

International
Operating Engineer

fall 2008



2008 ELECTION

Let's put the
right person
in this house!

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features



Fall 2008 - Volume 151, No. 3
Editor - Christopher Hanley



IUOE Political Survey



Prevailing Wages



Highway Bill



Project Labor Agreements



McCain-Obama letters



Let's Look at Our Enemies

Your vote this election will make history

Let me preface this column by telling you that, after a thorough review of the candidates' records on issues important to our union, its members and their families, after reviewing personal letters from each candidate to me outlining their stand on the issues important to us (see Pages 8-9), and after viewing the results of an International Union survey of local unions on their choice for president (see Page 4), the members of the IUOE General Executive Board (their names and local unions are listed in the left-hand column on the facing page), at its meeting September 8, 2008, voted **UNANIMOUSLY** to endorse U. S. Senator Barack Obama for President of the United States of America.

Your vote for the next president of the United States is rightfully and strictly a personal matter. Yet you should keep in mind that the decisions we make privately in the voting booth directly and emphatically impact our public lives. Our jobs, our workplaces, our union, our schools, our health care, our pensions, our national security, the price we pay for gas and heating oil, our food costs and just about every other daily necessity we depend on will be affected by the outcome of this election.

For any of those who doubt that fact, we suggest that you ask yourself: how, in general, does your life today compare to eight years ago? How do you want it to be four years from now? Or eight years from now? Who we elect will have a lot to say about that.

That is why the IUOE researched the two major candidates' positions on the bread-and-butter issues dear to Operating Engineers, and presented them to you in the two issues of the International Operating Engineer magazine preceding this one.

Key public policy issues matter immensely in terms of the level of prosperity and well-being of our members. Where the candidates stand on the issues is the standard – and only standard – each of us should be concerned with as we contemplate our selection for president in this important election.

What is clear is that the nation

today is headed in the wrong direction: workers' wages are lower now than they were 10 years ago; Social Security and defined benefit pension plans are under constant attack; inflation is higher than it has been at any time since 1990; and trade and budget deficits are at record highs.

Candidates Obama and McCain offer vastly different policy prescriptions on fundamental IUOE issues: job creation, wage standards, worker rights, health care coverage, retirement security, trade, and, generally, on the prosperity of America's middle class.

At the end of the day, we all need to answer this question: Which candidate will better the lives of Operating Engineers and their families?

This election edition of the *International Operating Engineer* examines those issues in one final pre-election summary.

The issues we focus on are ones that are vitally important to you, our members, and your future wellbeing, especially those that pertain to your work and future prospects for work.

While there may well be other issues that you deem important, the truth of the matter is that your job or your pension are what allow you the luxury of being able to afford and enjoy anything else. Without a good-paying job, without decent fringe benefits, without a solid pension, everything and anything else is out of reach.

We trust you find this information helpful as you make up your mind about which candidate you will support come November 4, 2008. Again, that is your decision to make – and yours alone. Whatever decision you make, please take the time to vote. This election is simply too important to you and your family and to the country as a whole to let it go by without registering your opinion.

Look with an open mind at the candidates' records on the issues, decide who you think has your best interests at heart, then exercise your voice and cast your ballot November 4th.



'... we all need to answer this question: Which candidate will better the lives of Operating Engineers and their families?'



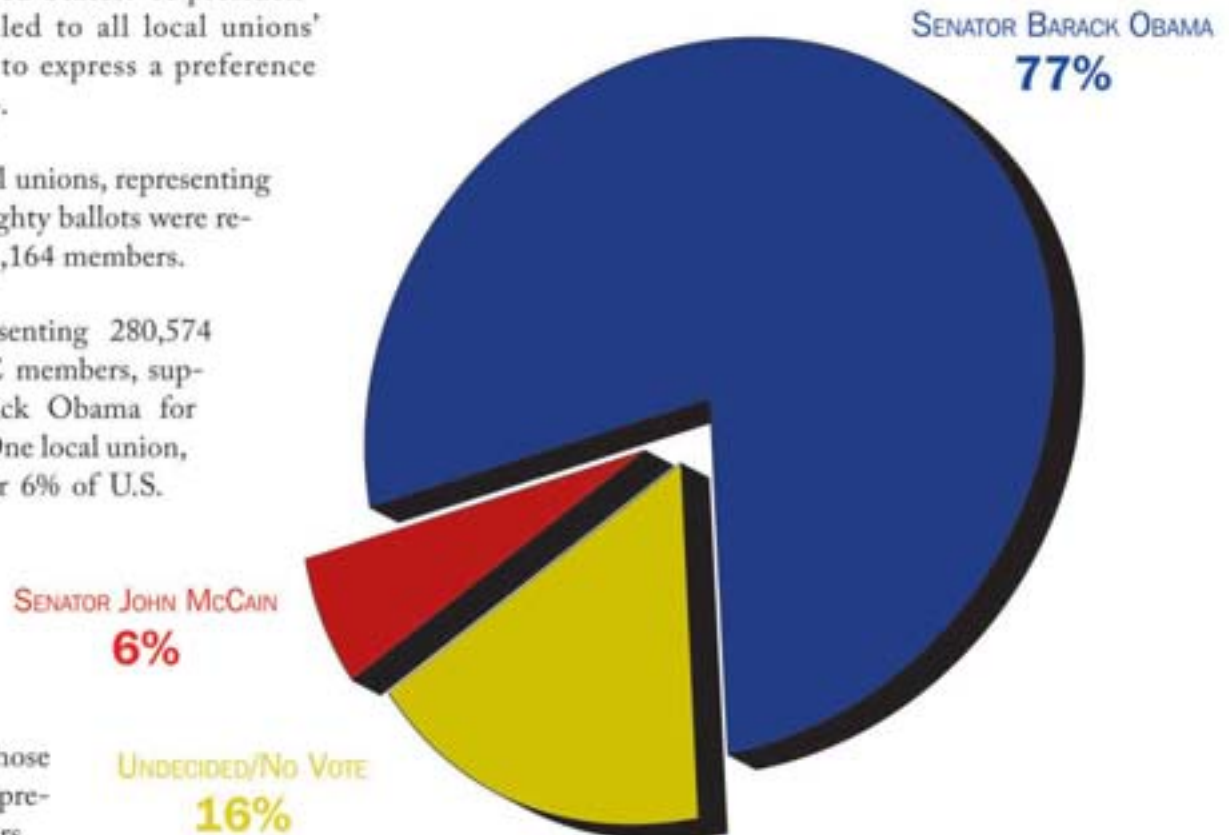
IUOE Presidential survey results announced

In a first-ever practice in the IUOE's history, General President Vincent Giblin sought the input of every U.S. local union leader on who should be the next President of the United States. A presidential preference ballot was mailed to all local unions' principal officer, asking them to express a preference on behalf of their membership.

Ballots were sent to 117 local unions, representing 363,672 members in the U.S. Eighty ballots were returned by locals representing 321,164 members.

Of those, 75 locals, representing 280,574 members, or 77% of U.S. IUOE members, supported endorsing Senator Barack Obama for President of the United States. One local union, representing 23,321 members, or 6% of U.S. members, supported Senator John McCain. Four local unions, representing 17,269 members, recommended no endorsement; 37 local unions, representing 42,508 members, did not vote. Combined, those no endorsement/no vote locals represented about 16% of U.S. members.

LOCAL UNION PRESIDENTIAL ENDORSEMENT SURVEY RESULTS



New IUOE website – more than just a facelift



The redesigned and expanded website, www.iuoe.org, now is welcoming all IUOE members. Pay a visit, browse for a while, and check it out. To gain access to the members-only site, just have your registration number and click on "Register" in the top right corner of the page. From there, simply follow the directions.

To improve the living standards and job opportunities of Operating Engineers, the International Union is committed to building the influence and political power of the IUOE.

You make all the difference. Your participation in political life – whether placing a call to a congressman or casting your vote on November 4 – is what will make the politicians stand up and take notice. After the election is over, the work isn't done. Politicians have to be held accountable. We need to make sure that campaign pledges don't become empty promises. Only you can make the difference!

The new website is making it easier to participate. On the website, with only a few clicks, you can register to vote; you can learn about hot political races around the country, or you can use the "Engineers Action and Response Network" (EARN) to send a message to a key decision-maker in the United States Senate, House of Representatives, or the White House.

Help secure a better future for members of the IUOE. Visit the new website, register for the members-only section, and get involved. Together, the IUOE can — and will with your help — improve the lives of all hard-working Operating Engineers and their families.



John McCain opposes Davis-Bacon Prevailing Wage Laws!

- For his 26 years in Congress, John McCain has opposed Operating Engineers on a key public policy: prevailing wages.
- He has consistently opposed working men and women on the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act.
- Over seventeen different times Senator McCain has sought to weaken or repeal the law in his time in Congress.
- If McCain becomes President, he would destroy prevailing wages. In the process, McCain would erode Operating Engineers' standard of living. It's that simple.

THE DAVIS-BACON ACT, originally passed in 1931, requires that workers on federally-funded construction projects be paid no less than the wages paid in the community for similar work. The Service Contract Act requires that prevailing wages be paid to workers for federal maintenance, operations, and service contracts.

What would happen without the protection of the prevailing wage laws?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Living standards fall | ■ Investments in training go down |
| ■ Family medical coverage is weakened | ■ Workplace injuries increase |
| ■ Retirement security is threatened | ■ Union contractors lose market share |

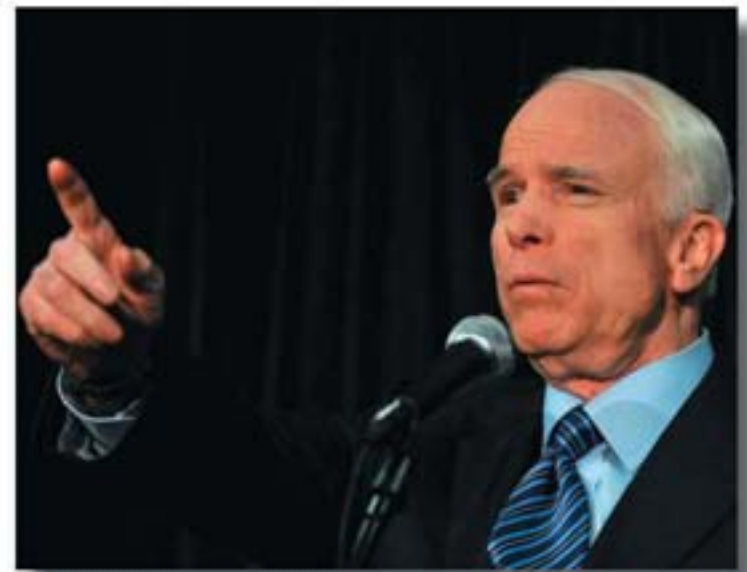
FALSE campaign promises don't make up for 26 years of Davis-Bacon opposition!!!



2008 ELECTION

SENATOR McCAIN was one of only 4 senators to vote against the highway program

- The federal highway program is one of the largest creators of jobs for Operating Engineers, especially heavy equipment operators.
- For each \$1-billion invested, over 45,000 good-paying jobs are created.
- McCain sees highway investments as wasteful, pork-barrel spending and would gladly veto these bills.
- McCain backed President Bush's effort to reduce highway investments.



- McCain would strip away Davis-Bacon prevailing wage coverage from the highway program.
- Operating Engineers would prosper under Senator Obama's highway and infrastructure investment policies.

McCain does not support strong federal infrastructure investments!



JOHN McCAIN would outlaw Project Labor Agreements!

Project Labor Agreements benefit Operating Engineers by helping to:

- Create more jobs for Operating Engineers
- Guarantee more work for IUOE contractors
- Ensure health care coverage for workers
- Make investments in training/apprenticeship
- Deliver retirement security to workers



McCain will ban project labor agreements by executive order, just like George W. Bush did.

PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

or PLAs, are collective bargaining agreements specific to a large construction project. They guarantee that all workers on a project come through union hiring halls. PLAs usually guarantee public project owners that there will be no work stoppages due to strikes or lockouts. They give public owners a key tool to manage a project, increasing the likelihood that it is brought in on time and under budget.

Presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama each wrote to IUOE General President Vincent Giblin soliciting the support of the Operating Engineers for their respective campaigns. Their individual letters are reprinted verbatim on the following two pages. They offer, in their own words, their views on a number of issues of extreme importance to IUOE members. The differences are major. Please read them carefully and, on November 4th, vote with your wallet.

Seeking our "Counsel" is the best John McCain can do after 26 years in Congress?



August 22, 2008

Mr. Vince Giblin
General President
International Union of Operating Engineers
1125 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear General President Giblin,

As I have traveled the country during this campaign, I have met many highly skilled, hard working Americans, many of whom are operating engineers. In the hands of your nearly half million members, our country has placed responsibility for building and maintaining the infrastructure that is the backbone of our economy; it is in good hands and I am always proud to meet these hard hats on the campaign trail. If I have the great honor of serving as President of the United States, I know I can count on the strength of American operating engineers to work with me to grow our economy, create new jobs, and keep America safe and secure.

Our nation's dependence on foreign oil is putting both our economy and our national security under stress. I will break that dependence by supporting expanded drilling here in the United States, building nuclear power plants, and investing in clean coal and alternative energy sources such as wind, solar, and hydro. As President, I will call on America to achieve the great national purpose of energy independence. My plan for energy independence will help create hundreds of thousands of jobs by building at least 45 new nuclear power plants by 2030 and creating an alternative fuel infrastructure in America. These are my priorities for my Administration and as we strive to put our economy back on track and create new jobs, including skilled construction workers throughout the country.


I believe that the world remains a dangerous place and, as President of the United States, I will have no greater priority than protecting our national security. However, we also face great challenges at home as our economy struggles. I want to create jobs in America by investing in our country's infrastructure, especially in the energy sector, as well as keeping taxes low, and reforming government to support economic growth. I appreciate what I have heard from your members, including their concerns regarding **Davis Bacon**. Obviously, any change in prevailing wage laws would need to be initiated and passed in the legislative branch. **If such a proposal were introduced, I look forward to your counsel on how it would impact our nation's economy and the construction industry.** My priority is to grow our economy to create good paying jobs and benefits for all citizens of our great country.

I am from Arizona, a right to work state, but I am first and foremost a federalist. What works for Arizona might not be the preference in other states, and as President, I want to leave non-federal issues to the states to decide as they see appropriate.

As the campaign heads into the fall, I will continue to travel the country, campaigning in all corners of our great nation discussing these issues. I look forward to hearing more from your membership as we work together to keep America safe and prosperous.

Sincerely,


John McCain


Paid for by John McCain 2008
PO Box 14118 | Arlington, VA 22215

Barack Obama

September 1, 2008

Vincent Giblin
General President, International Union of Operating Engineers
1125 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Vincent,

Thank you for allowing me to share a few thoughts with you and the members of the International Union of Operating Engineers. It was a pleasure speaking with you this week. I appreciate the work that you and your members do, and I appreciate the opportunity to seek your endorsement.

I started working for working families more than two decades ago as a community organizer on the South Side of Chicago. As I worked with families devastated by the closure of local steel mills, I learned that together, ordinary people can do extraordinary things—and that's the principle at the heart of the organized labor movement.

Passing legislation that helps working families will be a top priority for me as President. I support strengthening Davis-Bacon, because workers deserve fair wages and benefits. I believe the government should use project labor agreements (PLAs) to encourage completion of projects on time and on budget, and that's why one of my first acts as President will be repealing George Bush's ban and putting PLAs back into place. In the Senate, I led in an effort to end the misclassification of workers by employers who use "independent contractor" status to get out of having to pay employment taxes and workers comp or overtime.

We also need to invest in our infrastructure. I've called for a National Infrastructure Reinvestment Bank that will invest \$60 billion over ten years and generate millions of new jobs, and a separate investment of \$150 billion over the next ten years in the green energy sector that will create up to five million new American jobs that pay well, and can't be outsourced. We can't keep standing by while the price of gas doubles and our roads and bridges and airports crumble and decay.

Unions play a vital role in building and maintaining the American middle class, and you deserve the support of a President who doesn't choke on the word "union" and is willing to fight for the right to organize; a president who knows that it's the Department of Labor, and not the Department of Management. And that's the kind of President I will be. I hope to earn the endorsement of the International Union of Operating Engineers, and I encourage you to contact my staff if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama



Obama for America • PO Box 8210 • Chicago, IL 60680 • BarackObama.com

Paid for by Obama for America

This exemplifies REAL support and enforcement for Davis-Bacon and PLAs!

A commitment to JOBS for operating engineers!!!

MCCAIN vs. OBAMA

Key Health Plan Differences



SENATOR
MCCAIN (R)

SENATOR
OBAMA (D)

QUESTION

EXEMPT TAXES ON EMPLOYER-PROVIDED HEALTHCARE BENEFITS: Currently workers are not taxed for employer-provided healthcare benefits. **Will the candidate exempt from taxation employer-provided healthcare benefits?**



STOP INSURANCE COMPANY CHERRY-PICKING: Insurance companies often deny health coverage to people with pre-existing conditions. **Will the candidate prohibit insurance companies from continuing to cherry-pick?**



KEEP YOUR COSTS DOWN: Insurance companies and some policy makers promote high-deductible health plans and other health plans that shift more of the financial risk for health care onto hard-working families. **Will the candidate protect families from insurance plans that charge high deductibles or other out-of-pocket costs that they can't afford?**



MAKE COVERAGE AFFORDABLE: Both Senators McCain and Obama will provide subsidies or tax credits to help people purchase health insurance. **Will the candidate provide help on a sliding scale so all Americans pay what they can afford, but no more?**



GUARANTEE COVERAGE LIKE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAVE: Members of Congress are guaranteed quality health coverage through the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, but many American taxpayers cannot obtain coverage as good as what Congress has. **Will the candidate guarantee that all Americans have access to a health plan that is as good as what Congress has?**



CARE FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN: Twice recently, Congress tried and failed to overturn a veto of bills to expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and cover nearly half of America's 9 million uninsured children. **Does the candidate's plan support expanding CHIP?**



ENSURE AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTIONS FOR SENIORS: In 2003, seniors and people with disabilities covered through Medicare received drug coverage for the first time; however, the benefit has a large annual gap in coverage, known as the doughnut hole, where seniors must pay for drugs themselves. **Does the candidate support strengthening drug coverage for seniors by closing the doughnut hole?**



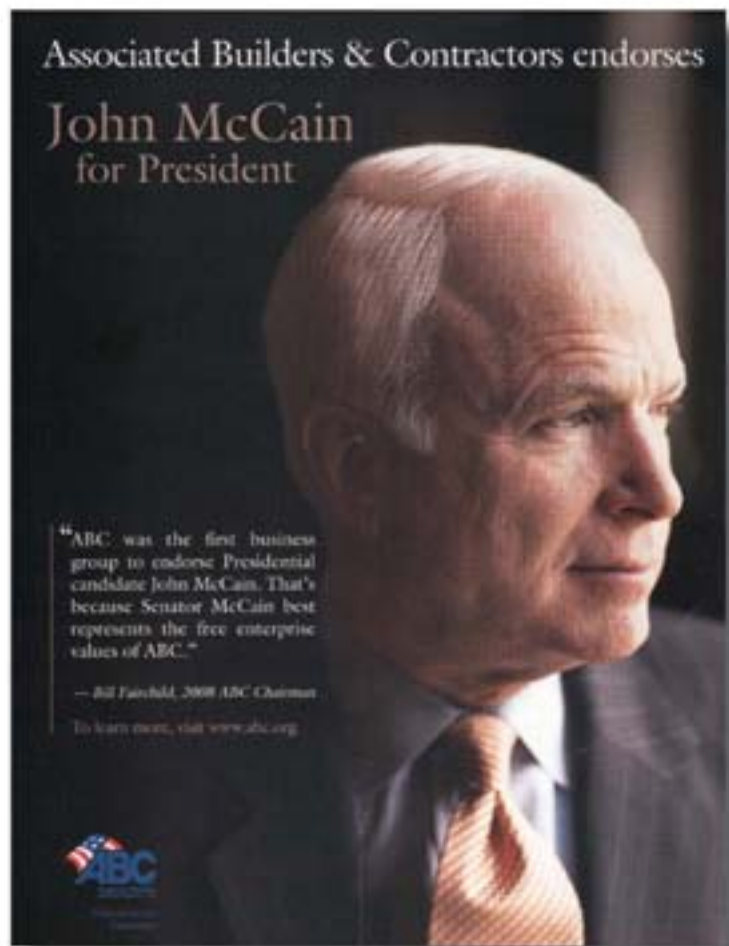
Let's look at our enemies

The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), a trade association for non-union contractors and, perhaps, the most anti-union business organization in the nation, endorsed John McCain for president. According to its website, "ABC's mission is the advancement of the merit-shop construction philosophy."

- In other words, **THE ABC EXISTS TO FIGHT UNION MEMBERS AND TO TAKE THEIR JOBS.** It should be clear why the ABC and John McCain possess such a close relationship – they share the same anti-union values.
- According to ABC, the group and the candidate share the same position on the Davis-Bacon Act. The ABC proudly proclaims that, "**JOHN MCCAIN BELIEVES THE DAVIS-BACON ACT SHOULD BE REPEALED.**"
- **ABC AND MCCAIN OPPOSE PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS (PLAs)**, and McCain will continue the Bush Administration Executive Order, which prohibits PLAs for projects involving federal dollars.
- **ON WORKER JOBSITE SAFETY, THE ABC SUPPORTS MCCAIN** because "John McCain believes that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration

"ABC was the first business group to endorse Presidential candidate John McCain. That's because Senator McCain best represents the free enterprise values of ABC."

*– Bill Fairchild,
2008 ABC Chairman*



(OSHA) policies must be thoroughly reviewed to ensure it [sic] does not overburden American employers..."

- **ABC AND JOHN MCCAIN ALSO SUPPORT WEAKENING OPERATING ENGINEERS' HEALTH AND WELFARE FUNDS.** ABC supports McCain because he would eliminate the tax exemption employers receive for providing health care benefits to their employees. The ABC says, "His plan [McCain's] would allow individuals to obtain insurance through any organization or association that they choose." McCain's plan will tax health care benefits and undermine the whole structure of the health care industry in the United States.
- **MCCAIN WALKS IN LOCKSTEP WITH THE MOST ANTI-UNION BUSINESS ORGANIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES.**...Birds of a feather flock together!



IT IS TIME TO VOTE WITH YOUR WALLET



MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON NOV. 4

Tell the politicians what really matters to the hard-working folks who are the backbone of this country. Tell them to support job-creating infrastructure investment, prevailing wages, health care for all, and our retirement and pension security. We need more and better jobs – not tax cuts for the wealthy few! We need a president who knows that union members built this country and are the foundation of the middle-class.

George W. Bush has taken this country in the wrong direction. His failed policies will leave this country's workers with no increases in real wages during his eight years. Since January, over 600,000 Americans have lost their jobs. Home values have plummeted and hundreds of thousands are facing foreclosures.

But together we can turn it around. On November 4, Operating Engineers have a chance to help change this country. This is no ordinary election. We need to rebuild the American dream. Make your voice heard. Make the difference. **VOTE!**

