

LABOR & COMMUNITY NEWS

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MARCH 2009

GRONSTAL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT LABOR BILLS



Senate Democratic Leader Mike Gronstal of Council Bluffs says the final details for labor's priority bills aren't set, but that all four are "live rounds" with a good chance of becoming law.

In a taping of Iowa Press, Gronstal criticized Iowa's track record: "Iowa for 60 years has pursued a weak-unions, low-wage,

low-skill strategy towards economic development and it has not created wealth in this state, and it has not created good-paying jobs."

Gronstal sounded optimistic about cooperation from Governor Culver. "We have talked to the governor repeatedly. We have had better communication. We have done a great job of on-going communication with the governor on all of these issues."

The union-related bills Gronstal indicates will advance this year include expanded scope of bargaining for public sector

employees, choice of doctor, fair share, and prevailing wage. Answering Republican and business groups' objections, Gronstal responded: "If you want to keep labor weak, the kinds of jobs you're going to end up with are the kinds of jobs you had at Postville with AgriProcessors...If that's Iowa's economic future, I think it's a pretty sad future and no wonder our kids are leaving this state."

"Tomorrow's Saturday," Gronstal said, in closing. "Everybody has their weekend, thanks to organized labor." 2/6/09 Iowa Radio News.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Next meeting, March 11th @ 300 East Locust**
CS@5, EBD@5:30, DEL@6

- **February 28 – Bidwell-Riverside Pancake Breakfast**

Benefit for Bidwell's work with low-income residents at Grace United Methodist Church, 38th and Cottage Grove in Des Moines from 8:00 – noon. All the pancakes you can eat for \$5.

- **February 28 – Charlie King concert and fund raiser for Iraqi refugees**

Charlie King and Karen Brandow will perform at Drake University's Cool Beans (above Hubbell Dining Hall). Concert begins at 7:30 p.m. with a suggested donation of \$5 - \$10, but no one will be turned away.

TRUMKA APPOINTED TO OBAMA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY ADVISORY BOARD



Rich Trumka, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, has

been appointed to President Obama's Economic Recovery Advisory Board. The Board, announced on January 6, has 15 high-level movers and shakers, including: Harvard's Martin Feldstein; Laura D'Andrea

Tyson, Dean of the Business School at UC Berkeley; and the CEOs of Caterpillar Inc., TIAA-CREF, and GE. Only one other union officer was named to the Board, Anna Burger, Secretary-Treasurer, SEIU.



Give Back

THEY CONTINUE TO GET CALLS FROM DISASTER VICTIMS, ALTHOUGH NOW THE FOCUS IS ON FINANCIAL CONCERNS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

DISASTER TRAINING SET FOR MARCH 28TH

Thinking about doing something to give back? South Central and the Red Cross of Central Iowa have partnered on a disaster training class set for March 28th. 2008 was the mother load for disasters in the state of Iowa. But how often does this happen? According to the Red Cross, a disaster strikes about every 3 years in Iowa.

The agenda will include an orientation of the American Red Cross, and participants will be able to assess how to use their skills and abilities to strengthen the capacity of both the community and the Red Cross to better serve people affected by disaster.

A mass care overview including sheltering, feeding, and bulk distribution and

community programs will also be covered.

The class is about full, we have room for 5 more, so if you want to join us, and want to do something that will make you feel really good, call SCIFL and leave your RSVP. For further information on this training opportunity, call Holly at 265-1862.

211 GETS OVER 57,000 CALLS IN 3 MONTHS

United Way officials say that between May 25 and August 25, the 2-1-1 centers in Iowa fielded over 57,000 calls from Iowans. Many of these calls were disaster related. They continue to get calls from disaster victims, although now the focus is on financial

concerns and mental health problems.

United Way and 2-1-1 officials made a presentation to the House Rebuild Iowa/ Disaster Recovery Committee about the work they did during the floods and tornadoes.

United Way provides the funding for the 2-1-1 system. 2-1-1 is a free information and referral helpline that answers calls 24-hours per day, 7 days per week.

Iowans can call 2-1-1 Throughout Iowa, just as they can call 9-1-1 from any community.

PRESIDENT OBAMA SIGNS STIMULUS

President Barack Obama signed the economic stimulus bill in Denver, and according to White House economists, Iowa's share of the stimulus package is expected to be nearly \$2 billion, which could bring nearly 37,000 jobs to the state. The stimulus package includes spending focused on unemployment, health

care and education. The plan also cuts taxes and provides money for road projects.

This new legislation also provides a one-time payment of \$250 to Social Security and Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries. Over 60 million beneficiaries will receive a one-time

payment. They expect all payments to be delivered by late May 2009. To assist in issuing these payments as quickly as possible, beneficiaries should not contact Social Security unless they do not receive their payment by June 4th. You can learn more about these one-time payments at www.socialsecurity.gov

Give Advocate Volunteer
Live United

211 CONTINUED

The 2-1-1 centers provide Iowans with assistance or direct them to agencies that can help. Iowa is one of only 17 states that have 2-1-1 access across the entire state.

In addition to assistance to victims, 2-1-1 was also used as a clearinghouse for volunteers last summer. In just four days, they deployed over 2,000 volunteers to help within Polk County. In this way, volunteers were directed to where they were most needed and emergency management staff was freed up so they could deal with the flooding. United Way and 2-1-1 officials' indicated that, after Hurricane Katrina, they realized they needed to coordinate with Iowa's county emergency management programs so they would be prepared if a disaster struck Iowa. The preparation helped make last summer go much more smoothly. Even though they were prepared, they called in operators from as far away as Hawaii to help relieve Iowa 2-1-1 operators.

United Way is also working with the Long Term Disaster Committees being used to help Iowans receive disaster assistance now. They said the additional state funding, which passed the Legislature in January, has been a huge help to Iowans. The centers are now trying to identify people who have not previously received assistance and help them apply for the new housing program and the disaster grant program.

CENTRAL IOWA SAVES WEEK
FEBRUARY 22 TO MARCH 1, 2009

Build Wealth Not Debt

Become a Central Iowa Saver

Here's how you can get started:

1. Sign your Central Iowa Saves pledge and commit to saving money.
2. Save something out of every paycheck, no matter how little.
3. Make it automatic. Use payroll deduction.
4. Set a savings goal.
5. Save \$25 a month for emergencies.
6. Pay down debt by an extra \$25 a month
7. Save part of your tax refund.
8. Open a no-fee or low-fee savings account by enrolling with a Central Iowa Saves financial institution.
9. Watch your savings account balance grow!



Visit centraliowasaves.org or call 515-283-0940



Central Iowa Saves | ISED | 1111 Ninth Street, Suite 380 | Des Moines, IA 50314 | 515-283-0940

United Way
of Central Iowa



AFL-CIO Community Services and United Way Partnership



Do One Nice Thing™

IN 5 MINUTES ON MONDAY

www.DoOneNiceThing.com

- 1 What Color Is A Burp?**
Burple! Tell or email a joke to a friend. ahajokes.com or jokes.com
- 2 Pay It Behind**
Pay for the meal, coffee or bridge toll behind you.
- 3 Free Kibble**
Donate free food for abandoned dogs at FreeKibble.com.
- 4 Secret Admirer**
Put a candy or flower on a co-worker's desk or friend's doorstep.
- 5 Good Search**
Give to your favorite charity free whenever you search the Internet at GoodSearch.com.
- 6 Your Voice Makes Me Happy!**
Call someone you miss.
- 7 Home of the Brave**
Thank a service member: www.LetsSayThanks.com
- 8 Smile at Someone**
You might be the only bright thing they see today.