



International Union of Operating Engineers

AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

1125 SEVENTEENTH STREET, NW • WASHINGTON, DC 20036-4707 • 202-429-9100 • WWW.IUOE.ORG

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Contact
Jay Lederer
(202) 778-2626
jlederer@iuoe.org
Jamie Horwitz
(202) 549-4921
jhdcpr@starpower.net

Statement by
International Union of Operating Engineers General President
James T. Callahan
on
Today's Appointment of IUOE General Counsel
Richard Griffin to the National Labor Relations Board

Today's recess appointment of Richard Griffin to the National Labor Relations Board is the right decision at the right time to keep this critical agency on the job, providing stability and balance to American workers and employers. Richard is highly respected by lawyers on both the labor and business side of labor law. His fair-minded approach to legal questions is exactly what the NLRB needs. As IUOE's General Counsel and as a former counsel to the NLRB Board members, he has substantial experience in employment law; as a former trustee of the IUOE's central pension fund, he played a key role in safeguarding the interests of employers and employees alike.

Some Republican members of the Senate have made a determined effort to cripple the NLRB and other government agencies by refusing to act on President Obama's nominees, no matter how qualified. Leaving the NLRB without a quorum would penalize both labor and employers.

Their position is comparable to ejecting the referee if you don't like the score of the game. That's just plain wrong. Richard Griffin and the President's other pick Sharon Block are distinguished attorneys who will bring an even-handed approach to labor and management issues. They deserve to be seated – and workers and employers deserve a functioning National Labor Relations Board.

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The International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) represents more than 400,000 members in 123 local unions across the U.S. and Canada, including operating engineers, who work as heavy equipment operators, mechanics, surveyors in the construction industry; stationary engineers in building and industrial maintenance; nurses and other health care workers; and public employees. IUOE, which operates over 100 state-of-the-art apprentice programs, is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

General President James T. Callahan was elected to office in November of 2011 and assumed his duties as General President on January 1, 2012. He previously served as IUOE General Secretary-Treasurer and was elected an International Vice President in 2008. He has served as President and Business Manager of Local 15 in New York City since 2003. A 32-year member, he was one of the many operating engineers who responded immediately to the September 11 tragedy and worked the entire recovery effort at Ground Zero. Callahan also serves on the Executive Board of the New York City Building and Construction Trades Council, the New York City Central Labor Council, and the New York State AFL-CIO. He is a member of the Board of Governors of the New York Building Foundation and sits on the Metropolitan Transit Authority's Blue Ribbon Commission. Callahan is also a Trustee of the IUOE General Pension Fund.