



CISCO

COMMUNICATOR

A Newsletter for Chicagoland Construction Labor & Management Professionals

Illinois Supreme Court Strikes Down 2013 Pension Reform Law

The Illinois Supreme Court, on May 8, ruled unanimously as unconstitutional a major pension reform bill for state government workers and public school teachers outside of Chicago. The measure had been approved by the General Assembly a year and a half ago.

The court action adds an enormous challenge into the state's pending budget process and negotiations as Governor Rauner was calculating a \$2.2 billion in savings from this pension reform law.

The seven Illinois justices declared that the law, passed 18 months ago, violates the state constitution because it would leave pension promises "diminished or impaired."

"The financial challenges facing state and local governments in Illinois are well known and significant. It is our obligation, however, just as it is theirs, to ensure that the law is followed. That is true at all times. Crisis is not an excuse to abandon the rule of law. It is a summons to defend it," the court released in the summary of their decision.



The Illinois Supreme Court building in Springfield.

The decree puts the Governor and the General Assembly back at the starting line in trying to figure out what's necessary to cover its state employee retirement obligations.

The action will renew the Governor's call again for an as yet unspecified, undrafted constitutional amendment to free the state from its pension promises of the past and transfer all current state and local employees into a "Tier 2" system.

CISCO Welcomes New Associate Members



Aldridge Electric - The Libertyville-based company is ranked as one the nation's leading civil and electrical contractors. Incorporated in 1952, Aldridge has more than 62 years of expertise completing complex drilling, mass transit, transportation, power and utility projects.

A family-owned company, Aldridge employs more than 850 employees nationally. The website address for Aldridge is www.aldridge-electric.com and the company phone number is 847-680-5200.



IUEC Local 2 - The International Union of Elevator Constructors is comprised of more than 1,200 Chicagoland members. Local 2's headquarters, NEIEP School Office and J.A.C. are located in Chicago Ridge. For well over a century, these talented members in the U.S.

and Canada have reshaped the skylines of cities and kept the country moving. You can find Local 2 on the web at www.iuec2.com and their phone number is 708-907-7770.

From *the* Desk of the Executive Director



There is good news, bad news, and a renewed spirit in the union construction industry in 2015. The good news is that there are many positive signs as construction work continues to increase slightly for much of Northeastern Illinois, a reason for optimism as we recover from the devastating recession.

Many of our contractors report an increase in projects, architect and design firms are hiring, and more importantly, most of the apprenticeship programs are recruiting and training the next generation of the highest skilled and most technologically trained workforce of anywhere in the country.

CISCO's Education-to-Careers outreach efforts are stronger and more diverse than ever, minimizing the national construction labor shortage in our back yard of Northeastern Illinois (see page 6).

The bad news is as most of you know the entire union construction industry is under attack by Governor Rauner's divisive, deceptive, slick state-wide media campaign cleverly termed "The Illinois Turnaround Agenda", which would eliminate collective bargaining and prevailing wage, while creating right-to-work zones. The "Turnaround Agenda" unfairly demonizes the hard working union construction industry, and state public unions as the cause of all of the State's financial woes.

Facts from the Illinois Economic Policy Institute indicate that if just half of Illinois counties became right-to-work (RTW) zones, the Illinois economy would fall by \$1.5 billion, and state & local taxes would be reduced by \$80 million dollars. Additionally, University of Illinois

research concludes that the passage of RTW would result in an increase of construction related worker fatalities (by more than 51%), and an increase in gender and racial income inequalities.

This "Turnaround Agenda" road show has been pitched to every city, town or county with the hope of passage thus crippling an already struggling middle class. These city/county hearings have resulted in a renewed spirit of union contractors and the thousands of skilled union workers they employ, speaking factually in a unified voice and testifying to the true value that prevailing wage, collective bargaining, and project labor agreements provide to every taxpayer and community in the State of Illinois.

As their voices addressed the various mayors and council members I was reminded of the movie "It's a Wonderful Life", when George Bailey addressed Mr. Potter. "Those families you're talking about, they do most of the working, paying, living and dying in this community. Well is it too much to have them live and die in a decent home? Anyway, my father didn't think so. People were human beings to him".

I applaud the collaborative efforts to defend the skills and value that our great union construction industry provides for Illinois. And as George Bailey reminds us there are hard working, middle class families that build and support our communities. Right-to-work is Not Right for the economy, Not right for Safety, Not Right for taxpayer value, Not Right for creating middle class jobs, and definitely Not Right For a "wonderful life" in Illinois.

Dan Allen
Executive Director

Save The Date: CISCO Golf Outing - September 14, 2015

Monday, September 14, 2015

Registration/Range: 7:00 a.m. • Shotgun Start: 8:00 a.m.

Cocktails/Lunch: 1:00 p.m.

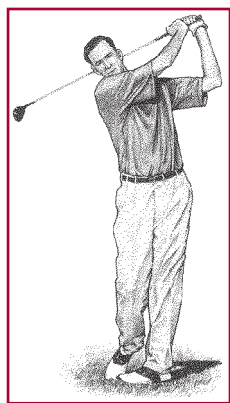
\$100 per golfer; \$375 per foursome; \$40 Lunch Only

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Presidential *Perspective*



While a lot of attention has been aimed at Springfield in the past four months, and deservedly so, a trade bill in Washington, DC, has also been receiving plenty of publicity. It's called the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a 12-nation trade deal that the President and the White House say would open Asian markets and promote better labor conditions abroad.

CISCO and its Board of Directors feel otherwise and recently sent letters to each U.S. Congressman in our service area, our two U.S. Senators and the President and Vice-President as well. In our opinion, the trade agreement is a license to continue the same failed trade economic policies that have left working people behind for the past 20 years. Studies show that this policy results in shipping thousands of U.S. jobs overseas to countries, some of which exploit workers with unsafe working conditions and sub-par wages that in some instances are less than \$3.00 per day.

Past trade agreements, passed under fast track, have resulted in a net loss of jobs for working Americans. In fact, outdated trade policy has decimated American manufacturing with more than 80,000 shuttered factories and millions of lost jobs. The results have devastated our communities, forcing cutbacks in public schools, infrastructure repairs, and police and fire protection.

There was recently some good news from the U.S. Senate as a procedural motion to open up debate of the fast track legislation failed by a 52 to 45 vote, falling short of the 60 votes needed to begin consideration of the complex Pacific trade bill. Many Democratic Senators, including a majority of those from Illinois oppose this trade agreement for some of the same reasons I listed above.

In short, the debate is not over, but we believe the right course of action is to say **NO** to multi-national corporations which exploit workers, **NO** to fast track TPP, **NO** to overseas American job outsourcing, and **YES** to a level playing field for hard working Americans, struggling to support their families in these very difficult economic times.

Sincerely,

Mark Maher
CISCO Board President

Dan McLaughlin Fills Vacancy On CISCO Board; John Boske Retiring



CISCO announced during its Annual Luncheon that Builders Association Executive Director Dan McLaughlin has been added to its Board of Directors. McLaughlin, who is also the Mayor of Orland Park, replaces Leon LaJeunesse, who had served on the board since 2011.

McLaughlin has been Mayor of Orland Park for 22 years, and was also the Executive Director of the Plumbing Contractors Association for 21 years prior to his joining the Builders Association in 2013.

"Dan has been a friend of organized labor for a long time," said CISCO Executive Director Dan Allen, "and he will be a great asset to our leadership team."

IN OTHER BOARD NEWS

Loretta Molter has been appointed as Board Secretary to replace Dan Divane. CISCO would like to thank Dan Divane for his 5 years of Board service.

Congratulations to board member John Boske, Business Manager/President of Sheet Metal Workers Local 265, who will be retiring July 1, 2015. John is also the President of the DuPage County Building Trades Council, and served on the Board since 2009.



"There is no greater advocate for the middle class and for the hard working men and women in the union construction industry, who literally build our communities from the ground up," Allen said. "He will definitely be missed."

Treasurer Frerichs Highlights Labor's Role In Strengthening Economy

Guests at CISCO's 27th annual luncheon heard a strong message from Keynote Speaker Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs about the importance of organized labor and the important role it plays in strengthening our families, neighborhoods and economy. The remarks were made at the April



24th Annual Luncheon at Maggiano's in Schaumburg.

Speaking to approximately 260 attendees, Frerichs said that the "path to long-term prosperity includes organized labor, apprenticeships and job training."

IL State Treasurer Michael Frerichs.

"Employers need a skilled workforce that can be trained to adapt to market-changing events, and organized labor is one path to creating that skilled workforce," he added.

"In too many states, organized labor has become the bad guy. I don't know if I should be angry that so many people are working to distort the great legacy of organized labor, or if I should be sad or worried that so many of our neighbors are believing it," he said.



Pictured (from left) are CISCO Board President Mark Maher, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs, and new board member Dan McLaughlin.

Everyone in attendance nodded in agreement regarding Frerichs comments regarding project labor agreements (PLAs), prevailing wage and right-to-work.

"Project labor agreements are not shotgun weddings. PLAs create jobs and skilled labor. PLAs are

sound economic policy. So is prevailing wage. Prevailing wage builds communities by supporting families and the small businesses they patronize. Prevailing wage saves lives by making sure union workplace safety standards are followed," Frerichs emphatically stated.

He added, "the path to long-term prosperity does not include Right-to-Work zones or enterprise zones or whatever the next rosy term will be."

"Prevailing wage builds communities by supporting families and the small businesses they patronize."

He concluded by referring to CISCO's scholarship awards, "I am proud that organized labor recognizes the value of education, and as the state's elected Treasurer, we make investments that promote education opportunity and access."

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Congratulations also goes out to the students who were presented with their scholarship awards during the luncheon. The group included four-year award winners – Katelyn Castiglia – Buffalo Grove HS (attending Butler University), and Patrick Hosty – Brother Rice HS (attending Notre Dame University).



Scholarship winners from left: Jay Farkas, Katelyn Castiglia, Patrick Hosty and Paige O'Brien.

Two-year awards (Community College attendees) went to Paige O'Brien – Hartsburg-Emden Jr. / Sr. High School (attending Heartland Community College), and Jay Farkas – Carl Sandburg HS (attending Moraine Valley Community College). The scholarship winners were chosen from a field of 115 applicants.

CISCO Photo Gallery - 2015 Off To A Busy Start



Annual Meeting: CISCO Board President Mark Maher presents Educator of the Year Award to Cal Ramirez, teacher at Manley HS with Johnetta Ryan, Education-to-Careers Director.



Annual Meeting: Bob Parrilli, IBEW Chicago & Collar Counties (left) chats with CISCO Board Member Maurice King, Vice President of IBEW 134.



DuPage Hands-On Expo: Plumbers Local 130 Apprenticeship Coordinator John Yock oversees a pipe-bending exercise during February's event in Carol Stream.



DuPage Hands-On Expo: DuPage Tech Center Instructor Steve Cervenka describes work in the area of refrigeration, heating and air conditioning.



Boy Scouts & Plumbing Council Honor Bill Hite: From left are Plumbing Council Chairman Bob Melko, Chicago & Cook County Building Trades President Tom Villanova, UA Local 130 Business Manager Jim Coyne, UA General President Bill Hite, UA Local 597 Business Manager Jim Buchanan and Chicago Federation of Labor President Jorge Ramirez.



UCA Spring Showcase: Enjoying the expo are from left UCA Executive Director Mike Wiedmaier, Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur, CISCO Board Member David Henderson and CISCO Executive Director Dan Allen.



Professor Bob Bruno, PhD, (left/right) from the University of Illinois' School of Labor and Employment Relations spoke to about 100 attendees at Plumbers' Local 130 Union Hall in Volo in April on the impacts of repealing the Prevailing Wage Law and enacting a right-to-work law in Illinois.



CISCO's 2015 Annual Luncheon





Johnetta Ryan,
Director
Education-to-Careers

EDUCATION 70 CAREERS

As Construction Recovery Continues, Recruitment Efforts Double

For a couple of years now, construction activity has picked up all across our service area. The increased workload has put an emphasis on the continued need to recruit more men and women into the trades.

Since last summer, CISCO's Education-to-Careers Program has been working double-time. Last summer, we partnered with the Chicago Teachers Union for the first time and joined forces with St. Paul Church to conduct a Hands-On Expo to reach out to the minority community in Chicago.




 **Don Walker, (left) Apprenticeship Coordinator for the Bricklayers and Dave Napstrek show students the art of bricklaying at Chicago's St. Paul Church.**

In February of this year, CISCO teamed with DuPage County, the College of DuPage and the Chicagoland Laborer's Training & Apprenticeship Center to conduct the 12th Annual Hands-On Expo in Carol Stream.

The following month, CISCO organized a two-day Hands-On event (March 10-11) with the Chicago Public School and Moraine Valley students at the Carpenters Training Center in Chicago. At least 11 building trades were on hand to provide students with the look and feel of what it's like to work in one of these trades.



 **Adam Sutter, (right) Admissions Director for Pipefitters Local 597 Training Center watches a student attempt pipe-bending during the CPS Hands-On Expo.**

Workforce shortages are being felt by nearly every industry, but CISCO continues to do everything in its power to make students and adults aware of careers in the construction industry.

In addition to these examples of collaboration, CISCO appeared at numerous Career Days throughout the school year. CISCO also works with vocational colleges, community groups, faith-based organizations and even prisons to promote the apprenticeship programs and careers in construction.

CAREER DAY OPPORTUNITIES

As another school year concludes, I'd like to remind teachers and counselors that CISCO is available in a number of ways during regular semesters and summer sessions. Call or email me (**630.472.9411** or **johnetta@cisco.org**) to arrange a presentation, tour the Apprenticeship Training Centers, or provide materials that detail the requirements for successful admission into each building trades' apprenticeship program.

Unions Rally To Counter Governor's "Turnaround Agenda"



When Gov. Bruce Rauner put forth his so-called "Turnaround Agenda" he underestimated public opinion in Illinois. His ideas to eliminate Prevailing Wage and Project Labor Agreements, and to institute right-to-work/empowerment zones have been met with strong resistance in nearly every town, city, municipality,

county and other forms of government throughout the state.

After his initial budget address, he stated that he would cut the Local Government Distributive Funds 50% across Illinois, but he dangled a promise to any jurisdiction which passed his "turnaround agenda" resolution, that the funding would be restored.

To date, 69 public bodies have discussed the resolution publicly and only 22 have approved the measure with the City of Rockford and McHenry County representing the largest in terms of population.

Conversely, 3 of the top 5 cities in population - Chicago, Aurora and Naperville - as well as Cook, Kane, Grundy and many downstate counties have either rejected or tabled the measure indefinitely. In fact, Chicago approved its own pro-labor resolution that denounces all of the Governor's main topics.

Political pundits who are tracking the resolution's lack of success say that the attack on organized labor and more broadly, the middle class, is not resonating among residents and many elected officials who don't see the state's economic woes as the fault of organized labor and unions. On the other hand, the Governor's all-out assault has served to unite the working, middle-class to a new level.

Facts are also making a difference:

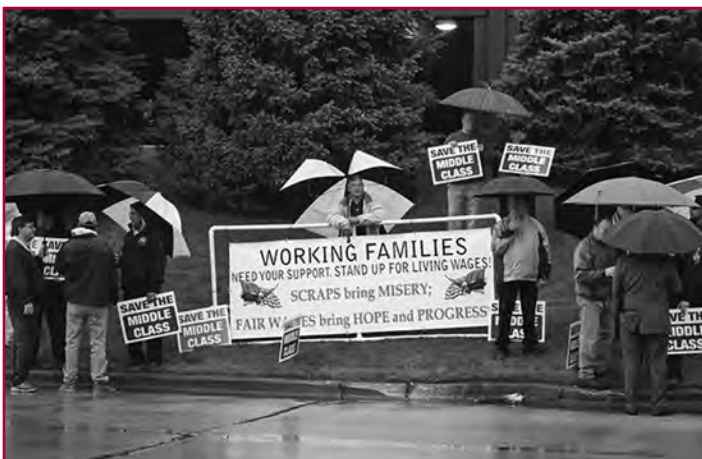
- The Illinois Attorney General has rendered an opinion that local right-to-work zones and opting out of prevailing wage laws are illegal under both federal labor law and state law.

Independent research is also serving to refute the resolution's abstract concepts. According to the Illinois Economic Policy Institute, if just HALF of Illinois counties became right-to-work zones:

- Total labor income would fall by \$1.3 billion,
- State's economy would shrink by \$1.5 billion,
- State and local taxes would be reduced by \$80 million, and
- Racial and gender income inequality would both increase.

In summary, the Governor's plan to replace the skilled, union workforce with unskilled labor leads to lower median wages, reduced benefits and unsafe working conditions thus weakening the state's economy and already struggling middle class.

Rally to Support Middle Class Greets Governor in DuPage County



About 100 members of the DuPage County Building Trades Council were on hand outside Drury Lane Conference Center earlier this month to provide support for the working families and the middle class of Illinois.

The rally began at 7 am, when about 925 guests were arriving for the Choose DuPage economic forecast event, where Governor Rauner was scheduled to deliver the keynote address. The peaceful rally was meant to inform attendees about the negative effects of the Governor's so-called "Turnaround Agenda".



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May 2015

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CISCO Communicator is published by the Construction Industry Service Corporation (CISCO). CISCO is a labor-management group bringing together unions of the building trades and construction contractor associations representing more than 140,000 construction workers and 8,000 contractors in the six county Chicago Metropolitan area.

CISCO MISSION STATEMENT

It is the primary mission of CISCO to strengthen the unionized construction market in the greater Chicago Metropolitan area. In support of this mission,

CISCO will perform three major roles: 1) Serve as a forum to facilitate dialogue between contractors and building trades union leaders concerning mutual problems and concerns; 2) Serve as a clearinghouse for information on the local construction industry; 3) Serve as a promotional group to encourage union construction with the user community and the general public. As a joint labor-management organization, CISCO will focus on cooperative efforts to reduce problems and conflicts and enhance the competitiveness of union construction. Through its activities, CISCO will build trust between the parties and will foster the joint commitment of local contractors and union labor to high quality, on-time, within budget delivery on all projects.

**Suggestions, story ideas, or comments should be directed to
CISCO at: 2000 Spring Road, Suite 110, Oak Brook, IL 60523**

Contact Us At: Toll-free 877-562-9411, (630)472-9411,
Fax: (630)472-9413, or e-mail gary@cisco.org

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___ "Union Construction" Bumper Sticker

___ Pre-Apprentice "Basic Skills" Training Guide (\$30 per book)