

## LABORERS' UNION REJOINS BCTD

The Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) reunites with the Building and Construction Trades Department (BCTD), AFL-CIO, after two years of separation, according to the BCTD President Mark H. Ayers. By a unanimous vote, the BCTD's 12-member Governing Board of Presidents approve the LIUNA's re-affiliation. "We are extremely pleased to have the Laborers back once again as an important part of the Building Trades family." Ayers has made reunification of unions that left the BCTD in 2006 a key focus since his election as president of the governing board on September 6, 2007.

Ayers congratulates LIUNA President, Terence M. O'Sullivan, "for his willingness to continue a dialogue with the Department and for maintaining, along with other members of the BCTD governing board, a shared commitment to always put the interest of rank and file members first. "Terry's vision, creativity and leadership will be a valuable asset to the Department as we continue our strategic pursuit of re-positioning and re-vitalizing the union construction brand around our core values of pride, performance and excellence."

O'Sullivan says the BCTD's decision to modernize and amend the construction industry's Plan for the Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes was the deciding factor for the Laborers' decision. Generally, an amendment to the Plan would give the so-called "Green Book" of jurisdictional agreements between building trades unions that is used to resolve work assignment disputes under the Plan equal weight to local prevailing practices, which O'Sullivan says would help alleviate concerns about whether reliance on the decisions are still relevant to current industry practices. As a result of the amendment, "I think this process is a fairer process. It's more reflective of the construction industry as it is today. We left the Building trades for principled reasons and we are going back for principled reasons." O'Sullivan calls the re-affiliation a "positive reflection on LIUNA leadership, Ayers, Secretary-Treasurer Sean McGarvey and the entire Governing Board of Presidents."

The Laborers, the Carpenters and Joiners of America, and the International Union of Operating Engineers ended their affiliation with the BCTD in 2006 and, with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, formed the National Construction Alliance (NCA). The basic issues of disagreement at the time centered on the NCA's seeking:

- a return to voting weighted by membership from the current one-union, one-vote policy on the department's governing board of presidents,
- elimination of the "Green Book" decisions under the Plan,
- a complete review of the department's budget and staffing aimed at a steep reduction of per capita tax and personnel cutbacks, and
- the immediate resignation of Edward Sullivan as BCTD president and Sean McGarvey as BCTD secretary-treasurer.

Robert Hoover, president of The Association of Union Constructors, expresses his support of the agreement to reunify by applauding Presidents O'Sullivan and Ayers "for coming together to add a needed layer of strength to the BCTD. With the Laborers help, the building trades becomes a more effective organization at bringing prevailing wages, good benefits and a measure of job security to the hard-working men and women in the construction and industrial maintenance fields."

(Source: BNA, *Daily Labor Report*, No. 50, March 14, 2008, pp. A4-A5.)