

New Jersey State AFL-CIO
2008 / 2009 Legislative Session Summer Recess Summary

The prime sponsors of the legislation are in parentheses following the bill numbers. Co-prime sponsors, indicated by a +, can be found for each bill by visiting the State Legislature's website at: www.njleg.state.nj.us

School Construction: NJ State AFL-CIO Position - SUPPORT

A-2873 (Assembly members Al Coutinho, Grace Spencer, Nellie Pou, Elease Evans, Mila Jasey, Cleopatra Tucker, Bonnie Watson Coleman + 3) & S-1457 (Sen. Ron Rice and Sen. Shirley Turner + 4), supported by the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, which allocates \$3.9 billion for school construction, passed the Senate narrowly by a vote of 21-18, mostly along party lines. All Democrats voted yes, except Senators Jeff Van Drew (D-1) and John Adler (D-3), who voted against the bill. All Republicans present voted against the bill. The bill passed the Assembly 42-36, also mostly along party lines, with all Democrats voting yes, except Assembly members Albano (D-1), Barnes (D-17), Diegnan (D-18), Milam (D-1), Stender (D-22) and Wisniewski (D-19) who voted no. All Republicans voted against the bill, except Assemblymen John Amodeo (R-2) and Vince Polistina (R-2), who abstained. Governor Corzine signed the bill into law on July 9, 2008.

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO thanks those legislators that supported this important legislation that will allow for the construction of modern educational facilities for our children, as well as providing an important economic stimulus for our state in regard to job creation.

Paid Family Leave: NJ State AFL-CIO Position - SUPPORT

We are proud that New Jersey has become the third state in the nation to pass Paid Family Leave Legislation (A-873: Assembly members Nelson Albano, Sheila Oliver, Linda Greenstein, Wayne DeAngelo + 11) & S-785 (Sen. Steve Sweeney and Sen. Barbara Buono + 3). This is a much needed and long overdue policy for New Jersey's working families.

In the Senate, all Democrats voted in support of the bill, except Senators Turner and Gill, who voted against it, and Sen. Rice, who did not vote. All Republicans present voted against the bill, except Sen. Baroni, who voted in support.

In the Assembly, the bill was also passed mostly along party lines. All Democrats present voted yes, except Assemblyman Milam who voted no, and Assemblywoman Joan Voss, who abstained. All Republicans voted no, except Assemblyman John Amodeo and Assemblyman Ron Dancer, who voted in favor, and Assemblyman Malone, who abstained.

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO would like to thank Governor Corzine who signed the bill into law on May 2, 2008, for his long time advocacy, as well as Senate President Codey and Speaker Roberts for posting this legislation. We also would like to thank all the legislators that voted in favor of this bill, as well as the lead sponsors, Senators Steve Sweeney and Barbara Buono, Assemblyman Nelson Albano, Assemblywoman Sheila Oliver, Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein, and Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo.

BPU Prevailing Wage: NJ State AFL-CIO Position - SUPPORT

A-3372 (Assembly members Barnes, Diegnan, Egan and Evans + 8) & S-2340 (Senators Steve Sweeney and Barbara Buono +3) requires the payment of the prevailing wage in construction projects connected with Board of Public Utilities financial assistance. The bill passed the Assembly in May 2009 by a vote of 54-22-3-1. All Democrats present voted in favor, as did Republicans Malone, Polistina, Rible, Rumana, Amodeo, Dancer, Thompson and Van Pelt.

S-2340 (Senators Sweeney and Buono +3) passed the Senate in June 2009 by a vote of 32-8. Voting “yes” were all Democrats present and Republicans Thomas Kean, Bill Baroni, Jen Beck, Joe Kyrillos, Kevin O’Toole, Steve Oroho, Sean Kean, Bob Singer, Kip Bateman and Tony Bucco.

The bill was signed into law by Governor Corzine on July 15, 2009.

Concerns “Stop Work Orders:” S-2498 (Sen. Fred Madden / Sen. Sandra Cunningham / Sen. Bill Baroni) & A-3569 (Assembly members Egan and Quijano + 1) allows the use of a “Stop Work Order” for failure of an employers to provide Workers’ Compensation coverage and for certain types of independent contractor misclassification.

The bill passed the Assembly in March 2009 by a vote of 46-24-7. All Democrats present voted yes, except Assemblywomen Spencer and Vanieri-Huttle, both of whom abstained. The only Republicans voting in favor were Assembly members Polistina, McHose and Amodeo.

The bill passed the Senate in May 2009 by a 33-4-3 vote. All members that cast a vote, voted yes, with the exception of Senators Marcia Karrow, Jen Beck, Tony Bucco and Gerry Cardinale, who voted no.

The bill was signed into law by Governor Corzine on July 10, 2009.

Concerns Certain Wage Records: S-1421 (Sen. Paul Sarlo / Sen. Fred Madden) & A-2593 (Assemblymen Scalera and Egan +1) requires the reporting of wage records by certain employers under solid waste contracts. The bill passed with broad bipartisan support in both houses. To view the vote, please visit www.njleg.state.nj.us

The bill was signed into law by Governor Corzine on July 15, 2009.

Casino Employees Allowed to Run for Atlantic City Public Office: NJ State AFL-CIO
Position - SUPPORT

S-1987 (Senators Jim Whalen, Jeff Van Drew) & A-3820 (Assembly members John Burzichelli, Nelson Albano, Paul Moriarty + 2), permits casino employees to serve on Atlantic City governing body in certain circumstances.

The bill passed the Senate in November 2008 by a vote of 31-8. Voting in favor were all Democrats present, as well as Republican Senators Joe Kyrillos, Diane Allen, Tom Kean, Sean Kean, Leonard Lance, Kevin O'Toole, Bill Baroni and Steven Oroho. The bill passed the Assembly in March 2009 by a vote of 60-18. Voting in favor were all Democrats present, and Republican Assembly members Bramnick, Malone, Munoz, Polistina, Casagrande, McHose, Rumph, Wolfe, Amodeo, Coyle, Van Pelt and Webber.

Reduction of Certain Public Employee Benefits: NJ State AFL-CIO Position -
OPPOSED

The legislature passed S-1962 / A-2818 (Senators Barbara Buono, Steve Sweeney, Nicholas Scutari, Tom Kean and Speaker Joe Roberts +6), which makes various changes to public employee health insurance and pension plans, including increasing the retirement age from 60 to 62 and eliminating Lincoln's Holiday and changing eligibility thresholds for pension and health insurance for part-time workers.

The legislation passed the Senate by a vote of 31-8-1, with mixed support from Democrats and with all Republicans supporting, except Sen. Bill Baroni (R-14) who voted no. The bill also passed the Assembly by a vote of 52-13-14-1, also with Democrats split on the issue, and with all Republicans present voting yes, except Assemblymen Amodeo (R-2), Polistina (R-2), Merkt (R-25) and Rooney (R-39) who voted no. For the complete vote, please visit www.njleg.state.nj.us

Passed One House:

A-2754 (Assemblyman Joe Egan and Assemblyman Ruben Ramos + 3) – The “Jobs, Trade and Democracy Act” is supported by the New Jersey State AFL-CIO. The bill seeks to establish a role for the State Legislature in analyzing international free trade agreements and requires legislative approval for the State to “sign on” or consent to international free trade agreements negotiated by the U.S. Trade Representative. The bill also allows the State to implement certain types of trade policy at the state level. The bill passed the State Assembly in March 2009 with broad bipartisan support. The Senate companion has been released from committee. We respectfully urge Senate President Codey to post S-1802 (Senators Weinberg and Madden +1) this legislative session.

SCR-60 (Sen. Steve Sweeney / Sen. Tom Kean +14): The resolution, supported by the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, proposes a constitutional amendment requiring contributions collected from assessments on wages to be used for employee benefits and prohibits the use of these contributions for any other purpose.

If enacted, the resolution would seek to stop the future “raiding” of pro-worker funds, such as Unemployment Insurance Fund and others. The resolution passed the Senate unanimously in November 2008. The New Jersey State AFL-CIO respectfully urges Assemblyman Joe Egan, Chairman of the Assembly Labor Committee, to post ACR-134 (Burzichelli / Albano / DeCroce), the Assembly companion resolution for consideration this legislative session.

S-1702 (Sen. Sweeney / Sen. Van Drew): The legislation, supported by the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, seeks to allow employees of the Casino Control Commission to organize. Currently, due to their confidential employee status, they are unable to do so. The bill passed the Senate in March 2009 by a vote of 35-3. We respectfully ask Assemblyman Burzichelli, Chairman of the Assembly Tourism and Gaming Committee to post A-3677 (Burzichelli / Milam / Albano / Chiappone + 15), the Assembly companion bill for a vote.

Other Labor Issues:

Workers’ Compensation Administrative Reform Laws

In May 2008, State Senator Paul Sarlo introduced a package of six bills – mostly focused on administrative reforms within the worker’s compensation system, which were signed into law in October 2008. The New Jersey State AFL-CIO supported the legislative package.

The bills: Increased the power of workers compensation judges; Enacted penalties for employers who do not have coverage; Required proof of workers compensation coverage; Concerned emergent medical care; Increased enforcement powers of judges and allows the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor to enforce workers compensation law.

OPEIU:153