

JOINT LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

#UNIONSTRONG2021

California Labor Federation 2021 Legislative Agenda

Emergency Paid Sick Leave: All forms of employer-provided COVID-19-specific emergency paid sick leave expired on December 31, 2020, and workers have since been left with either inadequate or no rights to sick leave while recovering from COVID-19, quarantining following exposure, or caring for a family member sick with COVID-19. The Federation will spearhead the effort to secure emergency paid sick leave.

Staff: Mitch Steiger

SB 606 (Gonzalez) – Strengthen Cal/OSHA to Improve Working Conditions: The Federation will co-sponsor legislation with the UFCW to significantly improve both Cal/OSHA’s ability to keep workers safe, as well as a worker’s right to report dangerous working conditions. This legislation will have three parts:

- Egregious employers – This bill will define the term “egregious employer” and allow inspectors to cite such an employer separately for each worker affected by a willful violation.
- Combining violations – Typically, employers can only be cited once for multiple violations of the same safety and health standard. This proposal will allow for separate citations when an employer commits violations of the same standard across multiple locations, when an inspector must investigate the same location multiple times, or when the violations were committed by an egregious employer.
- Retaliation presumption – This section will establish a rebuttable presumption of retaliation for any worker facing adverse employment action within 90 days of suffering a diagnosed occupational illness, requesting testing related to hazardous exposure, requesting reasonable personal protective equipment (PPE), or reporting possible safety and health violations.

Staff: Mitch Steiger

Organizing Rights for Tribal Casino Workers in California: The right to organize a union for tribal casino workers in California under the tribal-state Compact is under threat. The Federation will work with our brothers and sisters on potential legislative and executive action to protect this long-established right.

Staff: Eduardo Martinez



SB 410 (Leyva) – No Delays for Worker Health and Safety: All significant occupational safety and health (OSH) regulations require a Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment (SRIA), which is a wasteful, duplicative, time consuming, and expensive bureaucratic step that adds roughly two years to the already years-long process for developing and implementing such regulations. For example, state law required Cal/OSHA to submit an indoor heat regulation to the Cal/OSHA Standards Board by January 1, 2019, but the regulation has been stuck in SRIA for much of the last two years, forcing countless workers to suffer at least two additional years of intense and harmful heat exposure. However, emergency regulations targeting wildfire smoke and COVID-19 only took about six months each, further suggesting that SRIAs add nothing of value to the process. The Federation has sponsored legislation in the past to exempt OSH regulations from the SRIA process and gotten very close to getting this bill to the Governor. The Federation will sponsor this legislation again given how the recent experiences of wildfire smoke and COVID-19 have shown that much faster rulemaking is not only possible, but necessary.

Staff: Mitch Steiger

SB 62 (Durazo) – Garment Worker Protection Act: The Garment Worker Protection Act will expand and strengthen enforcement of wage theft liability in the garment manufacturing industry, ensuring that retailers cannot use layers of contracting to avoid responsibility under the law. By eliminating the piece rate in the garment industry, while still allowing for bonus and incentive payments, this bill will ensure that workers are paid for all time spent working.

Staff: Manuela Boucher-de la Cadena

AB 438 (Reyes) – Layoff Parity for Classified Employees: The Federation and CSEA will co-sponsor legislation to create layoff parity for classified employees. These workers receive a 60-day layoff notice. They can also be laid off anytime during the year without any notice for lack of funds or lack of work. In contrast, teachers and administrators can only be laid off if they are given notice by March 15th. If no notice is provided, teachers and administrators cannot be laid off for the entire school year, leaving classified employees vulnerable to any and all cuts. It is unfair for the employees earning the least to absorb all of the cuts, when highly paid administrators are protected. This bill will provide parity for all school employees regardless of their job title.

Staff: Manuela Boucher-de la Cadena

SB 294 (Leyva) – Educator Union Leave Parity: The Federation and CTA will co-sponsor legislation to create parity between educators and other public employees, so that all elected union leaders may take a leave of absence to represent their union without losing hard-earned benefits during their time of service. While all other public employees have no cap on the maximum amount of service credit that they can receive for their pension, education and community college employees are limited in fulfilling their duties as a union officer with a cap of 12 years. This limit unfairly singles out education employees, harming the ability of elected leaders to take a leave of absence to represent their union without losing their retirement benefits during their time of service.

Staff: Janice O'Malley

SB 270 (Durazo) – Strengthening Public Employee Orientation: Current law requires that public employers provide the bargaining representative with a list of new and current employees on a periodic basis. Some employers choose to ignore this law and do not provide this critical information. This bill will establish an enforcement mechanism at the Public Employment Relations Board. The Federation should join CSEA and other public sector unions, and co-sponsor this bill.

Staff: Eduardo Martinez

SB 566 (Leyva) – Pay Parity for CSU Support Staff: For the past 25 years, the California State University (CSU) has been unwilling to negotiate and reinstate salary steps. Despite multi-year efforts to negotiate a resolution, the CSU and CSU employees have been at an impasse. This bill restores 5% salary steps for 20,000 CSU support staff, many of whom are the lowest-paid employees at the university system – such as custodians and groundskeepers. This legislation will provide parity with California’s other 233 state agencies and over 210,000 state employees.

Staff: Janice O’Malley

AB 1550 (L. Rivas) – Protect Collective Bargaining at UC: Three years ago, the UC Office of the President requested that the UC Board of Regents move six part-time Non-Senate faculty job classifications for lecturers into the Academic Senate. The six part-time positions were actively covered by a collective bargaining agreement prior to the move. However, due to the move to the Academic Senate and the structure of the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA), those six positions lost their union representation. The Federation should join CFT to pass AB 1550, which will amend HEERA to prevent positions outside of the Academic Senate from losing their union representation upon being moved into the Academic Senate.

Staff: Manuela Boucher-de la Cadena

AB 1385 (Gonzalez) – Free Artists from Industry Restrictions (FAIR) Act: The Federation should join the SAG-AFTRA and co-sponsor the FAIR Act. The FAIR Act limits the unfair practice of production studios and record labels unilaterally holding artists off the job market, unpaid, for onerous periods of time. Unlike most Californians, recording artists are often trapped in long-term employment contracts by record labels, preventing them from even working for themselves or another label. AB 1385 will extend the protection against long-term employment contracts to recording artists and will modernize the law to reflect how film, television, and music are made and distributed today by limiting the length of time that production studios and record labels are able to unilaterally hold actors and recording artists hostage.

Staff: Janice O’Malley

ACA 8 (Lee) & AB 310 (Santiago) – California Tax on Extreme Wealth Act: The exponential amount of growth in the billionaire class from March 2019 to January 2021 grew around \$250 billion, which is roughly \$54 billion larger than the *entire* state budget of the fifth wealthiest economy in the world. The Federation should co-sponsor the California Tax on Extreme Wealth Act, which will impose an annual excise tax at a rate of 1% on extreme wealth in excess of \$50 million and at a rate of 1.5% on extreme wealth in excess of \$1 billion and is expected to generate \$22.3 billion in additional revenue annually.

Staff: Janice O’Malley

Budget Request: UCLA Rev. James Lawson Jr. Worker Justice Center: On November 24, 2020, UCLA Real Estate closed escrow on the two-story, 15,000 sq. ft. Downtown Labor Center located at 675 S. Park View Street in Los Angeles, CA. The UCLA Labor Center must now raise \$19 million to renovate the building to bring it up to university standards. The UCLA Labor Center has already raised \$2 million for the capital campaign, largely from local labor unions. A one-time allocation of \$15 million from the State of California along with the additional resources being raised by the Labor Center will cover the cost of a renovation for this important public building. Without this critical funding, the UCLA Labor Center will have to abandon the outreach center and the staff would return to the UCLA Westwood campus. The Federation should prioritize this budget request.

Staff: Eduardo Martinez
