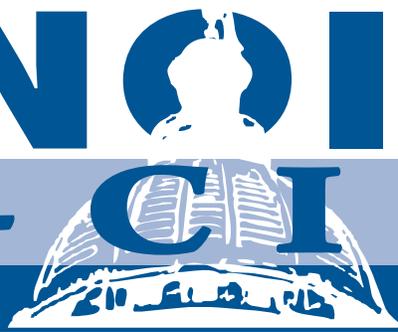


ILLINOIS AFL - CIO

NEWS UPDATE - 03/31/21



PRO Act Passes House; Senate Next

The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act passed the House of Representatives 225-206. Thanks to your efforts and the work of union members and allies across the country this significant pro-worker reform bill passed with nearly all Democrats supporting along with five Republicans.

The PRO Act (H.R. 842) now moves to the Senate, where it died last year without getting a vote in the GOP-controlled chamber. While its fate is unknown considering filibuster rules and a 50-50 Senate split, with President Biden's support and strong public support for unions, now is the best chance at gaining these critical changes to labor law.

Illinois' Sen. Dick Durbin (D) and Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D) both support the legislation and were sponsors of the Senate version.

Illinois congressional Republicans all voted against the PRO Act – including Mike Bost, Rodney Davis, Mary Miller, Adam Kinzinger, and Darin LaHood.

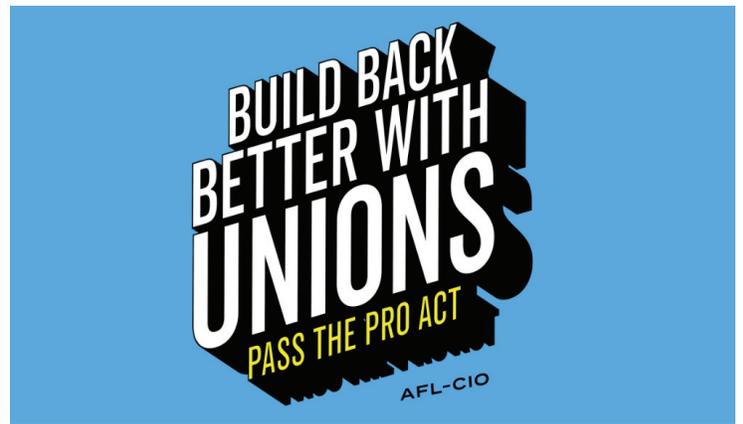
Every Democrat – Bobby Rush, Robin Kelly, Marie Newman, Chuy Garcia, Mike Quigley, Sean Casten, Danny Davis, Raja Krishnamoorthi, Jan Schakowsky, Brad Schneider, Bill Foster, Lauren Underwood, and Cheri Bustos – sponsored and voted for the bill.

“Our congressional allies really stepped up,” said Illinois AFL-CIO President Tim Drea said. “Union members helped elect them because they believe in boosting working

families. On the other hand, some representatives who claim to be labor-friendly, failed to be there for us.”

Corporate special interests like the national Chamber of Commerce are vehemently opposed making claims of calamity and economic collapse – all things we have heard before – but this response as reported in the New York Times captures the simple need for the reforms.

“It’s not as if the United States is going to turn into Sweden any time soon when it comes to worker power,” Jake Rosenfeld, a sociologist who studies unions at Washington University in St. Louis, said. “This bill still doesn’t alter the fundamental workplace arrangements in any way. What it does is try to honor the letter of the National Labor Relations Act and let workers who want actual representation have a fair shot.”



Voting Rights Expansion Bill Passes House

A bill geared to combat voter suppression and significantly expand the voting rights of Americans passed the House 220-210 with no Republican support.

The For The People Act (HR 1) makes changes in three main areas: protecting voting rights; making campaign finance reform; and shoring up ethics laws for members of congress.

Due to the GOP's united opposition, the bill's fate likely rests on filibuster reform in the Senate.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Vote by Mail - HB 1871

HB 1871 (Stuart)- The bill passed both Houses. The bill codifies some of the Vote by Mail options that was expanded for the 2020 General Election. Those changes were set to sunset at the end of 2020, but with the passage of HB 1871, the Vote by Mail option will continue to include:

- Secured mail-in-ballot drop off boxes,
- Curbside voting where permitted, and
- Ballot collection with no postage.

Vehicle Franchise Warranty Pay -HB 3940

HB 3940 (Walsh)- Manufacturers must pay a dealer at least the same amount a retailer customer pays for warranty work and factory recalls. This bill changes the way dealers are reimbursed by manufacturers so that workers are paid a fair wage. The bill passed out of committee 021-002-001.

Audiovisual Rigging Certificate - HB 419

HB 419 (Hoffman)- All audiovisual riggers at special events must hold a valid rigging certification. This protects workers and the public from audio visual and staging accidents. The bill passed out of committee 27-0.

Chicago Principals Fight to Regain Collective Bargaining Rights HB 3496

HB 3496 (Davis)- Chicago principals are one step closer to being considered educational employees and having their collective bargaining rights restored under the Illinois Education Labor Relations Act. The bill passed out of committee 15-10.

Charter School Union Neutrality - HB 114

HB 114 (Guzzardi)- The bill provides that any renewal of a certified charter or a new charter school proposal must include a union neutrality clause. This gives charter school employees the opportunity to join labor unions. The bill passed out of committee 15-10.

Bills Halted

Nurse Licensure Compact Halted - HB 580

HB 580 (Zalewski)- The Nurse Licensure Compact will negatively impact patient safety and limit the state's ability to regulate the nursing workforce. This bill was not called in committee in time for the House deadline.

Utilities-Surcharge Repeal Halted - HB 3941

HB 3941 (Mason)- A repeal in natural gas surcharges will restrict system modernization efforts which impacts the reliability and efficiency of the service. This bill was not called in committee in time for the House deadline.

Biden Signs Rescue Plan, Includes Critical Relief; Still Work Left To Do

President Joe Biden signed the \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package on March 11 that included direct payments, unemployment insurance supplement extension, vaccine support and money to state and local governments dealing with the financial fallout from the pandemic.

Biden signed the bill that passed without a single Republican vote in Congress to move on his top priority. Despite the much-needed relief, there is still more work to do, according to AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.

“Now it’s time to start building toward a just recovery that leaves working people with a louder voice and a stronger hand than ever before. That means delivering unprecedented funding to create a 21st-century infrastructure alongside a new generation of good-paying union jobs. It means delivering the \$15 minimum wage that should have been signed into law today. And most of all, it means strengthening working people’s right to organize together by finally passing the PRO Act,” Trumka said after the bill signing.

Labor Leader Approved As USDOL Head

Former Boston Mayor and longtime union member Marty Walsh was appointed by President Joe Biden and approved by the U.S. Senate to head up the U.S. Department of Labor.

Walsh, who served two terms as mayor, was confirmed by a 68-29 vote. All 29 votes were Republicans.

“Right now, this work is critical to the future of our economy, our communities, and our families,” Walsh told senators at his confirmation hearing last month. “I believe we must act with urgency to meet this moment to strengthen and empower our workforce as we rebuild.”

Climate Union Jobs Act

Climate Jobs Illinois is a coalition of labor organizations advocating for a pro-worker, pro-climate agenda in Illinois. Climate Jobs Illinois introduced the Climate Union Jobs Act (CUJA) on Monday, March 29th that received positive media coverage in every media market across the state. The legislation would put thousands of union tradespeople to work building a 100 percent clean energy economy in Illinois and provide a new pathway to the middle class, especially for historically underinvested communities. The bill broadly, sets labor standards when ratepayer dollars are used; preserves the state’s nuclear fleet and additional renewable generation; Invests \$50 million into proven jobs training programs and \$5 million of additional funding for the Illinois Works program to support the recruitment and training of a diverse workforce; creates a just transition for communities economically reliant on fossil fuel generation and establishes equity requirements for clean energy jobs. The bill also reduces the state’s emissions from buildings and transportation particularly with a ambitious Carbon Free Schools initiative among other aspects of the bill.

The coalition is comprised of the following member unions: Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters, Illinois Education Association, Illinois Federation of Teachers, International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers Union, International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers State Council, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 134, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150, Laborers International Union of North America Great Lakes Region, Laborers International Union of North America Midwest Region, Service Employees International Union State Council, and the United Auto Workers Region 4.

We are asking members to support of the Climate Union Jobs Act here: <https://climatejobsillinois.org/get-involved/>

**ZERO EMISSIONS.
100% UNION BUILT.**

Pass the Climate Union Jobs Act.

climatejobsillinois.org