

Labor's Language: Glossary of Union Terms

Labor agreements, publications, and even officials often use terms that are almost exclusive to the labor arena. To help stewards feel more comfortable operating in this area, "Labor's Language: A glossary of Labor's Terms" is a regular Steward Edition feature.

Prevailing Wage: Generally the wage prevailing in a locality for a certain type of work. It is a wage determinant for many federal construction projects. The term does not necessarily refer to union wages.

Raiding: A union's attempt to enroll workers belonging to, or represented by, another union.

Rank and File: The members of a union. This term does not apply to the leadership of a union.

Ratification: Formal approval of a newly negotiated agreement by a vote of the union members affected.

Recognition: Employer acceptance of a union as the exclusive bargaining representative for all employees in the bargaining unit.

Recognition Picketing: Picketing to pressure or coerce an employer to recognize a union as a bargaining agent for the employees. Recognition picketing is subject to certain restrictions under the amendments to the National Labor Relations Act.

Red Circle: A method of targeting certain job classifications for special treatment in wage negotiating, with both positive and negative results possible.

Reopener Clause: A clause in a collective bargaining agreement providing for reopening negotiations on wage rates, and other benefits, during the term of the agreement.

Replacement: Workers hired to replace employees on strike. In the case of economic strikes, the strikers retain their employee status while on strike; however, the company may hire permanent replacements, and may legally refuse to reinstate strikers who have been permanently replaced. Economic strikers are generally entitled to reinstatement when the replacements leave.

In the case of unfair labor practice strikes, the strikers must be reinstated with few exceptions.



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New Steward Training Program Kicks-Off in October

Local 876 Teams Up with WSU to Create Unique Education Program

As announced at the recent Steward Day, Local 876's new steward training series will be launched in early October with the first group of stewards attending session one of the multi-session training program.

"We are very excited about the new approach Local 876 is taking to educating union stewards," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "Working closely with the Labor School at Wayne State University (WSU), we developed a professional, comprehensive training program customized especially for our local and the members who so selflessly volunteer to serve as union stewards."

By next spring, all stewards in the initial target group (Kroger, Hollywood Supermarkets, and Hilliers) will be invited to attend one of five first session training days led by WSU Labor School Director, Hal Stack. Sessions are being held throughout the tri-county area to minimize drive time for stewards, who will be asked to attend the meeting nearest their workplace.

To optimize the learning environment, provide a more personal experience, and allow for greater individual expression and interaction,

"I firmly believe this training program will establish the foundation for the future of Local 876. Not only will stewards become better equipped to serve as union representatives, but the union leaders of tomorrow will begin to develop the skills they need to take their union involvement to the next level." Roger Robinson, Local 876 president

each session will be limited to less than 30 stewards.

"The experts at Wayne State told us that groups of 25, give or take a few members, work best for this type of training," Robinson said. "We want to do all we can to make this program successful so we are taking their advice and limiting class size."

Since a major factor in determining the program's success will be high steward attendance, Local 876 will be paying lost time to all stewards who attend the training and working with their employers to make necessary schedule adjustments.

"We are bringing the training sessions close to stewards and paying them lost time for the day because the local is deeply committed to this training program," Robinson said. "I firmly believe this program will establish the foundation for the future of

Local 876. Not only will stewards become better equipped to serve as union representatives and enforce the contract at their workplace, but the union leaders of tomorrow will begin to develop the skills they need to take their union involvement to the next level."

The training program was designed so that all stewards will begin at session one, regardless of their length of service as a steward.

"While each session builds on the previous one, the series is not structured to be a beginner, intermediate, or advanced program," Robinson said. "The instructors will use the knowledge of more experienced stewards to enhance the learning experience for all in attendance, but I fully expect all stewards to leave each session with new skills they can use at the workplace and in their personal lives."

Decision 2008: Whose on Your Side

Americans have an important decision to make in the upcoming election. The next president will shape the future for working families. This chart compares how the 2008 presidential candidates stand on the most important issues for working families. Local 876 stewards are encouraged to share this information with their coworkers, friends, and family to ensure that all voters cast their vote based on the facts, not political spin and paid advertisements, which can be filled with misinformation, half-truths, and lies.

Barack Obama

or

John McCain

Employee Free Choice Act

Obama says workers are victimized by current organizing laws and is committed to ensuring that workers can choose to gain a union voice on the job and bargain with their employers for better wages, benefits and working conditions — without employer harassment or intimidation. Obama co-sponsored and voted for the Employee Free Choice Act and promises to sign it into law as president. *Investor's Business Daily*, 3/30/07; H.R. 800, Vote 227, 6/26/07; *Chicago Tribune*, 3/4/07.

America's working families are struggling to make ends meet and the middle class is disappearing. The best opportunity working people have to get ahead economically is by joining together in unions to bargain with employers for better wages and benefits. But the current system for forming unions and bargaining is broken. Employers routinely intimidate, harass, coerce and even fire workers who try to form unions and bargain for economic well-being. The Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800, S. 1041) would level the playing field for workers and employers and restore our freedom to choose a union.

Employee Free Choice Act

Not a fan of unions, McCain voted against the Employee Free Choice Act which would level the playing field for workers trying to form unions, but for a national "right to work" for less law that would attempt to eliminate unions altogether. McCain also voted to allow employers to hire permanent replacements during strikes and crossed the picket line to appear on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno." H.R. Vote 227, 6/26/07; S. Votes 188, 7/10/96; 189, 7/13/94.

Good Jobs

Obama believes in an "aggressive strategy to create good, middle-class jobs" and would invest in education, training and workforce development to compete in a global economy. Obama voted to raise the federal minimum wage in 2005, 2006 and 2007, and would extend the Family and Medical Leave Act as president. *Obama for America*; S. Votes 179, 6/21/06; 26, 3/7/05; H.R. 2, Vote 23, 1/24/07.

America's workforce is under pressure, facing stagnant wages, rapidly rising health care costs, disappearing retirement benefits, and an overall lack of job security. It has taken 10 years for America's minimum wage workers to get a raise, and families are still struggling to get by on what they earn. The next president must put a high priority on ensuring that the U.S. economy is creating good jobs at good wages.

Good Jobs

McCain has a poor record on job issues. He voted against minimum wage increases, overtime pay protections, the Family Medical Leave Act, worker safety standards, and extending unemployment benefits, and for repelling state minimum wage laws. H.R. Votes 23 & 24, 1/24/07; 25, 1/25/07; 37, 1/31/07; 39 & 42/1/3/07; S. Votes 179, 6/21/06; 26, 3/7/05; S. 1637, 7/9, 5/4/04; S. 7, 2/4/93; H.R. Votes 11, 2/4/93; 143, 6/22/00.

Good Jobs

Health Care

Obama's health care plan would cover every American and give them access to health benefits similar to those enjoyed by members of Congress. His plan also tackles medical inflation and spiraling health care costs, develops new mechanisms to extend portable, affordable coverage and reforms health care delivery to emphasize prevention and efficiency. *Newsday*, 5/29/07; *Obama for America*.

America has a health care crisis. Forty-seven million Americans have no health insurance, while millions more are feeling the pressure of skyrocketing health care and insurance costs and inadequate coverage. Our health care system needs serious, comprehensive reform that will provide guaranteed, affordable health care for all.

Health Care

McCain's health care proposal is similar to President Bush's failed plan. Like Bush's, McCain's plan undermines existing employer-based benefits and pushes workers into the private market on their own. It will reduce benefits, increase costs and leave many with no health care at all. *The Commonwealth Fund*, *Envisioning the Future*, 1/08; *Kaiser Family Foundation and HRET*, *Employer Health Benefits 2007 Annual Survey*.

Health Care

Trade & Manufacturing

Obama would fight for fair trade agreements with strong labor and environmental protections, renegotiate or opt out of NAFTA and stop giving tax breaks to companies that send jobs overseas. Obama voted against CAFTA, and would provide Trade Adjustment Assistance to retrain workers before they lose their jobs. *Building Trades Conference*, 4/15/08; *Cleveland Democratic Debate*, 2/26/08; *Detroit Free Press*, 6/3/08; S. 1307, Vote 170, 6/30/05; *Obama for America*.

U.S. trade deals in recent years have cost America's workers millions of jobs and lowered living and working standards for workers globally. The next president must fight for a trade policy that supports, rather than hurts, working families at home and abroad.

Trade & Manufacturing

McCain said NAFTA was a "good idea" and "free trade is the best thing that can happen to our nation". McCain voted for NAFTA, CAFTA, and trade agreements with Oman, Singapore, Chile and Morocco and supports trade with Colombia and South Korea. *Des Moines Register*, 11/27/07; *Reuters*, 2/25/08; S. Votes 190, 6/29/06, 292, 11/4/97; H.R. Votes 318, 7/31/03, 319, 7/31/03; 353, 11/3/99; 115, 5/16/02, 117, 5/21/02, 207, 8/11/02; McCain press release, 5/21/08.

Trade & Manufacturing

Retirement Security

Obama wants to strengthen Social Security and block attempts to privatize it. He has fought against raising the retirement age, cuts in Social Security and Medicare and worked to lower prescription drug prices for seniors. *Quad-City Times*, 9/21/07; S. Votes 49, 3/15/05; 47, 3/15/05; 287, 11/3/05; 132, 4/18/07.

After a lifetime of work, retirees deserve a basic level of security. But employer-provided pensions are disappearing and Social Security is under threat. The next president must strengthen Social Security, rather than allow dangerous privatization schemes, and protect workers' pensions and retirement savings.

Retirement Security

McCain still supports Bush's risky plan to privatize Social Security, voted to raise the Medicare eligibility age, missed a critical vote to reduce prescription drug costs for seniors, and voted to cut billions from Medicare. S. Votes 68, 3/16/06; 363, 12/21/05; *Wall Street Journal*, 3/3/08; *Campaign Website*, *Congressional Quarterly*, 12/26/05.

Retirement Security