.”

The victory comes weeks after CTU officials alleged CPS illegally cast waiver votes in 13 elementary schools by inducing support for a longer school day and threatening and coercing teachers to vote in favor of the proposal in order to receive a mere one-time stipend up to \$1,250 instead of about \$6,200 on average salary they would have received throughout the school year had CPS honored their labor contract.

Cullerton visits Executive Board



Illinois State Senate President John Cullerton addressed the members of the CFL Executive Board at the group’s November meeting. Taking a break from the fall veto session in Springfield, President Cullerton gave updates on legislative activity impacting working families, including the smart grid infrastructure investment, gaming expansion, and proposed pension changes. President Cullerton said he is sponsoring a bill to help the long-stalled Tenaska clean coal facility in downstate Illinois.

Service and support workers at Chicago public schools stand with teachers

“We represent the employees of Chicago Public Schools who are not teachers. We are the Aides, Security Guards, Custodians, Engineers, Lunchroom Workers and all the other workers who are responsible for Chicago’s children from the moment they step on to the school grounds in the morning until they leave at the end of the day.

We are professionals who make sure that the school buildings work, are clean, that our children are safe and that they are fed. When it comes to Chicago’s kids, we are where the rubber meets the road.

We’re proud of the work we do and think that the children of Chicago are serious business and should be treated in that fashion. We ask that the Board of Education take a more constructive and serious approach with us on addressing our mutual issues.

The Administration thus far has chosen to engage in a media campaign against the teachers, rather than thoughtful

negotiations, to the detriment of the entire community. We are all in this together, and are all in this for the children that we are here to support. There has yet to be a proposal from the administration across the bargaining table for a longer school day – we first read about it in the newspaper rather than hearing about it from the administrations’ negotiators.

We didn’t create the length of the school day, the Board of Education did. We’re willing to negotiate extending the school day, but this takes good faith negotiations, not more Board of Education press statements and confrontational rhetoric and tactics. Our children deserve a respectful and thoughtful approach.”

Signed by: Henry Tamarin, President of UNITE HERE Local 1, Tallib-Din Ziyad, Vice President of SEIU Local 73, William Iacullo, President of Operating Engineers Local 143-143B, Michael Nugent, Business Representative of IBEW 134, and Timothy Healy, Vice President of SEIU Local 1.

IUOE’s Sweeney appointed to Tollway Board

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn has appointed James M. Sweeney, president-business manager of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150 and Chicago Federation of Labor Executive Board member, to the Illinois Toll Highway Authority Board of Directors.

“The role of the Illinois Toll Highway Authority is to oversee a safe and efficient network of roads that benefits users and fosters economic vitality in the region, and in the environment of crumbling roads and funding shortfalls, the tollway is one of the most viable means we have to modernize the transportation network around Chicago and Northern Illinois,” said Sweeney.

“By addressing existing needs and strategically expanding the system, we can reduce the congestion that costs individuals valuable time and money and which has sent commercial traffic away from Northern Illinois,” he added.



Unions Approve Comprehensive Wellness Program for City of Chicago Employees and Families

Members of the Chicago Labor Management Cooperation Committee (LMCC) voted to approve the comprehensive wellness program developed jointly by labor and city officials. The program will offer free wellness services, check-ups, and counseling for city workers, and will save taxpayers \$100 million.

The program was announced jointly by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Federation of Labor President Jorge Ramirez.

“With this partnership, we are able to save more than \$100 million for taxpayers and improve the lives of City workers,” said Mayor Emanuel. “This innovative program is only possible with the partnership of our partners in labor unions, and will help our workers and their families live healthier lives while greatly reducing the amount spent on health insurance for city workers.”

Wellness is an issue that was highlighted by the Mayor Emanuel and labor union leaders on the campaign, and is

one of the first issues that was discussed between the Administration and labor. The program was developed in a series of meetings over the last few months, and is designed to keep healthy people healthy, discover and address critical health needs in others, and help people who are sick manage their chronic conditions.

“I am pleased to have worked with the Mayor to craft a program that works for Chicago employees and the people of the city,” said Jorge Ramirez, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor. “The health and wellbeing of our members and their families is essential to the city’s success in the future, and we are committed to working with the Mayor to implement this program swiftly and effectively.”

“As a whole, the unions and the members they represent see the value in this investment in their wellbeing,” added Ramirez. “I want to commend and recognize those labor leaders for their leadership and hard work.”

Employees and eligible spouses

will be able to opt into the program for no cost. They will receive an annual health exam, follow-up phone calls from a medical provider, and free instruction on key areas of concern or focus. Employees who choose not to participate in the program will pay an extra \$50 per month in health care premiums; these fees will fund the program. At all times, the privacy of the employees and their families will be respected.

The health screenings will look for areas of immediate concern – hypertension, high cholesterol, smoking, diabetes – and will help develop a course of action that is appropriate for the patient. Previous experiences have shown that, in the first year of such a program, about three percent of those screened will avoid a life threatening incident or death.

The program will also include optional programs for children, including instruction on common afflictions such as asthma.

The program is expected to begin as soon as possible.

AFL-CIO President talks jobs, social justice in Chicago



“America does not have a debt crisis, it has a jobs crisis,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka at an address sponsored by the Chicago Federation of Labor and the Chicago Kent College of Law’s Institute for Law and the Workplace.

Speaking before a group of several hundred union leaders in Chicago’s, labor law professionals, elected leaders and law students in the West Loop, the head of the 12 million member labor federation made a strong case for rebuilding the American middle class through investment, sensible trade and tax policies and a focus on social justice.

Having worked through college and law school in the Pennsylvania coal mines before rising through the ranks of the United Mine Workers and eventually the AFL-CIO, Trumka described the decline in wages, jobs in manufacturing and other sectors, middle class families and union density during the last sixty years. During that same period, the wealthiest Americans have grown richer and the income gap between rich and poor larger than ever. “The rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer and the middle class is on life support,” said Trumka.

Saying President Barack Obama’s jobs bill puts America on the right path, he offered six additional ways Congress should act to put America back to work:

1. Rebuild America’s schools and transportation and energy systems
2. Revive U.S. manufacturing and stop exporting good jobs overseas
3. Put people to work doing work that needs to be done in local communities
4. Help federal, state, and local governments avoid more layoffs and cutbacks of public services
5. Help fill the massive shortfall of consumer demand by extending unemployment benefits and keeping homeowners in their homes
6. Reform Wall Street so that it helps Main Street create jobs

Less than a mile away from the event, demonstrators from “Occupy Chicago” were holding a constant vigil in the financial district in solidarity with “Occupy Wall Street” and other demonstrations across the country. Trumka, who said the fight for the labor movement is a fight for social justice, said the protestors are standing up for things many of Americans believe.



Top: AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka speaks to the crowd of union leaders, elected officials and labor lawyers Photos courtesy of Orlando Velez

Arbitrator rules that state layoffs, closures violate union contract

An independent third-party arbitrator has ruled that the State of Illinois is violating the terms of a collective bargaining agreement by laying off more than 1,900 state employees and closing seven state facilities, including three psychiatric hospitals, two developmental centers, a prison and a juvenile detention center.

“This order is unequivocal. Governor Quinn should rescind all threatened layoffs and closures,” said AFSCME Council 31 executive director Henry Bayer. “Failure to do so will not only harm the vital public services state employees provide, it will expose the state to significant damages for lost wages, benefits and other costs incurred as a result of the governor’s irresponsible actions.”

In addition to violating the terms of an agreement reached in 2010 between AFSCME Council 31 and the State of Illinois, Arbitrator Edwin Benn also underscored the economic harm the state’s threatened layoffs and closures would cause.

“This recession has shown me all too well what happens when employees are laid off in the kind of economic conditions now stressing the country and Illinois ... a high potential of foreclosures and evictions from their homes and residences for not being able to pay their mortgage or rent, loss of health insurance, loss and lack of medical care and the overall trauma of being unemployed in a very unforgiving economy.”

Benn also emphasized that the integrity of the collective bargaining process itself is at stake in this case. Restating his finding from his July award ordering the state to rescind Governor Quinn’s unilateral pay freeze and follow the contractual pay schedule, the arbitrator wrote, “if the state is correct in its statutory and Constitutional arguments, the multi-year collective bargaining agreement is, for all purposes, probably dead.”

Unions announce historic agreements at McCormick Place



Two unions representing workers at McCormick Place have announced new agreements with the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA), the body that runs McCormick Place, that will preserve Chicago's status as the country's premier convention destination.

Settlements reached with the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters and Teamsters Local 727 will end their federal lawsuits challenging some of the measures passed into law in 2010. The unions were successful in their legal challenge of the legislation but agreed to negotiate changes in order to boost the industry and create more jobs.

"Throughout this process, our goal has been to ensure that McCormick Place continues to set the standard for convention excellence," said Frank Libby, President of the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters and Chicago Federation of Labor Executive Board member. "This agreement will help our members stay on the job and keep Chicago's trade show industry healthy for years to come."

"Our members remain committed to keeping McCormick Place a sought-after venue for conventions from around the country," said John Coli, President of Teamsters Joint Council 25 and Chicago Federation of Labor Executive Board member. "This agreement clears the way for McPier to continue to grow its business."

"These agreements demonstrate the commitment from the men and women of organized labor to keep Chicago a premiere convention destination," said

Chicago Federation of Labor President Jorge Ramirez. "By working in a collaborative way, we were able to take steps that will benefit the city of Chicago and the entire region."

Under the agreements, the unions will help exhibitors control costs by agreeing to longer periods of straight time and allowing exhibitors to do more setup work on their own. The Exhibitors' Bill of Rights allows show managers and exhibitors to perform their own work in any size booth, using their own ladders or hand tools, cordless tools and power tools. Exhibitors will also be allowed to operate, load and unload their own vehicles at McCormick Place. Additionally, work will also now be able to be done by two-person work crews.

The agreements have already led to new trade shows committing to Chicago and several renewing contracts. A hotel group also committed \$125 million in renovations to three area hotels as a result of the announcement.

As part of the agreements, the city of Chicago will complement an existing state program by committing resources to a promotional campaign that will highlight the new competitive measures reached in this agreement with the goal of attracting even more shows to McCormick Place.

"McCormick Place is a cornerstone of Illinois' economy, and we weren't going to stop working with our labor partners until we delivered the reforms needed to bring more shows and jobs to our state," Governor Quinn said. "These historic reforms will save exhibitors

money by giving them the flexibility they need and help to attract even more shows to Illinois, while making sure the many hard-working men and women who support McCormick Place stay on the job."

"McCormick Place is a major economic engine for the City of Chicago, bringing more than 3 million visitors to the city every year," said Mayor Emanuel. "I am grateful that labor is our partner in implementing these reforms that will keep thousands of Chicagoans working, save exhibitors money and ensure our city remains a competitive destination and leader in the convention and tradeshow industry."

MPEA Trustee Jim Reilly says the agreement will help ensure that Chicago keeps pace with its key competitors. "We made changes last year in direct response to what our customers demanded. Now, working in partnership with labor, we have overcome some of the biggest obstacles to our efforts to lure new shows to the city. It is especially gratifying that all of the elements of the Chicago Trade Show industry – the City, the State, the Carpenters, the Teamsters and Freeman and GES - came together and generously contributed to reaching this historic settlement."

McCormick Place is the cornerstone of Illinois' Convention and Tourism industry, supporting 66,000 jobs and generating \$8 billion in spending each year. It acts as a magnet for Chicago, attracting millions of business leaders from around the globe who stay in hotels, dine out, shop and experience the city's world-class culture and entertainment.

NLRB Victory Restores Union Rights to NBC 'Content Producers'

In a resounding victory for NABET-CWA, an NLRB ruling orders NBC to reinstate the bargaining rights of "content producers," a title the network created three years ago to strip union representation from nearly 100 photographers, editors and writers.

"On behalf of our affected members and their families, we are extremely pleased with this outcome," NABET-CWA President Jim Joyce said. "NBC wasted shameful amounts of money to pay for outside legal counsel and consultants just so that it could take away union-negotiated wages and benefits from its workers, many of whom have been loyal NBC employees and NABET-CWA members for years."

NBC tried to claim that it was consolidating work and creating new, non-union jobs. But the ruling said testimony at hearings this year in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., made it clear that so-called content producers were doing the same work they have always done, just with a different title.



Union members march in solidarity for a new contract in front of television stations in Chicago

The decision affects both NABET members who lost their bargaining rights, as well as new employees hired as content producers. Content producers at NBC and NBC-owned stations in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles are directly affected by the ruling.

The decision comes as NABET and NBC begin the fourth year of negotiations for a new contract. In August, NABET members overwhelmingly rejected an NBC proposal that would have rolled back seniority and jurisdiction provisions, among other concessions.

CFL Workers Assistance Committee helps transition laid-off workers to new careers

The Health Care Career Bridge program helps laid-off workers transition to successful new careers in health care

Steve Mazner was laid off from ATA Airlines after the company ceased operations in 2008. Discouraged after losing his job as a flight attendant, he felt lost and unsure what to do next. "The airline industry was my life for 15 years," said Steve.

His pay was consistently cut to keep the airline in operation and he knew the airline industry was not the same as it used to be. Steve wanted to get into a different field of work and "decided to go back to school and train for a job in health care." Steve heard about CFL Workers Assistance Committee from the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), his former union, and enrolled in the Health Care Career Bridge (HCCB) program in spring 2009.

The CFL Workers Assistance Committee's HCCB program is funded through a grant from the City of Chicago and is one of the few bridge programs tailored specifically for laid-off workers interested in transitioning to a career in health care.

After completing the bridge program, Steve decided to pursue radiology training and received a training voucher to attend the Medical Radiologic Tech-

nology program at Malcolm X College in Chicago where he graduated at the top of his class.

Steve is currently working at Weiss Memorial Hospital making \$32 an hour as a Radiologic Technologist, in the registry department. When asked what the CFL Workers Assistance Committee means to him, Steve said, "education and help for training for a new career in a stable industry. I can now continue to grow and advance professionally and feel confident about my abilities." Steve is continuing on with his education and is starting a B.S. program in Radiologic Science this fall and thanks our whole team for being an instrumental part of his success, "I love my new career and am very happy I had the resources of the CFL Workers Assistance Committee behind me the whole way."

Visit www.cflwac.org for more info.





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of Labor**

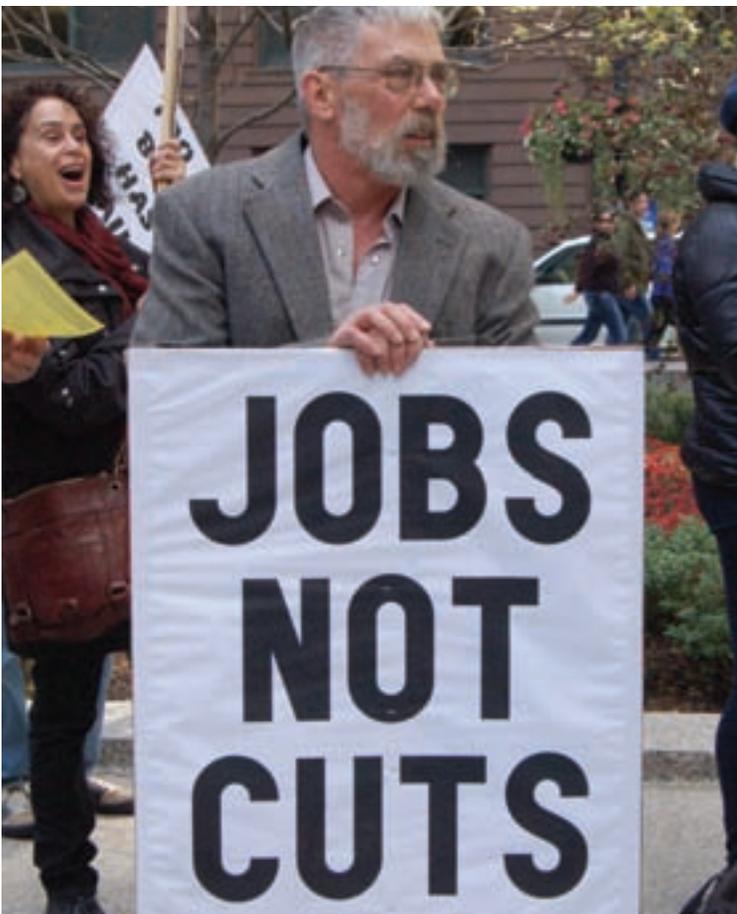
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Meeting notice

CFL Delegates Will Meet On

Tuesday, December 6, 2011 6:00pm

Chicago Plumbers Local 130 Hall
1340 W. Washington, Chicago

Delegates must present their current Chicago Federation of Labor membership card or this notice for admission.

We look forward to full representation from your local union to assist the Federation in the development of its policies.

In unity,

Robert G. Reiter, Jr.
Secretary-Treasurer