



Your Vote Is Not Enough

Every election presents an invaluable opportunity to improve the climate for workers in this country. The November 2006 elections, however, are extraordinarily important for our members and for the lives of working people across this country. After too many long years in which the interests of the very rich and the corporate behemoths have held sway, we have a strong chance get back in the game, stop the slide toward radical inequality, and have our needs translated into law and policy once again.

A Democratic majority is only 15 seats away in the House and 6 seats away in the Senate. It will be a tough fight, but gaining Democratic control of Congress is a real possibility. Over all, however, about 75 House seats are considered to be in play, so there are at lot more than 15 seats that will need our vigorous efforts. The battle for the House is critical, since it offers the best hope for bringing some balance back to national politics.

In the states, there will be 36 governor's races in November, 22 of which will be in states that now have Republican governors. These races give us another terrific shot to shift the balance of power in this country. Governor's races are important not only for the states, but for national politics as well. The state house has been a stepping stone to the White House many times, especially in recent history; 4 of the last 5 presidents were former governors. State legislative races, as well as other state and local contests, will have important impacts on the lives of our members and on the labor movement at large. We need to work hard for sympathetic candidates in those races as well.

What can you do? First and foremost, of course, is getting out and casting your ballot. But you cannot stop there. Make sure your friends, co-workers, and family members vote too. Drive people who don't have their own transportation to the polls. Make sure anyone who needs an absentee ballot has one and knows how to make sure it gets counted. Volunteer for candidates, make phone calls. To find out how and where you can most usefully direct your efforts, contact your local union, and state and city labor councils and ask them how you can help.

This November's election can start to move this country back in the right direction. It can and will also pave the way for 2008, when—if we do what we have to do—we can finally bring someone who truly understands the needs of the people back to the White House.

Making political change through elections is an all-too-rare privilege around the world. Everyone who has that privilege, as we do here, has a duty to exercise it. As union members, we all have a further duty to use the democratic process to create a brighter future for our fellow members and their families, and for working people in general. If we work hard and work together in the coming weeks, I am confident that we can make this election day—November 7, 2006—a historical turning point toward a brighter future.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

This is to advise that the regular Mid-Winter Meeting of the General Executive Board is scheduled to be held at the Sheraton New Orleans (www.sheratonneworleans.com), 500 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130, at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, February 12, 2007, and will remain in session through and including Friday, February 16, 2007. All business to come before the Board must be submitted to the General Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.

Local union representatives planning to attend must make hotel reservations by calling the hotel directly at 504-525-2500 or 888-627-7033. Guest room rate for IATSE is \$189.00, plus applicable taxes, for single and double occupancy. In order to ensure that you receive the preferred room rate established for our meeting, you must identify your affiliations with the IATSE.

Cut Off Date: January 11, 2007.