

# News from **CHANGE to WIN**

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**CONTACT:** Greg Denier, 202-486-2365  
Noreen Nielsen, 202-721-6047

## **CHANGE TO WIN: MOBILIZING FOR A NEW AMERICAN DREAM**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – *Change to Win Chair Anna Burger released the following statement for Labor Day 2009.*

“Our economy is transforming. Bailouts to big banks and shameless corporate greed have left us with a faltering economy, a weak job market and crumbling financial system that has made workers more vulnerable than ever. In order to put workers back on the path of prosperity, we need to build a new American economy where the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are good, middle class jobs. The jobs at Wal-Mart, in nursing homes, in our growing fields and warehouses, in weatherizing and retrofitting our buildings, and for those who care for us at our hospitals and in our hotels.

“The American Dream is realized or lost at work. Good jobs that provide paychecks that allow working families to buy cars, homes and educational opportunities are the foundation of the American Dream. Workers are demanding government action to implement progressive legislation that brings back balance and fairness: the Employee Free Choice Act, real health care reform, investment in a clean energy economy, and financial regulatory reform. Workers will accept no less than a new American Dream.

“With Labor Day rapidly approaching and the Congressional recess coming to an end, we are on the verge of witnessing some of the most critical debates in our nation’s history, and the unions of Change to Win will be on the frontlines to fight for the reforms that will strengthen America’s middle class and rebuild the economy. We will mobilize to move America forward so that we all prosper and create an economy and country that we are proud to leave to the next generation.

“Despite the hardships, there are signs of hope and renewed determination emerging across the country. In the past year, we helped elected a new President that places the well-being of working families at the core of his leadership and policies. And we have seen the labor movement grow for the first time in years, showing that when workers are given the choice, they choose to join together in unions.

- Workers at the largest pork processing plant ratified their first union contract after a 15 year battle -- improving wages, benefits and working conditions for thousands of workers.
- The Teamsters organized more than 43,000 workers in 2008, the most in a single year in more than 50 years. The union expects to exceed that number in 2009. They are also

collaborating with environmental allies Sierra Club and the National Resources Defense Council in an innovative program to clean up trucking in our nation's ports.

- 13,000 home care attendants in Missouri's consumer directed home care program voted to join the Missouri Home Care Union.
- The UFCW along with a broad coalition of labor, environmental and community groups launched a new campaign challenging Wal-Mart to support the *American Values Agenda for Change*, including worker rights, quality jobs, equal opportunity, corporate responsibility and a healthy environment.
- The Laborers' International Union is engaged in a nationwide effort to train and organize thousands of workers in green jobs such as home weatherization.
- A new worker movement is building in the Inland Empire region of California among warehouse workers who are standing up to the biggest retailers in the nation: Wal-Mart, Target, Home Depot, Lowes, and Sears/Kmart.

“A strong labor movement is at the heart of American prosperity. Decades ago, America's workers fought to bring us the eight-hour work day and the weekend, health care and paid vacations, safe jobs and pensions to retire on. America's unions helped create the middle class. Today, America's unions will reignite that same spirit and determination to give all working families a stronger voice in the workplace, in our communities, and in the global economy. We will not sit by the wayside. We are a movement in motion.”

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**\*\* Note: Media representatives interested in scheduling an interview with Change to Win leaders should contact Noreen Nielsen at [Noreen.nielsen@changetowin.org](mailto:Noreen.nielsen@changetowin.org) \*\***

#### About Change to Win

Six million workers united in Change to Win to build a new movement of working people equipped to meet the challenges of the global economy and restore the American Dream in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: a paycheck that can support a family, affordable health care, a secure retirement and dignity on the job. The partner unions are: International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Laborers' International Union of North America, Service Employees International Union, UNITE HERE, United Farm Workers of America, and United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.