

THE GENDER WAGE GAP:



Women who work full time, year-round earn **just 84 cents** for every dollar earned by a White man.

All women who work (including those in part-time and seasonal jobs) earn **just 78 cents** for every dollar earned by a White man.



AFL-CIO

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NEWSLETTER

Week Ending: March 15, 2024

From the Desk of President Martin

NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE

Day 41 of the 60 day legislative session was Tuesday which was also the day the legislature began debate on budget bills. You can find the Appropriations Committee full summary of the budget [here](#). We should also know soon what will be in the Revenue Committee's priority bills promoting the Governor's property tax initiative.

Part of LB 1413-Transfer and provide for the transfer of funds and create and change the use, and distribution of funds includes recommending a transfer of \$70 million from the State Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund (SUIT) in FY2023-24 to the General Fund. Of this amount, \$10 million is transferred to fund the \$10 million General Fund appropriation to continue the Department of Labor's workforce development program. Funds in the SUIT Fund originate from all state unemployment insurance tax collected under sections 48-648 to 48-661. The transfers require amending the provisions of the fund to allow transfer to the General Fund. Projected fund balance at the end of FY2024-25 will be approximately \$7.2 million.

The business community is opposed to this transfer of funds and here are their reasons why:

- Transferring funds from the State Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund (SUIT) to be used for any purpose other than unemployment benefits is unfair to the businesses who must pay taxes into the Trust Fund. While there is a case to be made for transferring some of those funds to workforce development as the bill currently does, that should be part of a larger conversation on the use applicability

of these funds and what qualifies as worker training.

- If there is a concern with the amount available in the SUIT fund, state legislators should explore ways to either eliminate the tax or expand its use – for example, more funding could be used for re-employment purposes, such as worker training and retention.
- Senators should not be confiscating taxes paid into a fund exclusively by employers for employees in order to pay for unrelated and temporary property tax relief purposes, particularly since its unclear what the needs are or whether the transfer is even necessary.

For once, we agree with the business community, but not specifically on their reasons, but hey, we can use their reasoning too! [We ask that you contact your Senator](#) to oppose the "raid" of the Unemployment Insurance fund. This is not acceptable to working families. This money should not be diverted away from the original intent and that is to supplement workers incomes when they find themselves jobless, through no fault of their own, and unable to support themselves or their family while they continue to search for work. There are workers who do not own property and therefore, would not benefit from property tax relief if monies from this fund were diverted.

Read more on the budget proposals at [Open Sky Policy's article: Three things to know about budget proposal](#).

UPDATE ON LB1170

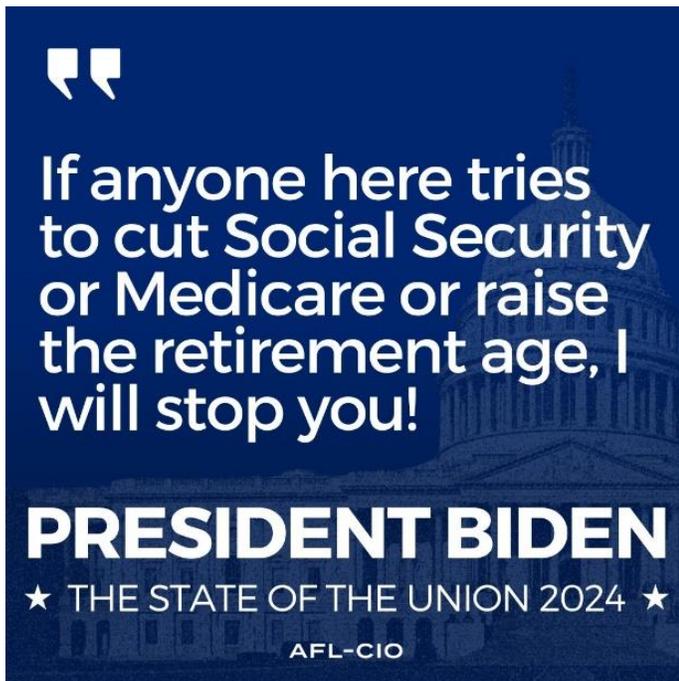
LB 1170, the Business and Labor Committee's priority bill that reduced UI benefits from 26 weeks to 16 weeks, was successfully filibustered last week by labor supporters and has been taken off the agenda because the bill does not have the 33 votes needed to stop the filibuster. At this point, we do not believe that this bill will come back to the floor for further debate this year, but stranger things have happened. **THANK YOU ALL FOR REACHING OUT AND CONTACTING YOUR SENATORS IN OPPOSITION TO THIS BILL.** It is because of your activism that we were successful.

STATE OF THE UNION

Last week President Biden gave his State of the Union address. I hope you were able to watch this as he gave a resounding message that the State of the Union is strong. President Biden is the most pro-union President we have ever had in the United States and he reiterated this message in his speech. President Biden's record throughout his first term demonstrates that he's the right choice for

working people. He has led our economy out of crisis with record-low unemployment; made historic investments in America's infrastructure, manufacturing and good union jobs; strengthened workers' rights; protected our retirements; boosted Buy American rules; lowered prescription costs; and more. But above all, President Biden has championed unions. He's the first president ever to walk a picket line, during the UAW strike last year. President Biden plans on doing even more in his second term; making the wealthy and corporations pay their fair share in taxes and putting the middle class first; saving our democracy and protecting women's reproductive health while our rights and freedoms are at stake; and uniting the country in a time where politics is more divisive than ever. He has our backs, and he has America's back. A message that resonated strongly with me is what he said about Social Security and Medicare, that if anyone tries to cut Social Security and Medicare, HE WILL STOP THEM!

The AFL-CIO has enthusiastically endorsed President Biden for President of the United States and I hope you will join us in your support.



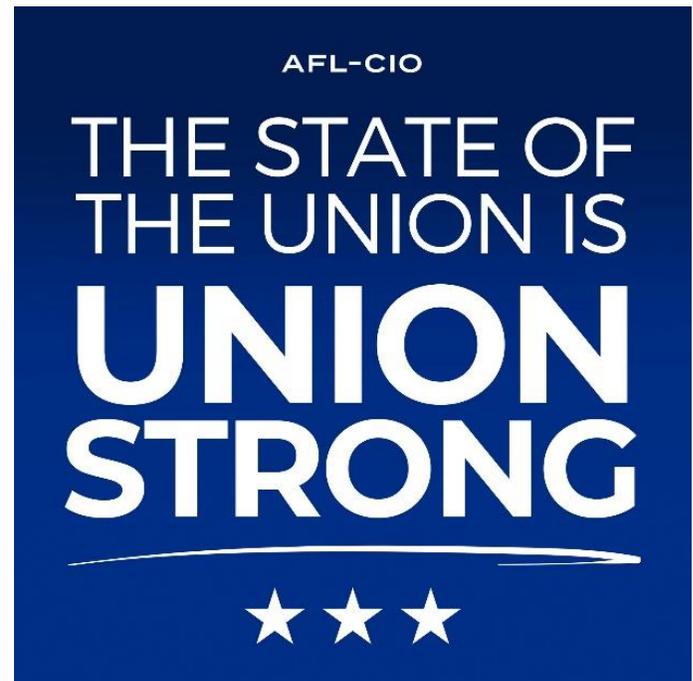
“

If anyone here tries to cut Social Security or Medicare or raise the retirement age, I will stop you!

PRESIDENT BIDEN

★ THE STATE OF THE UNION 2024 ★

AFL-CIO



AFL-CIO

THE STATE OF
THE UNION IS
**UNION
STRONG**

★ ★ ★

How did our representatives vote?



AFL-CIO Legislative Scorecard

This voting record lets you know where your lawmakers stand on issues important to working families, including strengthening Social Security and Medicare, protecting the right to join a union, improving workplace safety and more.

aflcio.org/scorecard

- As support for labor unions is at a record high and waves of organizing are sweeping across the country, working families are keeping a close eye on who is looking out for us in Congress.
- It's not about what political party a member belongs to, it's about whether their vote represents the interests of people who work for a living or the rich and powerful. Are they voting to keep the government funded and help working people? Are they voting for administration appointees who look out for workers and hold the powerful accountable? Are they voting against bills that would undo key safety rules or cut essential programs?
- Unfortunately, House Republican leadership is dominated by anti-worker zealots, including Speaker Mike Johnson (2023 score of 0% and a lifetime rating of 9%) and Rep. Virginia Foxx (2023 score of 10% and a lifetime rating of 8%).
- 93 Republicans had a score this year of zero and the top Republican score was 20%.
- Working families continue to enjoy the support of labor champions, including all Democrats, except for 12, who had a 100% score in 2023—many of them continue to have 100% lifetime scores.
- Another key takeaway is despite the *rhetoric* coming from some Republicans about support for workers, their *actions* haven't lined up and we haven't seen any meaningful changes in how they vote, including Sens. Josh Hawley and JD Vance who both had a 2023 score of 0%.
- The extremist House Republicans are in the pocket of big corporations. Their populist rhetoric is all talk and not backed up when it's time to vote. They're corporate cronies who side with millionaires and billionaires instead of helping working people who are struggling to get by.
- Methodology—A dozen or so “key votes” are chosen for the scorecard that represents the diversity of AFL-CIO affiliate union interests and AFL-CIO vote recommendation letters, of which more than 50 are sent a year.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler on Equal Pay Day

For Equal Pay Day—the [day](#) in 2024 a woman needs to work until to catch up to what a man made in 2023—AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler issued the following statement:

(Washington, D.C., March 12, 2024)—Today, as we observe Equal Pay Day, we are reminded of the persistent injustice faced by working women across our nation. It is unacceptable that for the past 20 years the gender wage gap has remained largely unchanged as big corporations and the wealthy—along with many Republicans—resisted change. But a new wave of hope and organizing is building in the fight for equality, and the labor movement knows that when working people stand together in a union, we have the strength and power to demand equal pay for equal work.

An #EqualPayDay reminder that it's not rude to discuss your salary. Keeping it secret is an outdated management trick to hide pay inequalities and unfair wages.

Talk about your salaries. Openly. Demand fair pay & organize. 🙌

The labor movement plays an integral role in fixing the gender wage gap. Women in unions earn 22% more than nonunion women; for women of color, the wage gap is essentially closed when they have a union contract. And it's better in a union for more than just salary. A union contract also means more protection against harassment, discrimination and other abuses women routinely face on the job, as well as health and safety policies, paid leave, and retirement protections.

We remain steadfast in our efforts to close the gender pay gap once and for all. This means advocating for policies that promote pay transparency, strengthen anti-discrimination laws and ensure fair wages for all workers. It also means challenging outdated attitudes and norms that perpetuate gender stereotypes and devalue women's contributions in the workforce. Unions are more popular now than they've been in generations because they're the answer in the fight for fairness on the job, paid sick days, child care, equal pay and economic justice for women. We stand in solidarity with women everywhere who are demanding fair treatment and equal opportunities in every workplace.

Additional information:

- While women who work full time, year-round earn 84 cents for every dollar earned by a man, when part-time or seasonal jobs are included, this number drops to 78 cents.
 - Asian American women working full time, year-round are paid 93 cents, and all earners (including part-time and seasonal) are paid 80 cents for every dollar paid to non-Hispanic White men.
 - Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women working full time, year-round are paid 66 cents, and all earners (including part-time and seasonal) are paid 60 cents for every dollar paid to non-Hispanic White men.
 - Moms working full time, year-round are paid 74 cents, and all earners (including part-time and seasonal) are paid 62 cents for every dollar paid to dads.
 - Latinas working full time, year-round are paid 57 cents, and all earners (including part-time and seasonal) are paid 52 cents for every dollar paid to non-Hispanic White men.
 - Black women working full time, year-round are paid 69 cents, and all earners (including part-time and seasonal) are paid 66 cents for every dollar paid to non-Hispanic White men.
- Although women comprise just under half of the workforce in the United States, they make up two-thirds of the workforce in the 40 lowest-paying jobs, including jobs in the care, service and hospitality industries. Women also experience higher rates of poverty than men.
- Based on this wage gap, a woman, regardless of her race or ethnicity, would lose \$399,600 over the course of a 40-year career, undercutting her ability to provide for her family and save for retirement.

Five Nebraska legislative candidates have already raised more than \$100k

March 11, 2024 **Nebraska** Examiner, By: Aaron Sanderford

LINCOLN — The price of mounting a credible bid for the Nebraska Legislature keeps rising, with 2023 fundraising tallies hinting at 2024 being another banner year for six-figure races.

Five candidates for the \$12,000-a-year job had already raised more than \$100,000 in 2023, a pre-election-year — a number that shows an accelerating trend from recent years, based on year-end fundraising reports from the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission.

Top legislative fundraiser in 2023 (all incumbents)

1. Eliot Bostar, \$205,000
2. Carolyn Bosn, \$140,000
3. Jen Day, \$113,000
4. Ray Aguilar, \$110,000
5. Kathleen Kauth, \$101,000

Top legislative candidate cash on hand in 2023 (all incumbents)

1. Mike McDonnell*, \$277,000
2. Eliot Bostar, \$255,000
3. Julie Slama*, \$146,000
4. Ray Aguilar, \$100,000

*Not running this year

For the 2020 election, a record 27 Nebraska legislative candidates raised more than \$100,000. For races in 2022, 20 raised \$100,000 or more. As recently as the 2010s, only seven or eight candidates raised that much for most legislative elections.

Bostar leads the pack

State Sen. Eliot Bostar of Lincoln, a Democrat in the officially nonpartisan Legislature, led in funds raised in 2023, with \$205,000. That pushed his campaign cash on hand to \$255,000, including money raised in previous years.

Much of that money came from trial lawyers, family members, some of the top Lincoln-area Democratic donors and a conservation-related political action committee that listed him as executive director.

Bostar's campaign spent about \$38,000 in 2023, mostly on helping other candidates.

Asked about the push for earlier fundraising, Bostar said he learned the hard way in 2022 that estimates about what it would take to win in his district were low.

In that race against Republican Jacob Campbell, the two candidates raised and spent at least \$600,000 combined, one of the costliest legislative races in Nebraska history.

"I think I estimated too low the first time around, and I didn't want to make that mistake again," Bostar said.



On March 1, the deadline to file to run for office, the Republican who had filed to run against Bostar, Philippe Bruce, withdrew from the race. That left Bostar funded for an election fight that might not come, an outcome he said he did not expect. Asked what he might do with the money, he said he didn't expect to run unopposed and hadn't thought much about it yet. Senators are limited to serving two consecutive terms.

He said he understands people who question raising and spending so much money for a seat that pays like a part-time job. But he says candidates run to help others, not for the pay.

Bosn leads newcomers

State Sen. Carolyn Bosn of Lincoln, appointed by Gov. Jim Pillen to replace former State Sen.

Suzanne Geist of Lincoln, raised the next most at \$140,000 and had \$125,000 in cash.

She had help from the family of Tom Peed of Sandhills Publishing and many major GOP donors statewide. Her campaign reported spending about \$15,000, mainly on consulting.

Bosn, a former Lancaster County prosecutor, said she attended meetings, visited businesses in her district, spoke to constituents and built relationships. But, she said, she was "very shocked when the six-figure numbers came in."

"I was surprised at the amount that some races cost," she said.

Her likely opponent, Nicki Popp, raised \$23,000 and had \$9,400 in cash. Her donors included State Sen. Jane Raybould of Lincoln. Popp, who is

registered nonpartisan, spent \$16,000, mostly on consultants.

Day, Aguilar raising big for tough races

Incumbents facing tough election fights this fall were next, with Democratic State Sen. Jen Day of Omaha raising \$113,000 and listing \$74,000 in campaign cash.

She had help from the family of University of Nebraska Regent Barbara Weitz and State Sen. Tony Vargas of Omaha. Day spent about \$50,000, mostly on campaign operations.

She faces two GOP candidates in right-leaning District 49. Bob Andersen raised \$29,000 and had \$17,000 in cash. Caleb Muhs raised \$26,000 and had \$16,000 in cash.

Andersen got help from former Nebraska gubernatorial candidate Charles Herbster and spent \$11,000. Muhs got help from the political action committee supporting Nebraska realtors and spent \$13,000.

Grand Island State Sen. Ray Aguilar, a Republican, raised \$110,000 and listed \$100,000 in cash on hand for his central Nebraska race.

Aguilar, who is serving his second stint in the Legislature after having been term-limited, said he has talked with some of his colleagues about how much these races cost.

“You start to wonder where all this will end,” he said. “It’s expensive.”

One of Aguilar’s opponents, former State Sen. Dan Quick of Grand Island, reported raising \$85,000 and listed \$72,000 in cash.

Kauth preps for SW Omaha fight

The final early member of the six-figure fundraising club for 2024 is State Sen. Kathleen Kauth of Omaha, who serves parts of southwest Omaha.

She raised \$101,000 and had \$57,000 in cash.

She received help from Herbster and Attorney General Mike Hilgers. Kauth spent \$52,000 in 2023, largely on consultants and campaign operations.

She told the Examiner that legislative races in Douglas County are getting more expensive every election cycle. She estimated that her race could cost \$180,000 to \$220,000, without outside spending.

“That is an astonishing number,” she said.

Her top Democratic opponent, Mary Ann Folchert of Omaha, raised \$51,000 and had \$24,000 in cash on hand. She received help from some top local donors, including Michael Yanney. Folchert spent \$31,000 in 2023 on fundraising and other campaign operations.

Ballard, Derner raise for tough Lincoln race

State Sen. Beau Ballard, who was appointed to his northwest Lancaster County seat, appears to be headed for a tough first election. He raised \$89,000 and had \$83,000 in cash on hand.

One of his top supporters is Hilgers, the senator he replaced in the Legislature. Ballard’s campaign spent about \$8,100 in 2023, mainly on operations. His likely opponent, Democrat Seth Derner, raised \$61,000 and listed \$52,000 in cash. He got help from the Omaha-based Weitz family and the union representing electrical workers.

Of all the legislative candidates, Omaha lawyer Tracy Hightower-Henne, a Democrat, spent the most in 2023. She is among several candidates running to represent northeastern Douglas County. She spent nearly \$63,000 last year, reports show, including more than half on a parade entry during Native Omaha Days in North Omaha.

McDonnell, Slama leaving with big war chests

One of the most interesting tidbits from last year’s legislative fundraising documents is the handful of senators not running again who are leaving office with significant sums.

Chief among them is State Sen. Mike McDonnell of Omaha, who has been considering a run for Omaha mayor. He raised \$22,000 in 2023 and had \$277,000 in cash. Unions helped him.

State Sen. Julie Slama of Dunbar raised \$53,000 and amassed \$146,000 in cash. The lawyer announced right before the deadline for incumbents to run that she would not run for re-election.

She has said she wants to focus on being a new mom. Political insiders have said she might run for a different statewide office later, such as secretary of state or treasurer, an office she applied for last year when it became vacant.

Other senators leaving with major cash on hand include Vargas with \$101,000, State Sen. John Lowe of Kearney with \$46,000, Sen. Tom Brewer, who represents north-central Nebraska, with \$28,000, and Sen. Lou Ann Linehan of Omaha with \$15,000.

Vargas is running for Congress in the Omaha-based 2nd Congressional District for a seat held by Republican Don Bacon. Vargas narrowly lost to Bacon in 2022.

The Nebraska primary is May 14. The top two vote-getters, regardless of party, advance in the officially nonpartisan races to the general election in November.

Rail Workers, Labor, and Elected Officials Rally for Rail Safety

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW)

IAM District 19, the IAM Rail Division, and their allies took to the streets recently in Los Angeles to call on immediate action to protect communities from the recent scourge of railway accidents.

February 29, 2024

The coalition called on the Senate to pass the bipartisan **Railway Safety Act (S. 576)**, which would mandate vital safety measures and take a significant step toward safeguarding railway employees and the public.

“The freight rail industry’s primary focus is profit, often at the expense of safety for workers and communities,” **IAM International President Brian Bryant** said at the rally.

“Congress must pass comprehensive legislation to address long-standing safety problems in the freight rail industry.”

U.S. Reps. **Jimmy Gomez** (D-Calif.) and **Nanette Barragán** (D-Calif.) spoke at the rally and reaffirmed their support.

The Railway Safety Act would **prohibit railroad carriers from imposing impractical deadlines** on railcar and locomotive inspectors. This ensures inspections are conducted thoroughly and diligently, promoting overall rail safety for communities.

“Rail safety affects not only rail workers but all people, communities big and small, and cities like Los Angeles,” said **Josh Hartford**, **IAM Special Assistant to the International President for the IAM Rail Division**. “The Railway Safety Act will begin to hold railroads accountable.”

The legislation also mandates that only highly skilled and qualified personnel are authorized to



perform inspections, specifically for locomotives and pre-departure railcars. This eliminates the risk of relying on operating crews or untrained individuals, contributing to enhanced safety in rail transportation.

Other featured speakers and attendees included **IAM Western Territory General Vice President Gary R. Allen**, **IAM District 19 President and Directing General Chairman Andrew Sandberg**, the **Transportation Communications Union (TCU/IAM)**, the **Los Angeles County Federation of Labor**, the **California Federation of Labor**, the **Transportation Trades Department**, the **Brotherhood of Railway Signalmen**, the **American Train Dispatchers Association**, **SMART-TD Union**, **Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1227**, and the **Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen**.

Lincoln Central Labor Union Candidate Screening

On Sunday, March 10th, Lincoln Central Labor Union affiliated locals held their Candidate Screening for the 2024 election.

Candidates submitted answers to a questionnaire that had been mailed to them in advance. Union officials who were present had an opportunity to ask additional questions of the candidates.

After much discussion and consideration, the LCLU made their endorsement recommendations. The candidate names and races have been sent to Nebraska State AFL-CIO President, Sue Martin and they will be a part of the COPE Convention on March 23rd.



Women's History Month

For NALC Branch 654 member Dominique Brooks, being a letter carrier means looking out for your community. One cold morning, she saw a boy in a parking lot on her route wearing nothing but his pajamas and socks. When she didn't see an adult with him, she jumped into action. Brooks put her coat around the boy to keep him warm and called the police. After the police arrived, the boy led them to his home where his parents were sleeping and unaware of his escape. All were grateful for Brooks' quick-thinking and compassion.



IBEW Local 1517 swears in new members

Alliance, Nebraska “We had the pleasure of swearing in three new members to the Local at the February meeting. This new generation of railroad worker is entering a completely different industry than it was just 10 years ago. As officers, our jobs

educating these new railroaders is now of the utmost importance. The fight is endless, but with strength in numbers being the goal, the small glimmer of hope is growing little-by-little.”
-President David Brennan

#essentialworkers #apprenticeships #union #ibew #UnionStrong #solidarity #railroad #organize



President David Brennan swearing in new members during the July 2023 and February 2024 meetings.

Nebraska & SW Iowa BUILDING & TRADES Chili Cook Off



The Nebraska & Southwest Iowa Building and Trades Chili Cookoff is in the books!

There was a great turnout for the event. With proceeds going to their Scholarship Fund.

Judges were Ron Hug, former IBEW and Omaha City Council, District 4; Dan Osborne, UA 464 and candidate for U.S. Senate; and, John Cavanaugh Nebraska State Senator District 9

Paid Sick Leave petition volunteers Denise Bowyer and Dawn Essink collected over 100 signatures to get this important issue on the General Election Ballot.

Shirts 101: our union merchandise store is NOW OPEN

Get your Nebraska State AFL-CIO swag now! The store is only open until the end of March.

Our **NEW UNIONIZE NEBRASKA** red t-shirts are available as well as many other items!

Use the bar code in the ad to place your order.

To save on shipping, let them know that you would like to pick up your order at Shirts 101 2700 N. 27th St., Lincoln, NE

SHIRTS101.STORE/NE_AFL_CIO

BRAND NEW TEE AVAILABLE!



SCAN ME

PLACE YOUR ORDER TODAY!

produced locally in
lincoln, nebraska

questions? contact us at
customerservice@shirts101.com

Lincoln Central Labor COPE Fish Fry: Friday, March 22nd



FISH FRY

All you can eat with all the fixings!
50/50 raffle and Silent Auction Baskets
Friday, March 22nd
5:00pm to 7:00pm or until we run out
Labor Temple ~ 4625 Y St. Lincoln, NE

Tickets: \$15.00 Children under 10 free

Contact your Union Representative or John Markey, President of the
Lincoln Central Labor Union: 402-416-4958

Purchased tickets are a suggested donation to the Lincoln Central Labor Union COPE fund.
Printed by Heather McKenzie, AFL-CIO Labor Engagement Liaison at a 501c3

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS!

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Sponsor</u> | <u>Event</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>City</u> |
|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------|
| 3/22/2024 | Lincoln Central Labor Union | COPE Fish Fry | 5pm | Labor Temple 4625 Y Streets | Lincoln |
| 3/23/2024 | NE State AFL-CIO | COPE Convention | 9:00am | IBEW Local 265 Hall 1409 Old Farm Rd | Lincoln |
| 4/12/2024 | Lincoln Central Labor Union | Annual Albert W. Bauer Awards Banquet | 6pm | Lincoln Firefighters Reception Hall 241 Victory Ln | Lincoln |
| 4/26/2024 | William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies | NE WORKS! Conference | 8am to Noon | Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center UNO | Omaha |
| 4/28/2024 | NE State AFL-CIO in partnership with USMWF | Workers Memorial Day | 7pm | Nebraska State Capitol North Steps | Lincoln |
| 5/11/2024 | NALC and APWU | Stamp Out Hunger Annual Food Drive | All Day | Selected cities/towns across the State | Nebraska |
| 5/14/2024 | Election | Presidential Primary | 8am to 8pm | Across the State | Nebraska |
| 6/1/2024 | NE State AFL-CIO | Annual Charity Golf Tournament | 7am | Ashland Golf Club 16119 Highway 6 | Ashland |
| 9/7/2024 | Midwest Central Labor Council | Solidarity Saturday | TBD | TBA | North Platte |
| 9/7/2024 | Lincoln Central Labor Union | Solidarity Picnic | TBD | Labor Temple 4625 Y Street | Lincoln |
| 10/20/2024 | Lincoln Central Labor Union | Trunk or Treat | TBD | Labor Temple 4625 Y Street | Lincoln |
| 11/5/2024 | Election | Presidential General | 8am to 8pm | Across the State | Nebraska |
| 12/7/2024 | Lincoln Central Labor Union | Annual Children's Toy Drive | 10am – 1pm | Labor Temple | Lincoln |

Please share your Local's event highlights with us!

Communication Director/Mobilization Coordinator at: comms@neaf-cio.org or call 402-310-1952

Union-Made St. Patrick's Day



Corned Beef

- Saag's
- Thumann's
- Winter's Premium Deli



Potatoes and Cabbage

- Dole fresh potatoes
- Purchase cabbage at a union grocery store



Whiskey

- Jim Beam
- Brown-Forman
- Basil Hayden's
- Elijah Craig

aflcio.org/StPatricksDay

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