

OPEIU LOCAL #9

Newsletter

For Bulletin Board Posting

MAY 2010

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PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, May 17, 2011
5:00 p.m.

Iron Workers Local 8
12034 West Adler Lane
Milwaukee, WI

Nominations in May

Due to a lack of quorum because of snow, sleet, hail and rain we were unable to have nominations at our April meeting. As a result of this, nominations for President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary, three (3) Trustees and seven (7) Executive Board members will be held at the May 17th General Membership meeting. If necessary a mail ballot election will be held following the meeting. Anyone who is interested in having their name placed in nomination for a position but is unable to attend the meeting should send a notice to the Local office that they want their name placed on the ballot and that they will accept the nomination.

Wisconsin's Proud, Progressive Traditions—with some under attack

The year 2011 will mark the 100th Anniversary of the enactment in Wisconsin of the nation's first workers' compensation law. In May of 1911 executive approval was given to that historic law. It was enacted with only token opposition in the Legislature and became effective immediately, beating out 4 other states that passed similar legislation but delayed implementation until 1912. It was a hard fought campaign to win acceptance of the program, which is not an accepted practice in industry. The original act was just a beginning and it lacked strong enforcement procedures, but it nonetheless was a pioneering act, well to be remembered.

Similarly, Wisconsin became the first state in the union to pass a collective bargaining law for public employees. Many public officials supported such a law since it provided for "order" that comes from developing a contract with employees through their union. Quickly many other states followed Wisconsin's example and enacted similar legislation. This system of public sector unions has largely worked by recognizing that the interests of the workers, the public and the officials (government) must be balanced. Unfortunately Wisconsin now has a Governor that has led the way in working to remove those very rights that were founded here. And, again, by example, other states are feeling it appropriate to try and follow suit. What a sad time it has become.

Ryan Budget Undermines Medicare and Medicaid to Transfer Wealth to Rich and Large Corporations

By Robert Kraig, Executive Director, Citizen Action of WI

Paul Ryan's budget, while pitched as a deficit reduction measure, is actually a thinly veiled plan to destroy Medicare and Medicaid as we know them in order to fund \$2.9 trillion dollars in additional tax giveaways to the wealthy and to transfer \$20 trillion to the health industry by giving them control over Medicare. The transfer to the health insurance industry alone will cost 6 times more than the shortfall in Social Security, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Ryan Devastates Medicare as we know it: Ryan's plan transforms Medicare into a voucher system that forces seniors to buy coverage from the private insurance industry. In the first year Ryan's system would double out-of-pocket costs for the typical senior (an increase of \$6,000 per year). Out of pocket costs would escalate over time because the voucher will be increased at a rate of 3% less than yearly medical inflation. Over time the cost share seniors pay would grow to over \$24,000 per year, or 68% of the median senior income. In addition, Ryan's plan would increase the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67, leaving millions of seniors to fend for themselves on the notoriously discriminatory individual insurance market.

Ryan Devastates Medicaid:

Medicaid provides health coverage for low income families and long term care for seniors and people with disabilities. Ryan's budget proposal turns Medicaid into a block grant to states that will increase much more slowly than the rate of health care inflation. Ryan's system would lead to a 49% cut in federal support for Medicaid, forcing many states to drastically cut eligibility and benefits. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, if Ryan's plan had been in effect over the last decade, WI would have lost \$3

billion in federal support for Medicaid during the current 2 year state budget, nearly doubling the state's deficit and forcing draconian cuts to BadgerCare, home care, nursing home care and SeniorCare.

Ryan Plan Increases Health Care Costs and Shifts Burden to Us:

Medicare and Medicaid are only difficult to afford because of the rapid rate of health care hyperinflation. The only serious effort under way to get health care costs under control is the Affordable Care Act, yet Ryan repeals it, guaranteeing that costs will continue to rise well above the rate of general inflation. Even worse, Ryan's privatization of Medicare will transfer \$30 trillion to the health insurance industry, which amounts to a \$100,000 wealth transfer from every man, woman and child in the U.S. According to the Congressional Budget Office, shifting Medicare to private insurance costs 11% more, due to insurance industry profit and overhead. Initially seniors on Medicare will pay on average \$4,380 just to cover insurance industry profits and overhead, and will pay \$9,930 per year on average within 20 years. This amounts to a health insurance tax on America's seniors.

For more information contact Citizen Action of Wisconsin at www.citizenactionwi.org.

As always if you have any problems do not hesitate to call or email the office.

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