



Coalition of Labor Union Women

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COALITION OF LABOR UNION WOMEN KICKS-OFF NATIONAL CONVENTION Working Women Unite and Mobilize for Health Care, Economic and Social Policies

LAS VEGAS, NV -- "The 1990's will see historic advances for all American women and especially for working women," Gloria Johnson, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) said today at the opening session of the organization's seventh biennial convention. "Already we have elected a record number of women to Congress and heralded the appointment of more women to the highest echelons of government and to the Supreme Court than ever before."

More than 1000 women activists from across the country gathered today at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada for the three-day national convention. Leaders and rank and file union members representing every major U.S. trade union will participate.

"After 12 years of neglect and opposition from the White House, the Clinton Administration has moved forward on some of the highest priorities on the working women's agenda -- signing into law the Family and Medical Leave Act, supporting reproductive rights and championing health care reform to ensure that all Americans have access to decent medical care," Johnson said.

Convention Speakers will include:

- Carol Moseley-Braun, U.S. Senator
- Karen Nussbaum, Director, Women's Bureau U.S. Department of Labor
- Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada
- Frankie Sue Delpapa, Attorney General of Nevada
- Thomas Donahue, Secretary Treasurer, AFL-CIO
- Arturo Rodriguez, President United Farm Workers
- Bill Bywater, President, International Electronics Union (IUE)
- Moe Biller, President, American Postal Workers Union
- Arthur Coia, President, Laborers International Union

The convention will feature a rally at the Frontier Hotel in support of the striking workers -- most of whom are women and minorities. "Our sisters and brothers on the Frontier picket line are proof positive of the dire need to enact the Workplace Fairness Act. Once and for all we must put an end to the unjust practice of replacing workers who exercise their lawful right to strike," Johnson said.

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A series of workshops will focus on priority issues for union and all working women such as: Health Care Reform, Sexual Harassment, Reproductive Rights, Violence Against Women, Women and AIDS, Pay Equity, Breaking the Glass Ceiling, Bargaining a Union Contract and Winning a Union Election.

"There is no issue more pressing for working women today than health care reform," said Johnson. "Too many women and their children have gone for too long without access to affordable, quality care. CLUW members are ready to work tirelessly with the Administration and Congress to enact a program that provides universal coverage, cost containment and full inclusion of women's health care needs."

CLUW does have some concerns about the Clinton plan's reliance on regressive flat premiums and consumer excises taxes as financing mechanisms. "In order for health care reform to be truly fair to all Americans, we must address both the benefits and the financing of the package," Johnson declared.

A forum entitled "Women in a Global Workplace" will feature international guests from Africa, Europe, Latin America and Canada. Olympia Gatica, a Guatemalan Maquila worker, will report to the convention about poor conditions and labor law violations in runaway factories, buttressing CLUW's firm opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

CLUW is an organization of 20,000 members from 75 local chapters, representing 7.5 million women in unions from diverse geographic, industrial and occupational backgrounds. CLUW represents a strong voice on such issues as reproductive rights, affirmative action, tax policy, family leave and national health care reform.

CLUW President Gloria Johnson, a life-long activist in the labor, women's and civil rights movements, was recently elected Vice President of the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

For more information, or a complete schedule of convention events, please call the contact above.

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