



# Albany Update

Volume 5 February 11, 2005

## LABOR - Year Ahead Overview

In 2004, the major **labor** legislative battle revolved around raising the minimum wage. The legislature passed a minimum wage increase that was then vetoed by the Governor. However both the Assembly and the Senate overrode Governor Pataki's veto of the wage increase, and it was enacted into law. The veto override was made possible because of the AFL-CIO and the Working Families Party's support of key Senate Republicans.

In 2005 many of the key issues for labor will resolve around the budget. This reflects the ever-increasing power of the public employee unions within the AFL-CIO.

The labor movement will focus its attention on increasing aid to education and battling Governor Pataki's cuts to the state's Medicaid program. Labor will also fight to make sure that the temporary tax increases, which are set to sunset, remain in effect

In the private sector there will be a major effort to reform Workers Compensation. Employers will want to cut costs while the labor movement will attempt to increase payments to injured workers. In 2004 the Senate and Assembly came to agreement on a Workers Compensation reform package, but the Governor rejected the proposal. This year the Governor has proposed eliminating the Workers Compensation Board and merging it into the Labor Department.

Other issues to watch this session include the attempts to reform the Wicks Law, reform of the section 240 liability and the Governor's efforts to merge the State Labor Relations Board and the Public Employees Relations Board.

With reform the buzzword in Albany, labor legislation will be a major focus of legislative activity in the current legislative session.

## FUNDRAISERS

### Monday, February 14th

NYS Senate Republican Campaign Committee  
Albany, \$1,000

Senator John Bonacic [R]  
Housing Construction & Comm Development  
Albany, \$400

Senator Bill Stachowski [D]  
Ranking mem- Ethics; Investigations & Gov't operations  
Albany, \$300

Assem Will Barclay [R]  
Ranking mem-Insurance Comm  
Albany, \$250

Assem Luis Diaz [D]  
Albany, \$250

Assem Peter Rivera [D]  
Chair-Mental Health; Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task  
Force  
Albany, \$350

Assem Sheldon Silver [D]  
Majority Leader  
Albany, \$1,000

### Tuesday, February 15th

Assem Annie Rabbit [R]  
Albany, \$125

Assem Catherine Young [R]  
Ranking mem-Housing Comm  
Albany, \$275

### Monday, February 28th

Senator John Flanagan [R]

Senator Betty Little [R]

Senator Stephen Saland [R]

Assem Adam Bradley [D]

Assem Michael Fitzpateick [R]