



SENTINEL

Advocate

The Official Newsletter for the STATE
Professional Managers & Supervisors Association / Select-Exempt Service
Division of the Federation of Physicians & Dentists / AHPE

GAO: Labor Department Failing Miserably in Enforcing Wage Laws (Posted on *AFL-CIO Now Blog* by James Parks on March 25, 2009)

WASHINGTON - Labor Secretary Hilda Solis announced the department's *Wage & Hour Division* will add 250 new investigators, a staff increase of more than a third. The agency already has begun the process of adding 150 new investigators to its field offices.

In addition, another 100 investigators will be hired to ensure that contractors on economic recovery projects comply with the applicable laws. This is a big step in the right direction to rebuild the agency, which lost more than 200 investigators during the Bush administration.

The federal agency that is supposed to protect workers and enforce minimum wage, overtime and child labor laws is failing miserably, leaving low-income workers vulnerable to wage theft. In a report released today, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) says the labor Department's Wage and Hour Division "has left thousands of actual victims of wage theft who sought federal government assistance with nowhere to turn." [Go to PMSA1199.org and click on "The Insider" to find a link to the rest of this article.]

Congress Introduces Bill to End Insurance Discrimination Against Pre-Existing Conditions (www.healthcarefinancenews.com, March 19, 2009 / Diana Manos, Senior Editor)

WASHINGTON - Legislation was introduced Wednesday (March 18), that would end insurance discrimination against those with pre-existing or chronic illnesses.

Sen. John Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), chairman of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health Care and Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.), a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, have introduced the *Pre-existing Condition Patient Protection Act*, which would eliminate pre-existing condition exclusions in all insurance markets, a priority set by the Obama administration.

Rockefeller and Courtney said they plan to work closely with the president to enact "this vital legislation."

"We have 133 million Americans living with chronic illness - insurance companies should no longer be allowed to reap profits by denying care to sick Americans," Rockefeller said. "These medical services are not optional, and most times they are not affordable without insurance. Our system is broken, which is why we must eliminate the ability of insurers to deny coverage from pre-existing conditions in every single market. The time for serious action is now." [Go to PMSA1199.org and click on "The Insider" to find a link to the rest of this article.]

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

We have re-launched our website and have made it easier for you to go directly to your Division pages.

We realize that in this day and age, an up-to-date website is essential to the busy working professional. So we've given ourselves a facelift! We've also obtained additional domain names! So, in addition to going through our main FPD/AHPE web page at

fpdunion.org

you can NOW go directly to your Union Division pages at

PMSA1199.org

Take full advantage of your membership - visit our new web site TODAY!



As a dues paying member, you can now purchase **Aflac™ Supplemental Insurance** policies at a special discounted rate! When you're out of work due to an illness or injury, there are two things that are increasingly hard to come by: piece of mind and cash. **Aflac™** provides both. Find out how by contacting our **Aflac™** agent, Mary Remson at mary_remson@us.aflac.com.

5 benefits union members can use - RIGHT NOW!

Union membership works for you everyday! Not only does membership get you an advantage at the bargaining table on the job, but off the job you and your family are automatically entitled to free benefits and special savings. **TAKE A LOOK!**

1 Battling rising health care costs? Do you lack full coverage through your employee benefits? *Union Plus* programs can help you save by filling in benefit gaps, like discounts on services not covered by your insurance, and by encouraging healthier lifestyles, like discounts to health clubs. Learn more at www.unionplus.org/health/health-savings.

2 Are you struggling with debt? As a dues paying member, you have resources available to you that can help you manage your debt and take action. Simply go to www.uniondebthelp.org today.



3 Act now if you are facing mortgage payment problems. Get free and confidential advice personalized for your situation. Or if you're a first-time homebuyer, it's never been easier and more affordable. Check out the "Money & Credit" section of www.afscme.org/members/71.cfm.

4 Union members can receive a special 10% discount on wireless service from AT&T (formerly Cingular) through www.afscme.org/members/9640.cfm. And whether you're a student, parent or retiree, get your tech savings at www.afscme.org/members/1239.cfm.

5 Only the *AFSCME Advantage MasterCard* offers you exclusive money-saving benefits and *Triple Plus Features* that no other card can equal. Apply directly at www.afscmecard.com/1/2.

Questions? Visit www.PMSA1199.org to find a link to your "Member Benefits" or go directly to www.afscme.org/members/71.cfm and start saving TODAY!

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LOCAL UPDATES:

Enemy of the State – Employees That Is - So Says The Legislature

Message from the Director, Jack Seddon

Once again, the House and Senate leadership, along with their minions, are looking at State employees to balance the "error of their ways." They got us into this and now they want those they can buffalo, cajole and literally de-humanize to get them out of it.

In their brilliance they are proposing more layoffs, while continuing to provide all state services, wage reductions of 1% to 5% and the combination of agencies and/or the elimination of others, not to mention the contracting out of North East Florida State Hospital (NEFSH).

Yet all the while this Legislature and Administration places blame for their own shortcomings on "greedy" State employees. But the "proof is in the pudding" when they bicker incessantly over not touching bogus self-serving, self-interest sales tax

exemptions, over increasing tobacco taxes and over reducing, not expanding, the *Seminole Gaming Compact*. What a joke they are, taxpayer money being paid to support the waste of time and energy - it's like a bad "Laurel and Hardy" act.

This Legislature would rather support an ostrich than a State employee – kind of shows their mentality. Is it not sad that we pay a group of fools to further insult our intelligence? Well, their time will come, and just like the former Speaker, some will be indicted and possibly end up where they should be – jail or as a resident of Chattahoochee or, better yet, NEFSH.

Rest assured that your organization continues to fight for what is right – your future, fair and equitable wages, benefits, dignity and respect for the job you do every day – not for a job that only requires the ability to eat, drink and be merry for sixty (60) days at the expense of the State employee and taxpayer. Join your organization today and support all State employees – the time is now!



PMSA/SES get an increased benefit of \$4000 through AIL!

After recent discussions with *American Income Life Insurance Company (AIL)*, a 100% union company with 53+ years in serving the working families of America and an "A+ Superior" rating, we have been able to increase our **accidental death & dismemberment (AD&D) benefit** from \$3000 to **\$4000!** This benefit is available to all dues paying members and retirees AT NO COST and will continue to cover you as long as you are a member or retiree of the local. For more information on this benefit

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