



Vol. XL, No. 4  
JULY-AUGUST 2015

# Label Letter

Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

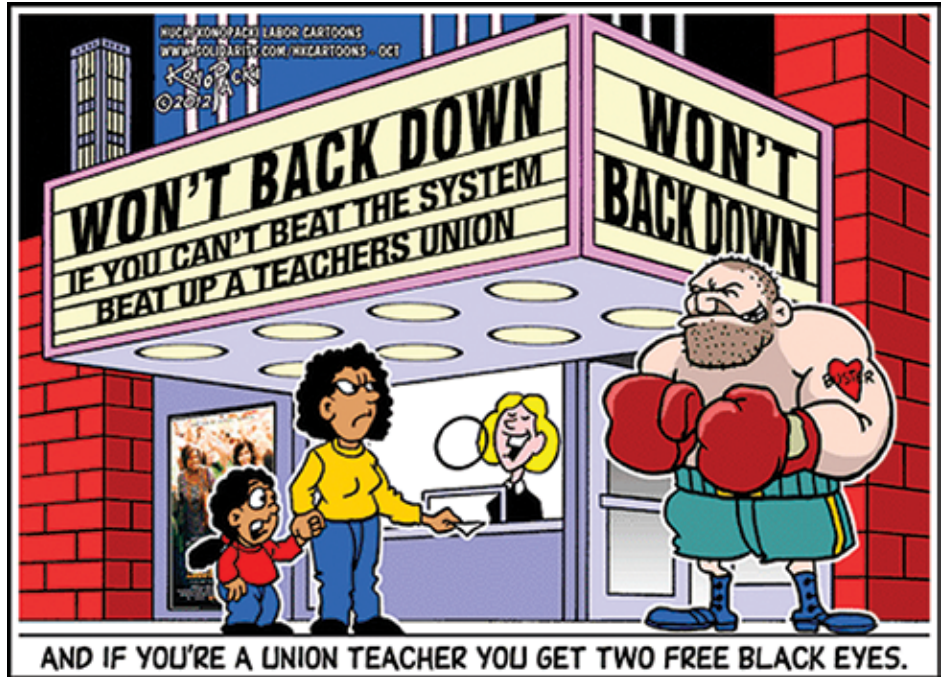
## BY THE NUMBERS: MAKING WORK PAY

ESTIMATED UNION HOURLY WAGE PREMIUM

Personal Care.....	<b>9.9%</b>
Sales.....	<b>14.4%</b>
Healthcare.....	<b>13.9%</b>
Food Service.....	<b>19.0%</b>
Administrative Support.....	<b>21.0%</b>
Police and Fire.....	<b>24.8%</b>
Groundskeeping.....	<b>27.7%</b>
Teaching.....	<b>24.7%</b>
Healthcare Professional.....	<b>14.6%</b>
Business and Finance.....	<b>19.3%</b>
Arts, Entertainment and Sports.....	<b>22.5%</b>
Computer Science.....	<b>17.0%</b>
Manufacturing.....	<b>27.7%</b>
Transportation.....	<b>35.4%</b>
Social Services.....	<b>32.9%</b>
Management.....	<b>34.1%</b>
Maintenance and Repair.....	<b>36.1%</b>
Construction.....	<b>41.6%</b>
Life, Physical and Social sciences.....	<b>48.2%</b>

Data Source: Current Population Survey, Merged Outgoing Rotation Group, 2014, as provided by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

Note: Figures calculated by The Century Foundation program assistant Mike Cassidy, based on multivariate regression model, controlling for key demographic and labor force characteristics.



## STANDING TALL IN TOUGH TIMES

### AFT KEEPS COLLECTIVE VOICE IN WORKPLACE

Today, 30 states spend less on education than they did before the Great Recession. More than half of America's public school students live in low-income households. Just last year—five years after the recession officially ended—there were still 320,000 fewer teachers, paraprofessionals, nurses, guidance counselors and librarians in schools than in 2007.

Shameful. That's the only way to describe this current state of affairs, and the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of Teachers have been calling it out at every level. We're standing strong with Newark, N.J., where citizens are demanding an end to 20 years of a failed state takeover that demonizes teachers and reduces teaching and learning to No. 2 pencils and standardized tests. We're standing strong with Pennsylvanians, who last year ousted a governor for

lavishing tax breaks on corporations while cutting \$1 billion from schools. And we're standing strong at the federal level, where some in Congress are trying to divert Title I dollars away from school systems serving the nation's poorest students.

It's no coincidence that a union willing to take these stands finds itself under attack. Across the country, politicians and well-funded organizations such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the billionaire Koch brothers, and super PAC after super PAC are using frivolous lawsuits, cookie-cutter legislation, and polarization to divide and conquer. Just last month, these anti-



By Lorretta Johnson,  
Secretary-Treasurer,  
American Federation  
of Teachers



# 2015 UNION MADE State Parks

**D**id you know that you own millions of acres of national parks, historic structures, cultural artifacts, ancient forests, snow-capped mountains, and clear blue lakes? Our public lands and waters belong to all Americans and are waiting for you to explore them!

You also employ thousands of union members who staff federal parks and monuments. **AFSCME** represents thousands of municipal workers at city and state parks and zoos. Interior Department workers who staff federal parks and monuments are also union members (**NFFE**, an affiliate of the **IAM**). And **AFGE** represents employees who build exhibits, conduct research and maintain the world-renowned Smithsonian Institute Museum in Washington, DC.

This year the Obama administration will give all fourth grade students and their families free admission to national parks and other federal lands for a full year.

The 'Every Kid in the Park' initiative is part of an effort to get school children

outdoors and more active. It will begin with the new school year this fall, which coincides with the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016.

Beyond the 'Every Kid in the Park' initiative, the National Park Service already offers free entrance days where the general public can visit one of the 127 national parks that actually have an entrance fee. There are currently 408 national parks with only 127 charging and entrance fee. Free entrance days remain on August 25, September 26 and November 11, 2015. You can visit the National Park Service website for additional information: [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

Support good jobs by visiting our national parks and other federal lands. ■

# ORGANIZING A UNION

## Could there be an App for That?

You can do almost anything these days using your smartphone. You can order a pizza, hail a cab, file your taxes or draft your will. Since Apple founder Steve Jobs debuted the iPhone in the summer of 2007, our virtual world has rapidly changed and evolved, the app has become an industry standard for corporations and labor unions alike. But the process of labor organizing hasn't kept pace.

But, what if there were an app for that?

In December 2014, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), released new rules that included shortening the time between the filing of a petition to form a union and when the employees vote to less than 30 days; ordering companies to make their internal e-mail systems available to employees for union organizing efforts; and a little-noticed provision that instructs the agency to devise methods for accepting electronically signed union authorization cards from employees.

The ability to e-sign union authorization cards is a big deal. In a recent report

from the Century Foundation, *Virtual Labor Organizing: Could Technology Help Reduce Income Inequality?*, authors Mark Zuckerman, Richard D. Kahlenberg, and Moshe Z. Marvit discuss how the creation of an online tool could assist employees who want to start a campaign to join a union at their workplace.

"We believe a new online tool designed to take employees through a step-by-step labor organizing process could be effective in increasing unionization," the group writes.

The report makes the case for a virtual platform that would allow average employees in workplaces across the country to organize and join a union while avoiding many of the roadblocks that employers often throw down when they see efforts to organize.

The trio lays out a plan for how they envision the app would work:

*"It would be designed to help workers engage with other employees as well as form an organizing committee, create*



*instructions for beginning and carrying on all facets of the organizing campaign, automatically file petitions and forms with the NLRB upon the show of sufficient support, and it would even offer model agreements on issues such as wages, benefits, scheduling policies, and health and retirement plans."*

"I believe an app would be an asset in the organizing toolbox," says Union Label and Service Trades Department President, Rich Kline. "I believe it would certainly appeal to younger workers who rely heavily on social media already. The idea that you can reach employees more discreetly without alerting employers to union activity can help Millennials who may be concerned about job security." ■

## WALK IN MY SHOES

**Jerry Harris,**  
CWA LOCAL 7818 SHOP STEWARD

## Does Your Union Buy Union?

I am the shop steward at a CWA Local 7818 represented print shop in the Inland Northwest. The company, Lo-Go, prints banners, stickers, decals and does embroidery and silkscreen. We also manufacture specialty items like tote bags, bandanas and other special projects to fulfill Union made/Union printed requests. We started making our own items in-house because we were having a hard time sourcing union-made, American-made products. We thought manufacturing these products in-house would bring us the

support of local area unions looking to 'buy-union,' but instead we've seen far too many unions choose the non-union route.

If we can't rely on our local unions to buy-union then why be a union company.

I urge you as union members and leaders to seek out union-made in the USA products and services.

Changes have got to be made not only for us but for all of the smaller union shops out there that are struggling. If a Union logo is printed, it had better have been printed by a Union shop — period. If a politician

is receiving Union contributions, they must use Union labor — period. Members need to be educated on what to look for — if they are wearing items showing their Union solidarity, they need to know that what they are wearing has been made in the USA and printed using Union labor — period.

We hear from many sources that American made items are very hard to find. Call us! We can find what is needed or we will make it!

Please contact us at [lo-go.sales@live.com](mailto:lo-go.sales@live.com) with any comments or requests. ■



# Lo-Go

Custom silkscreen, embroidery  
signs and car decals  
4444 W. Industrial Loop, #E  
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho  
208-704-2742

worker forces got a break when the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*. The plaintiffs in this case, backed by big anti-union money, are asking the court to reverse laws that have been in place for decades. They want the court to rule that unions in the public sector can't charge for the costs involved in getting a contract and making it stick in the workplace. The argument is set up to revolve around individuals and their First Amendment rights, but everyone knows what's really going on: This case is an outright attack on unions—an attempt to weaken us; to

keep us from representing our members; to silence our strong, collective voice for things that students, families, schools, and communities need and deserve. The other side seems upbeat, giddy at the thought that the high court could deliver the type of ruling that drains thousands of members from our ranks, a hit that could effectively silence the union for many years. The other side seems to have forgotten: This is not a glass-jaw union, not by a long shot.

The AFT has a history of taking principled stands even when there are big risks involved. It goes back more than a half-century, when we were one of the first unions to amend our constitution to ban whites-only locals. In 1957, the AFT took a hit from that decision—losing thousands of members when we expelled all remaining segregated locals. We took the hit, and we came back bigger and stronger. The challenge was the glue that bound us together—not the wedge that drove us apart—and you don't have to go back decades to see this at work.

Last November, after a really bad turnout in the midterm elections, Maryland elected a Republican governor who felt he owed some favors to people like the Koch brothers and Jeb Bush. One of the Kochs' puppet organizations, in fact, got a lot of publicity by claiming that Maryland has "the worst charter school law in the country"; and the governor introduced a law that would strip our charter school

teachers of their union membership. Our members turned out all winter, every week, traveling by bus to the capital in the snow and rain. When our charter school teachers testified in the state Senate, the room was packed until midnight. We pulled together with the community—forging lasting partnerships with groups like the American Civil Liberties Union, Casa de Maryland, Progressive Maryland and all the folks in the Baltimore Education Coalition—and we prevailed.

But something else happened. Our willingness to take a strong, decisive stand was seen and respected in schools around Maryland. Ultimately, it helped convert 200 workers from "agency fee" status to full AFT members. Pressure leading to growth: It's happened many times in our union's history. And it should give pause to today's critics, the ones who have taken to the courts, sure that they have the weapon to deal our union a permanent blow. We'll never stop fighting for the things that put us in the crosshairs to begin with, the measures that students, families and communities want and need—things like small classes, wraparound services, and enrichment that keeps music, art and PE in schools.

That's not to say these aren't dangerous times, or that we can't become a more effective union. They are, and we can. When I started out as an organizer in Baltimore decades ago, one out of every three Americans was in a labor

“Without a doubt, the issues are there to bind us together.”

*Across the country, politicians and well-funded organizations such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the billionaire Koch brothers, and super PAC after super PAC are using frivolous lawsuits, cookie-cutter legislation, and polarization to divide and conquer. Just last month, these antiworker forces got a break when the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*.*

union. Back then, we didn't just speak for community—we were the community. Entire blocks were made up of union households: teachers, nurses, steel workers, laborers, longshoremen. And what we understood then was that if we stood together, worked together and fought together, we could have a better life for ourselves and a better future for our children. Now, with greater attacks on collective bargaining and a relentless effort to break our backs, we must create substantive and sustained working partnerships—throughout the community, and within our very ranks.

Without a doubt, the issues are there to bind us together. Take racial equality and justice—concerns that recently have

mobilized communities across the nation, topics that for decades have engaged and mobilized our members as well. Late last year, the AFT established a task force that sparked discussions around the country with members from every AFT division, frank conversations that often focused on the issues facing black men in the communities our members serve. The response from the field was clear: Not only are our members excited to be involved in conversations about cultural and institutional racism, they are ready to do something about it. Our first task force meeting took place last June, an amazing kickoff that began the work in earnest with discussions on educational justice, economic justice and equity in our justice system.

This is union work. This is the collective voice that our members demand, their chance to be heard on the vital issues of the day. And this is the way that a strong and vibrant union of 1.6 million teachers, paraprofessionals, school support staff, higher education faculty and staff, public employees, nurses and healthcare workers responds when our members find themselves under attack by a few rich players intent on using the courts and legislatures to silence dissent.

We'll always be that voice; our members expect no less. And those who are betting they can weaken the union in ways that keep us from speaking out ... well, history shows that's hardly a smart bet. ■

## NLRB ISSUES COMPLAINT, SCHEDULES HEARING ON APWU ULP CHARGE AGAINST USPS

In August 2015, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) will decide if the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) violated the law when management entered into a deal with office-supply chain Staples without first bargaining with the American Postal Workers Union (APWU).

NLRB Region 5 issued the complaint and scheduled a hearing on the Unfair Labor Practice charge that the USPS illegally subcontracted work to Staples and ordered the agency to return the work that existed in July 31, 2014, to the APWU bargaining unit. The complaint also states that the USPS engaged in “bad faith bargaining,” when it refused to provide the APWU with information and violated the subcontracting provision of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The USPS instituted the pilot program in Staples stores in the fall of 2013 when it created mini-post offices in more than 80 Staples locations. When the program first began, APWU demanded that the store's postal counters be staffed by USPS employees. When the post office refused, the union launched its ‘Stop Staples’ campaign.

The campaign was aimed at educating consumers about the secretive back door deal that “privatizes the retail operations of the public Postal Service; transfers living-wage, union jobs to low-wage jobs, and compromises the safety and security of the U.S. mail,” the union wrote.

In April of last year the union called for an AFL-CIO endorsed boycott of the retail giant.

The union says the ruling represents an important step in the battle against privatization of the Postal Service. But APWU President Mark Dimondstein says: “The boycott of Staples and its online subsidiary, Quill.com, is still on. Let's turn up the heat!” ■



**CORRECTION:** In the March-April edition of the Label Letter we incorrectly stated that Missouri Governor, Jay Nixon, had introduced ‘Right-to-Work’ legislation in his state. The article, “Right-to-Work (for Less) Legislation Popping Up Around the Country” should not have included Governor Nixon. Although RTW legislation was passed in Missouri, it was done by the legislature. Governor Nixon vetoed the bill in June, calling the bill harmful to the middle-class. **We applaud Governor Nixon.**



# Leadership Changes Abound for U.S. Unions

Several of the nation's top unions have new leadership in place following a slew of retirements.



Chris Shelton

## CWA

At the Communications Workers of America (CWA), Larry Cohen retired after 10 years at the helm of the 700,000-member union of telephone, airline, broadcast, printing, journalism, and

government workers, among others. Chris Shelton, the longtime leader of CWA District 1, in New York and New Jersey, succeeds Cohen as the incoming president, voted into the top spot at the union's 75th Convention in June.

Shelton will be joined by Sara Steffens who was elected to the number two spot at CWA replacing Annie Hill as Secretary-Treasurer.



Lonnie R. Stephenson

## IBEW

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) released a statement in late May announcing the retirement of President Edwin D. Hill. "In a brief

email to his International Office staff, Hill said, "I came to this decision after much thought and reflection, concluding it was the right time for the next generation of

IBEW leadership to come to the fore." Hill, a second-generation journeyman electrician and member of Beaver, PA, IBEW Local 712, held the position of president for nearly 15 years. Upon Hill's recommendation, the leader of the 725,000-member Brotherhood was replaced by Lonnie R. Stephenson, vice president of IBEW's Sixth District, covering Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota. IBEW Secretary-Treasurer Sam Chilia will continue to serve in that capacity.



Joseph Sellers, Jr.

## SMART

At the International Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers (SMART), General President Joseph Nigro stepped down on April 30 to focus on his health, the union announced.

The SMART General Executive Council named General Secretary-Treasurer Joseph Sellers, Jr., to fill the position of general president, and Chief of Staff Richard McClees to fill in as general secretary-treasurer.

Nigro, who is recovering from a series of recent surgeries, had served as general president since July 2011. He announced his decision to retire in a recent letter to union leaders.



Eric Dean

## IRONWORKERS

Also in April, Ironworkers General President Walter Wise announced his retirement. In a letter to the union's members and staff, Wise a 42-year veteran of the Ironworkers, said

that the general executive council had elected Eric Dean as the union's thirteenth general president. Dean hails from Local 63 in Chicago.



Marc Perrone

## UFCW

Earlier this year at the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) International Convention Marc Perrone, a labor leader who has committed four decades to fighting

for hard working families, was elected President of the 1.3 million member union.

Perrone took over the top spot from retiring International President Joe Hansen, who had led the union for more than a decade.

In his address to Convention Delegates after his election, Perrone said: "The ideas to build a stronger union do not lie within any one individual, they lie within all of us." ■

# AFGE



## SPOTLIGHT THE LABEL

### AFGE Sues OPM Over Data Breaches

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) filed a class action lawsuit against the Office of Personnel Management regarding the recent cyber attacks that exposed the personal data of more than 20 million current and former federal employees.

The suit names former OPM Director Katherine Archuleta, Chief Information Officer Donna Seymour and government contracting company Keypoint Government Solutions as defendants.

The union is suing OPM in an effort to force the agency to strengthen its cyber defenses and compensate federal employees harmed by the recent attacks.

J. David Cox, AFGE National President believes that the suit will force changes where numerous congressional hearings have not. "Sometimes it takes the court system

to mandate that agencies do various things," said Cox in a media briefing in June. "This has rose to such a level that clearly we're looking for relief and all the proper procedures to be put into place. If the only way we can get that is through the court system, then that's the direction we have to go."

The suit alleges that OPM violated the Privacy Act of 1974 by failing to fix cyber security flaws that it had known about since at least 2009. It says the agency was negligent because it did not act on the warnings of its inspector general.

Archuleta stepped down from her post as OPM Director after news broke that at least 22.1 million personnel records had been exposed, far more than the initial reports predicted. ■

# AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS

## JULY-AUGUST



### HOSPITALITY, TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

#### SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!

Please support the workers in these hotels by continuing to boycott the following properties:

- **ANCHORAGE, AK:** Hilton; Sheraton
- **CALIFORNIA:** Hilton LAX, Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, Hyatt Regency Sacramento, Hyatt Fisherman's Wharf San Francisco, Hilton Long Beach, Embassy Suites Irvine, Le Meridien San Diego
- **RHODE ISLAND:** Renaissance Providence Downtown Hotel
- **SEATTLE:** Grand Hyatt Seattle and Hyatt at Olive 8 Seattle

#### SUBMITTED BY United Steelworkers (USW)

- **PALERMO PIZZA**

### LEGAL

#### SUBMITTED BY American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees

- **GLEASON, DUNN, WALSH & O'SHEA**
- **HARDIN, LAZARUS AND LEWIS, LLC**
- **MCDONALD, LAMOND, CANZONERI AND HICKERNELL**

### OTHERS

#### SUBMITTED BY Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers International Union

- **R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.** Camel (cigarettes, snus, orbs, strips and sticks), Pall Mall, Winston, Salem, Doral, Kool, Misty, Capri. Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Co. is a non-union sister company of RJR producing Santa Fe Natural American Spirit cigarettes

#### SUBMITTED BY American Postal Workers Union

- **STAPLES** retail stores

The global Hyatt boycott has ended. However, there are a number of local Hyatts with continuing labor disputes.

To avoid current or future strikes, boycotts, and other labor disputes at Hyatts or any other venues, use the UNITE HERE Union Hotel Guide at [unionhotelguide.com](http://unionhotelguide.com) or download their iPhone App, which lists which hotels to patronize or avoid.

To avoid the prospect of labor conflict during your stay at a hotel, insist on protective contractual language when you make a reservation or organize an event. Suggested model protection language can be found on UNITE HERE!'s website at [www.hotelworkersrising.org/media/modelprotectivelanguage.pdf](http://www.hotelworkersrising.org/media/modelprotectivelanguage.pdf)

## POLICY GUIDELINE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF AFFILIATES' BOYCOTTS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has developed policy guidelines that regulate how the federation endorses boycotts undertaken by its affiliates. To get AFL-CIO sanction, boycotts should be directed at primary employers.

### THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE PROVISIONS:

- All requests to the national AFL-CIO for endorsement must be made by a national or international union.
- Any affiliated union with a contract in force with the same primary employer will be contacted by the AFL-CIO to determine whether there is an objection to the federation's endorsement.
- Affiliates will be asked to provide the AFL-CIO with background information on the dispute in a confidential information survey. Prior to endorsement of the boycott, the executive officers, or their designees, will meet with the national union's officers, or their designees, to discuss the union's strategic plan and timetable for the boycott, or other appropriate tactics, and to discuss the federation's role.
- The national or international union initiating the boycott is primarily responsible for all boycott activities; the AFL-CIO will provide supplemental support.
- Boycotts will be carried on the AFL-CIO national boycott list for a period of one year, and the endorsement will expire automatically at the end of that time. National and international unions may request one-year extensions of the listings for actions where an organizing or bargaining campaign is actively in place.

*(These guidelines were adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in April 2011.)*

PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE PAID  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

TIME VALUE

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# EndNotes

By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*



## Label Letter

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## SUPPORT THE TEACHER'S FIGHT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION



**M**ost Americans place a high value on public education. Typically, public education is seen as a cornerstone of democracy, producing a literate, informed electorate.

Of course, that's exactly why some of the most powerful members of the vaunted One Percent are out to undermine, if not destroy, public education.

Get rid of that pesky literate and well-informed electorate, submerge the public space with political propaganda ungrounded in fact, loaded with fearful imagery, and they have what they want: elected officials subservient to their oligarchy.

But we still have a sound system of public education that unionized teachers are

defending. Repressive regimes rest upon the uneducated who are easily controlled. That's why the opponents of public education are attacking teachers, attacking tenure and professional standards for teachers.

Foremost among these opponents is the Koch brothers' American Legislative Exchange Council, a far-right organization opposing environmental rules, minimum wage laws, affordable housing laws and paid sick days. Did you know, for instance, that the ALEC's minions in Wisconsin have proposed

certifying high school dropouts to teach in public schools.

We hear from politicians of all persuasions that children are important to the future strength of our nation. How strong will they and the US of A be if they are taught by dropouts.

The teachers need and deserve our support. They are fighting for our kids and for a future we want to see. As AFT Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson says in this issue of the *Label Letter*, the teachers won't quit in the fight for "measures that students, families and communities want and need." ■

**"...opponents of public education are attacking teachers, attacking tenure and professional standards for teachers."**