

SEIU Local 517M E-Former – May 2011

SEIU Lobby Day is May 4th

SEIU Local 517M will be holding a Lobby Day at the Michigan Capitol in Lansing on Wednesday, May 4, 2011. Our voices have been heard outside the Capitol now it is time to make your voice heard inside the capitol! Meet with your legislator and let them know you will hold them accountable. More information and RSVP information is available at:

<http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/04/21/seiu-local-517m-lobby-day/>

State Provides Economic Overview to SEIU and Other Unions

On Thursday, April 21st, representatives from State Treasury and the State Budget office



presented their “economic presentation” to the Bargaining Teams from **SEIU Local 517M**, Michigan Corrections Organization/SEIU Local 526M, MSEA, the UAW, and AFSCME. A copy of the documents presented at this session can be [found here](#) or by contacting a member of the bargaining team. More information available at:

<http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/04/22/unions-here-economic-presentation/>

Visit the Redesigned SEIU517M.ORG



On April 11th we launched the newly redesigned www.seiu517m.org. The new website allows for comments on the different news posts, archiving of past news, listing of the recently posted articles, and categories to better find relevant information. There is now an on-line COPE donation form on the political action page, links to our photo gallery on Flickr and our Facebook page. There is also a “Letters to Legislators” page which lists all the Speak Out letter writing campaigns we currently have running. In the coming weeks other features will be added including a calendar feature! So check out the new site and direct comments and

suggestions to **Dave Corrie** at corried@seiu517m.org.

Region 1 Midland School Members Ratify First Contract

The Midland Schools Chartwells Chapter have ratified their first contract with SEIU 517M. This group of 48 food service providers in Midland Schools are very eager to participate in our Fight for a Fair Economy events and actions! Their new 3 year contract includes health, dental, vision, life and disability insurance. Also included are wage increases, work clothing and COPE language! Congratulations to Bargaining Committee Member Leaders **Barb Neil**, **Mary Mann**, **Ellen Carpenter** and **Kathy Richert**!

Region 2 Holds Steward Training



On April 15, 2011, a Steward Training was held at Muskegon Community College for 10 stewards from across Region 2. Divisional Vice President **Ray Clover** (pictured), Region 2 Program Coordinator **Jim Kehoe**, and Region 2 Labor Relations Specialist **Christine Fahl** conducted the training.

Region 3 Contract Updates

Taylor Schools has released Chartwells from their food service contract thanks to a lot of hard work from Taylor School Unit Board members. We are in cost savings talks in the Dearborn Heights School District, City of Hillsdale and St Clair County RESA. In St. Clair County, the Teacher Assistants have voted to not take the scheduled raise this year of 1.5%. The St. Clair County bus drivers and aides also voted to forgo the same 1.5% raise as well as allowing 9 aides to stay as subs in full-time positions for 1 year to be looked at again for school year 2012-13

Region 3 Flint Schools Bargaining

On April 28, 2011, the SEIU/Flint Schools Member Strength Bargaining Team met to begin consideration of management's request to voluntarily open the labor contracts due to expire on June 30, 2012 in order to help solve an \$8 million budget deficit by making concessions.

Our SEIU Team is made up of Union Chief Spokesperson **Howard Gordon**; **William Stewart** (Unit 100); **Brenda Greene** (Unit 150 and Unit 101); **Bea Barker** (Unit 140); **LaMarr Mitchell** (Unit 210 and Unit 220); **Hattie Young** (Unit 100) and **Tina Thompson** (Unit 100). The SEIU and Flint Schools Bargaining Teams have met twice; on April 11th and April 15th to discuss the financial condition of the school district and Management's requests for district-wide economic concessions to help balance the 2011-2012 school year budget. At this time, Management has not completed their budgetary analysis because the State of Michigan has not committed to the school districts how much state money they will receive. Because of this, no specific proposals for concessions have been received by the SEIU Member Strength Bargaining Team so, other than meeting, specifics have yet to be considered. When this eventually happens, as always, your Bargaining Team will be working with our overall membership to ultimately decide the direction of our union. Stay tuned!

Taxation Bill Passes State House

On April 28, 2011, the Michigan House passed **House Bill 4361 56 to 53**. This bill would tax retiree pensions and eliminates the earned income tax credit to pay for corporate tax cut. Corporations would end up paying \$1.7 billion (80%) less in Michigan taxes while retirees will pay \$300 million more to offset the corporate tax revenue loss. In addition, low income workers will lose their earned Income Tax Credit on average of \$400 per year to make up the revenue loss from the corporate tax cuts. SEIU has consistently opposed the shifting of taxes from those who can afford to pay to those who can least afford to pay. This tax shift vote fell mostly along party lines with 6 Republicans voting no with the Democrats. The Senates takes this bill up next and your letters and call to your Senator will be most important during the next few weeks. **SEIU strongly recommends a NO vote on this bill**. Sign up for our Lobby Day to be held May 4th and take your message personally to your member of the Legislature. The Roll Call vote on this bill is provided below:

Nays

Ananich (D), Barnett (D), Bauer (D), Bledsoe (D), Brown (D), Brunner (D), Byrum (D), Cavanagh (D), Clemente (D), Constan (D), Darany (D), Dillon (D), Durhal (D), Forlini (R), Geiss (D), Goike (R), Hammel (D), Haugh (D), Hobbs (D), Hovey-Wright (D), Howze (D), Irwin (D), Jackson (D), Kandrevas (D), LaFontaine (R), Lane (D), LeBlanc (D), Lindberg (D), Lipton (D), Liss (D), Lund (R), McCann (D), Meadows (D), Melton (D), Nathan (D), Oakes (D), Olumba (D), Outman (R), Rutledge (D), Santana (D), Schmidt, R. (D), Segal (D), Slavens (D), Smiley (D), Somerville (R), Stallworth (D), Stanley (D), Stapleton (D), Switalski (D), Talabi (D), Tlaib (D), Townsend (D), Womack (D)

Yeas

Agema (R), Bolger (R), Bumstead (R), Callton (R), Cotter (R), Crawford (R), Daley (R), Damrow (R), Denby (R), Farrington (R), Foster (R), Franz (R), Genetski (R), Gilbert (R), Glardon (R), Haveman (R), Heise (R), Hooker

(R), Horn (R), Hughes (R), Huuki (R), Jacobsen (R), Jenkins (R), Johnson (R), Knollenberg (R), Kowall (R), Kurtz (R), Lori (R), Lyons (R), MacGregor (R), MacMaster (R), McBroom (R), McMillin (R), Moss (R), Muxlow (R), Nesbitt (R), O'Brien (R), Olson (R), Opsommer (R), Ouimet (R), Pettalia (R), Poleski (R), Potvin (R), Price (R), Pscholka (R), Rendon (R), Rogers (R), Schmidt, W. (R), Scott (R), Shaughnessy (R), Shirkey (R), Stamas (R), Tyler (R), Walsh (R), Yonker (R), Zorn (R)

Governor's Proposals Sending Michigan Workers in the Wrong Direction

The State of Michigan is facing numerous challenges to working families, including anti-labor legislation and Governor Rick Snyder's budget proposal that dramatically shifts the tax burden onto the working poor and senior citizens. Since January, two notable pieces of legislation have passed: 1) Legislation reducing the length of time individuals can receive unemployment benefits from 26 weeks to 20 weeks, making Michigan the first state to do this. 2) Emergency Financial Manager legislation that gives government appointed Emergency Managers the authority to terminate or override approval of collective bargaining agreements, dissolve political structures such as councils, commissions and school boards, and consolidate services in schools, cities, townships and counties.

The governor's tax proposals include eliminating the Michigan Business Tax and replacing it with a 6 percent corporate tax. Under this change, about 95,000 businesses will not pay state business taxes. **Overall, it cuts business taxes by about 86 percent. The business tax cuts are paid for with a 31 percent increase in taxes on individuals.** All public and private pensions would be taxed under the governor's proposal. And of particular concern, the Michigan Earned Income Tax Credit would be eliminated. This change alone would push 25,000 people, including 14,000 children, into poverty. Some additional pending and anticipated components of the budget, or separate pieces of anti-worker legislation include:

- Up to \$700/pupil funding cut for public schools.
- Elimination of revenue sharing that will cut \$300 million from funding to local communities, much of which goes toward public safety, police and fire fighters.
- Freeze wages of and pass health care costs onto public workers.
- Require public employees to pay no less than 20 percent of health care plan costs.
- Allow the legislature to regulate the health benefits of public employees.
- Repeal of the Prevailing Wage Act.
- Force non-instructional public school services to be privatized, including transportation.
- Freeze teacher pay.
- Make it illegal for public space to be utilized for union activities.
- Deregulation of environmental protections.

The Governor appears to be using the state budget to make drastic cuts to programs that will harm working families, communities of color, young people and low-income individuals, while simultaneously reducing taxes for businesses and wealthy Michiganders.