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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Bill Hutchinson, *President* | Dave Efaw, *Secretary-Treasurer* | Steve White, *Director*

# Jobs Bill Still a Possibility in Budget Special Session

Governor Jim Justice remains determined to pass job creation legislation as part of his budget plan.

Legislators in the Senate approved the Governor's plan to rebuild the states crumbling roads and bridges. However the Republican majority in the House of Delegates rejected the plan – at least during the first round of the Special Session.

The Governor's plan includes preserving the West Virginia Turnpike Authority and the current tolls on Interstate 77 and 64. The proposal would also allow the Authority to operate in other parts of the state.

Governor Justice has proposed an \$8 per year fee for anyone using the toll road which would be a substantial savings to those currently using the toll road. Those who are simply traveling through the state from other parts of the country would likely see a toll increase.

The Governor also has proposed an increase in the gas tax and DMV registration fees to pay for more construction needs.

Together with other actions al-

ready passed by the legislature the Governor's plan could fund up to \$2.8 billion in road projects and create 48,000 new jobs.

House Republican leaders have

refused the plan calling for major tax cuts in public safety, education, senior services and health care.

As the ACT Report goes to press the Special Session is underway. ■



*These Operating Engineers Local 132 members were among the many craft workers who came to the state Capitol in Charleston to support jobs during the regular session of the legislature.*

## \$884 Million Brooke Power Plant Proposed

Plans for a new 830 megawatt gas-fired electric plant south of Colliers in Brooke County were announced in late April.

The developers, Energy Solutions Consortium LLC, filed an application with the state Public Service Commission for the \$884 million project on April 26. The project is called Brooke County Power I, LLC.

Energy Solutions and the Upper Ohio Valley Building Trades Council have a memorandum in place to make sure local skilled union workers will build the facility under a project labor agreement.

The combined cycle plant will sell into what is called the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland (PJM) regional electric power grid. Referred to as 'merchant power' the facility will not sell to West Virginia regulated customers but to power companies or customers in other states.

The current schedule calls for the project to start in January of 2018 and be complete by the end of 2020.

The plant will use \$177.5 million annually of natural gas. A third party will construct gas interconnections at an additional cost of \$55 million.

An agreement with the Brooke

County Commission and the Brooke County Board of Education will result in payments of \$27 million over a 30-year period.

"We are excited about the much needed jobs this project will create for our members," said Kyle Brown, President of the Upper Ohio Valley Building Trades Council.

The Brooke project represents the third major gas-fired project proposed in WV in recent years. Moundsville Power, proposed in 2014 and approved last year is waiting for legal challenges posed by coal industry supporters to be resolved.

Harrison Power applied for PSC approval earlier this year and is also facing a challenge.

At the same time according to PJM records there are dozens of gas-fired projects proposed or underway in Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio.

"A few coal industry supporters are killing jobs for West Virginia workers to the benefit of our neighbors," said ACT's Steve White.

"We support coal-fired electric generation but the reality is nobody is proposing new coal plants because gas is cheap." ■

# Governor Vetoes Paycheck Deception Bill

Governor Jim Justice vetoed a bill on April 26 dubbed 'Paycheck Deception.'

The bill, SB239, would have made it harder for employers and union members to assign wage payments for dues, some benefits, credit unions and charitable contributions.

The main purpose of the bill was seen as a punishment of labor organizations and their members by the Republican legislative leadership.

Current law already requires a worker to submit a signed request for any payroll deduction other than those ordered by a court.

The new law would have forced a worker to reauthorize deductions every year.

The law would also have added requirements to employers as well as new penalties.

Governor Justice wrote in his veto message "This bill creates a significant hardship on employers and employees for a convenient practice that has become commonplace in today's society, authorizing payroll deductions."

The Governor went on to note SB239 put "an unnecessary burden on businesses, and an inconvenience on employees..."

According to WV State Building Trades Secretary-Treasurer Dave Efaw the legislation may have been illegal and certainly would have been challenged in court.

"We appreciate that Governor Justice vetoed SB239 which was a terrible bill," said Efaw. "We also believe

the legislature went way over the line in mandating how private contracts are written." ■

# State Pipe Trades Apprenticeship Contest Held in Huntington

The West Virginia State Pipe Trades held their annual Apprenticeship Contest in Huntington April 3 - 6.

The event took place at the training center of UA Local #521 with 15 apprentices from the five local unions based in West Virginia.

Contestants competed in four categories: Plumber; Pipefitter; Welder; and HVAC Technician. In addition an award is given to the overall best performing local.

Apprentices are given hands-on tests in a variety of skill areas including solder, braze, isometric drawing, welding, rigging, tube bending, plumbing, pipe layout, screwed pipe, builders level and underground layout. They also were given a written test.

"We had a great batch of contestants who all did an excellent job,"

said James Chinn Jr., Training Coordinator for Local #521. "I want to thank our judges from Virginia, Washington DC and Ohio along with many volunteers who made this a successful event."

An awards banquet was held Thursday, April 6th where the winners in each category were announced. Winning in the Plumbing category was Chris Stuckey from Local #83 Wheeling. For Pipefitter, Adam Searls from Local #521 Huntington. Winning Welder was Ezekiel Smith from Local #625 Charleston. Alonzo Goudy from Local #625 won top honors in HVAC Technician. The overall winning local was Local #83 Wheeling.

Prizes were awarded for each category. The winners move on to Cincinnati, Ohio for the Region 2 competition the first week in June. ■

# School Construction Costs Up, Construction Wages Down

Although legislation aimed at restoring the state prevailing wage law was introduced Republican legislative leaders made sure it never was placed on a committee agenda. However the topic did get raised during the 2017 session.

Evidence disclosed during the session regarding new school construction costs showed an increase, not a decrease as promised.

House of Delegates member Mick Bates (D-Raleigh) who is a member of the House Finance Committee asked the question about costs during a March budget hearing. Did the cost of school construction decrease with the repeal of prevailing wage? The short answer was no.

Bates then asked for more specific data regarding wages and costs.

In response the State School Building Authority wrote a letter detailing both square foot costs and wages with and without prevailing.

The letter detailed how without prevailing wage the average cost per square foot of new school construc-

tion has increased and the average hourly wage of construction workers decreased.

"The numbers show what we have been saying all along," said ACT's Steve White. "The promise of savings from the repeal of prevailing wage is false."

The report accurately notes that construction bids can change depending on a number of factors such as the overall level of work in the area, the time of year the bids are received, and the size of the project.

Larger projects will have lower per square foot costs simply because of economies of scale.

Furthermore site conditions and the location of the project can also influence pricing.

What the report did not examine was quality of construction issues and the increased use of out-of-area contractors with imported workers.

The truth about prevailing wage repeal was also raised during a House of Delegates floor debate on SB412.

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Apprentice contestants take a rigging test as part of the apprenticeship contest held in Huntington April 3 - 6. Five pipe trades locals in WV; Charleston #625, Parkersburg #565, Morgantown #152, Wheeling #83 and Huntington #521 participated.

# Workers Memorial Day Held in Wheeling

Workers Memorial Day (April 28) is a day set aside by Labor for events across the country to remember those who have died on the job.

This year in West Virginia the event was held in Wheeling at the River City Restaurant and Wheeling Artisan Center.

According to WV AFL-CIO President Josh Sword around 100

people attended including family members of those who died during 2016, workers and public officials.

As part of the ceremony the

names of 24 West Virginia women and men who died on the job during 2016 were read and a bell tolled for each name.

The event not only recognized the personal suffering of many families and friends but sought to inspire future efforts to fight for safe and healthful workplaces for all workers.

“It’s a sad event

obviously,” said Sword.

“But it also gives us strength to fight even harder for workplace safety.” ■

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**Josh Sword,**

*WV AFL-CIO, President*



Family members of Frankie Belknap, Steven Oldaker and Justin Zink, each who died on the job in 2016, were among the 100 who came to the Workers Memorial Day service held in Wheeling on April 28.

## Plumbers & Fitters Parkersburg Local 565 & Morgantown Local 152 Want Apprentices

The Parkersburg Plumbers Joint Apprenticeship will take applications from Monday, June 12 through Friday, June 23.

Applications will be available from 9:00am till noon Monday through Friday.

Those interested should go to Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 565 at 593 Cedar Grove Road, Parkersburg (two block from WVU-P).

The five year program teaches all aspects of the plumbing and pipefitting trade including pipe fitting and welding, medical gas, CAD, instrument technician, refrigeration, blue print reading, plumbing, and heating and cooling.

Apprentices are paid while on-the-job and also go to school for a minimum of 216 hours per year.

You may be 17 years of age during application but must be a minimum of 18 years of age when registered for Apprenticeship, if selected.

An applicant must have a high school diploma with official transcripts or equivalent with records, college transcripts (if applicable), a valid driver’s license and be physi-

cally able to perform the work of the trade.

A copy of the applicant’s birth certificate, driver’s license, high school diploma or equivalent, and, if recently in the military, a DD214 form will be requested at the time of application.

Completed applications together with all supporting documents must be submitted within the same time period of June 12 to June 23.

Applicants must reside in the area of Local 565 which includes Calhoun, Jackson, Pleasants, Tyler, Wirt and Wood County in WV; and in Ohio, Morgan County south of Route 78, Meigs, Monroe, and Washington County.

Applicants must pass an aptitude test administered by Workforce West Virginia as well as an alcohol and drug test.

The recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices shall be without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin or sex. For more information visit their [website ualocal565.org](http://website.ualocal565.org) or call 304-485-1565. ■

Morgantown Plumbers Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC) Inc. will accept applications for apprenticeship at Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 152, 100 Richard Avenue, Morgantown during the following dates and times:

Tuesday, May 30 – Saturday, June 3 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Monday, June 5 – Saturday, June 10 from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The five year program teaches all aspect of the plumbing and pipefitting trade including pipe welding certification; medical gas certification; blue print reading; plumbing; heating and cooling.

Apprentices learn on the job under the supervision of journeymen and attend classes two nights a week.

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.

An applicant who is 17 at the time of application can apply as long as their 18th birthday is prior to being registered by the JAC.

Applicants must take the TABE test, given by Workforce West Virginia specifically for the Morgantown Plumbers JAC.

No other test will be accepted. Individuals passing the 10th grade level test or higher will be granted an interview.

Testing information will be provided at the time of application.

Applicants must be high school graduates or have a high school equivalency diploma and must also provide copies of the following documents when applying: a high school diploma issued by a county or state education entity; a high school transcript or official transcript for the GED or equivalent; and proof of birth (birth certificate).

U.S. military veterans with an honorable discharge (active duty or reservist) must submit a DD-214 for consideration of credit for training and experience.

Applicants will be subject to a substance abuse test before entering the program.

Applicants shall be bona fide residents of the following counties (proof of residency required): Barbour, Braxton, Doddridge, Gilmer, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Harrison, Lewis,

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# Painters Hold 7th Annual Corrosion Expo

Around 250 participants attended the seventh annual Corrosion Expo sponsored by Painters District Council 53 at their 90,000 square foot training facility in Lewis County.

The event combined continuing education events and trade show vendors – all focused on how to prevent or correct corrosion.

“We had a wide range of folks including engineers and inspectors who deal with water treatment plants, water, sewer and bridge improvements,” said Dan Poling, Business Manager for Painters DC53. “We also had natural gas industry

inspectors, paint and coatings manufacturers, industrial contractors and suppliers, along with folks from the Department of Highways and Department of Defense.”

According to Poling when the event was first started there were just 40 participants, mostly inspectors and contractors. Since then participation has expanded to include engineers, paint manufacturers, safety suppliers and anybody who supplies anything for the prevention of corrosion.

Classes can help professionals get needed continuing education credits

or certification. Topics are aimed to help engineers, water plant and treatment operators, rural water association members and coatings inspectors.

Around 40 vendors from the local area and as far away as Florida and Connecticut came. The unifying theme was anybody who supplies anything for the prevention of corro-

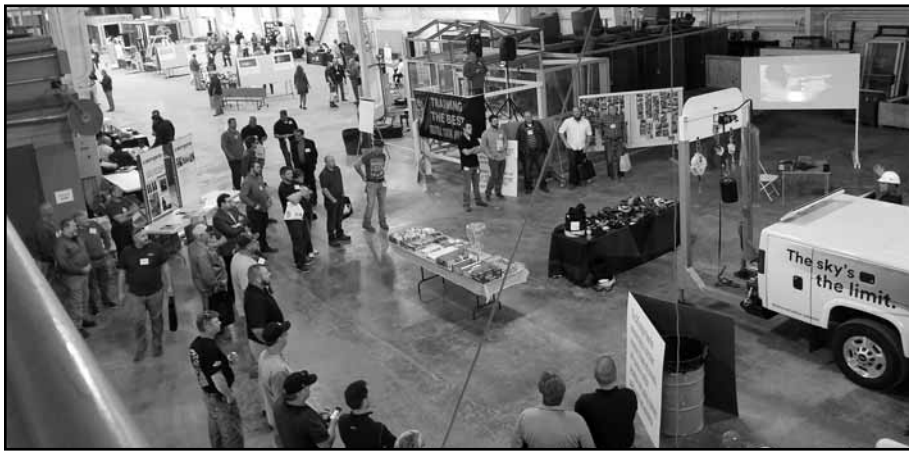
sion.

Some cutting edge products were on display such as new technology using dry ice blasting as a replacement for sandblasting.

District Council 53’s training facility includes five registered apprenticeship programs; industrial painting; commercial painter; drywall finish; glazing; and hydro-blasters. ■

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A safety supply company demonstrates fall protection equipment as part of the seventh annual Corrosion Expo held at the Painters DC 53 training facility in Lewis County.

## School Construction

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The bill would have made public construction payroll documents secret. This led Delegate Scott Brewer (D-Mason) to tie the two issues together.

“The purpose of SB412 is to keep the facts about construction worker wage and benefit cuts secret and to hide the negative effects the repeal

of prevailing wage is having on our communities,” said Brewer.

SB412 passed the Senate but failed to pass the House.

For more information on the results of prevailing wage repeal check out the [web site wvbrokenpromise.com](http://web.site/wvbrokenpromise.com). ■

## Apprenticeship

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Marion, Mineral, Monongalia, Pendleton, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, Tucker and Upshur.

A current valid driver’s license must be supplied at the time of application. A \$20.00 application fee, cash or check only, will be charged.

The JAC will establish an eligibil-

ity list consisting of applications received.

If you have previously applied for the apprenticeship program and were not accepted, you may re-apply.

No applicant shall be rejected because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. ■

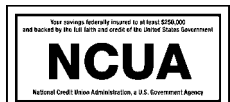
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toll free (855) 355-7284

177 29th Street, Wheeling, WV (304) 232-0181