



UFCW Members Mobilize for November Elections

[This is a sample editorial and call to action for the November elections. Please feel free to adapt and redistribute. For the electronic text, go to www.voteufcw.org.]

UFCW members from coast to coast were part and parcel of the incredible grassroots movement that united to elect Barack Obama in 2008 and bring a worker-friendly majority in to power in both houses of Congress. Our union brothers and sisters walked countless blocks, registered thousands of first-time voters, and brought uncounted new voices into the political process. Record numbers of people in every city and town—men, women, young people and retirees of every background—were engaged and committed to shaping our country’s future for the better.

During that campaign season, we were in the midst of an unprecedented economic collapse. The vast majority of citizens thought the country and our leaders had gotten us way off on to the wrong track, yet our campaign was fueled not by frustration, anger, or disappointment but by hope—and the knowledge that with hard work, perseverance, and the right kind of leadership America could emerge stronger than ever.

When President Obama took office, he inherited overwhelming challenges: two wars, an economy in crisis, a broken health care system, and record deficits. On the campaign trail, he used to say that “the size of our challenges had outgrown the smallness of our politics.” It was a call to rise above the partisan bickering that had become the norm from our state hous-

es to the White House and had all but stopped movement in any direction. It was a call to acknowledge the real, urgent, over-arching problems facing our country and the world—from the economy to the environment—and confront them, boldly, with ideas, solutions, leadership, creativity, and America’s can-do attitude.

Democrats in Congress didn’t slow down when faced with the daunting hurdles facing our nation. Rather, they worked overtime with the President to prevent a second Great Depression, putting our economy on the road to recovery. We stabilized our financial system and we put

insurance companies, big banks, and credit card companies on notice with the strongest consumer protections ever. UFCW members lead the push to make affordable health care available to everyone—and we stuck to our ideals: everyone should have access, nobody should be denied because they’re sick, and nobody should go bankrupt because of illness.

These weren’t band-aid solutions to big problems. These policies addressed the underlying reasons for our broken health care system and the inequality that meant our economic system was only working for Wall Street and not Main Street. They weren’t immediate solutions, and they require short term sacrifice for long term gain. But that’s exactly why we elected President Obama in the first place. Americans have learned the hard

way that the responsible solution is not the easiest, or the quickest, or the one that yields the best sound byte.

We elected Barack Obama and Democrats because they acknowledged we all had a role to play in building our future—and they asked us to step up and be part of

Worker-friendly candidates will:

- Create jobs and make our economy work for all Americans;
- Defend fair pay, and economic security, and the right of workers to join unions;
- Make progress toward civil rights and equal pay for equal work;
- Protect the health care of working families;
- Invest in a clean energy future and end our dependence on foreign oil; and
- Educate our children for the challenges of the 21st century.

those solutions. They asked all of us to sacrifice a little, everyone must contribute to the recovery and to building a better America we can be proud of—all of us, from the most successful entrepreneur, to the small business owner just starting out, to the millions of Americans who stand at a cash register all day, to our opinion leaders and pundits who guide the national debate. And so many of us have risen to that occasion, helping to move America

was an unmistakably clear mandate. Instead of intelligent discourse, respectful compromise, or the checking and balancing of power, they chose to root for failure of the President's agenda and policies—as if it were personal instead of about the future of every single American. UFCW

Myron Naylor, Safeway, Local 5

with Senator Barbara Boxer, D-Calif.



"This is the first time I've ever been involved in an election. The more I learn, the more excited I get, and the more important this work seems. Everything depends on who we elect."

forward—from the taxes we pay, to the time we volunteer, to the civility we find when we discuss politics with a neighbor who disagrees with us.

Yet since the day President Obama took office, Republicans have tried to block progress at every turn. Republicans refused to give the winners of the election the slightest room to govern when there

John Rowe, Safeway, Local 5



"I care about health care and disability rights. Republicans want to destroy the safety net for disabled people like my wife. That's why I'm voting for Barbara Boxer and Jerry Brown."

members should take it personally when Republicans ridicule our long, thoughtful, earnest work to make health care affordable and accessible by labeling it "Obamacare" or denouncing us as socialists.

Republicans resort to ridicule because they don't have real, thoughtful solutions to any challenge we face. Our twenty-four hour news cycle makes the Bush Administration seem like ancient history—but UFCW members remember that Wall Street bankers made the rules and American families



Rachel Almazan, Rite Aid, Local 1428

"I talk to coworkers, friends and neighbors and customers about politics. If we put the wrong people in charge, everything we've accomplished – not just in this administration but over decades – is at risk. Republicans will roll back everything we've accomplished and hand it over to the elites in this country."



paid the price. Millionaires got tax cuts while middle-class Americans worked harder and harder to make ends meet. Meanwhile, the exploding deficit mortgaged the future of every American child to the tune of over \$100,000 each.

Yet Republican candidates from Meg Whitman in California to John Kasich in Ohio are touting their Wall Street experience as if it's a resume builder and not a serious problem. Republicans' failed policies, utter complicity with Wall Street's delusional greed, and disdain for even the most basic regulation or responsibility lost us 8 million jobs in the first place. And as a result, lives all over America are on hold: retirements are postponed, college educations are delayed, dreams of owning a home or starting a family are destroyed. For a long time, the future has been hanging out in front of us, like a carrot on a stick. As we took steps toward it, the future remained a mirage just out of reach.

Make no mistake: Republicans are the ones who strung that carrot up. And it's Democrats who have cut it down. America is emerging from the recession, slowly, steadily, by putting one foot in front of the other. It's not just recovery that's at stake in November, it's our future, and that's why union members and progressives can't let up—despite the sometimes slow pace of change, despite setbacks and disappointments we might encounter. There is far, far too much left to do.

If you care about building a better America, you need to talk to your neighbors, your family, and your co-workers. You need to knock on doors and make phone calls for the worker-friendly candidates in your state who are ready to move our country forward. We've come too far to turn back now. **OP**

UFCW ABC Contest: California Locals Lead the Way Building Worker Power, Rebuilding our Economy.

The recent "Citizens United" ruling by the Supreme Court has for the first time allowed corporations to spend unlimited amounts of money on candidates and special interests that put profits over people. In the 2010 election cycle alone, conservative interest groups that are funded largely

by corporate contributions have outspent pro-worker interests 7 to 1. How are the voices and issues of working families supposed to be heard if they are being masked by millions of corporate dollars?

UFCW members do have the power to fight back—by joining our Active Ballot Club (ABC), the only non-partisan political action committee (PAC) that works on behalf of UFCW members specifically. A contribution of \$1 per week may not sound like much, but if every member contributed that amount, we would have much greater power to overcome an anti-worker agenda. UFCW members have proven time and time again that there is strength in numbers.

This year's ABC contributions contest was designed to do just that—to show corporations that our members

are stronger than the corporate anti-worker agenda. UFCW

Local 400 member Alan Cruickshank works just two nights a week at his local Giant Food store, but he has been a dedicated union member from the outset. On September 30, he first learned about the UFCW's Active Ballot Club, the Union's political fundraising arm, and wanted to get involved.

"Right now, we are living in an unstable economy and we need all the help we can get," Cruickshank said. **"The Active Ballot Club allows us to support the lawmakers that support us workers and as someone who has, at times, struggled to keep shelter over my head and food on my family's table, I know how important that is."**

When Cruickshank sees someone working to achieve a goal, he does what he can to support them in making it happen.

"If the ABC helps workers achieve their goals, I want to support it," he said. "Besides, when it only costs \$1, you're helping your fellow workers and you don't even notice when you look at your paycheck!"

One dollar a week may not seem like much, but with the 1.3 million members of the UFCW standing together as the voice for working America, Alan Cruickshank wants you to know:

"The point is, it adds up!"

ON POINT

UFCW Unity Agenda of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union

"I believe UFCW members need a voice in the federal, state, and local government. Through the Active Ballot Club, our union voice is heard. If we don't get involved in the process, what we have will be gone; our raises, our health care, and our pensions will be lost. With everything on the line, it doesn't cost much to help protect our future. Join ABC today!" —Harry Green, Dominick's, Chicago, IL, Local 881 UFCW



"I realize the importance of supporting pro-labor candidates for the mid-term election. My co-workers and I gladly contribute to the ABC program." —Gladys A. Guzman, Stop & Shop, Everett, Local 1445, with servicing agent Bob Lennon



Local 1445's Jim Carvahlo says they've achieved their ABC success in the following way: "new member orientation helps, where our servicing agents have meetings with all new members as they enter the union to educate them about their contract, and how the union works for them as well as all the ways they can be active in their union, including participating in the ABC program."



"I know we can achieve some things in bargaining. But I realize, in order to make meaningful change, certain issues need to be taken care of at the legislative level. That is why I am involved in ABC." -Matt Kenyon (right), Local 21

Jason Morey of Local 700 (left) says about contributing \$1/week to the ABC, "You bet I did it. Its a small price to pay to try and keep things right. If the balance of power shifts here in our Statehouse it could be devastating to all workers, especially union members. Our Governor has already shown how he feels about union workers. If he has it his way, he'll try to make Indiana a 'Right-to-Work' State."





locals all over the nation have stepped up to the plate, but UFCW locals in California deserve a special mention for their extraordinary participation. Over 11,000 UFCW members from all over the state volunteered to contribute \$1 a week to ABC.

Locals in California teamed up this August to challenge their reps and stewards to talk to members about contributing \$1 a week to ABC. The idea for the California ABC initiative stemmed from a successful ABC effort led by Local 770 earlier in the summer. The statewide effort kicked off with a two-part ABC training workshop. Participating locals included UFCW Locals 5, 135, 324, 770, 1167, 1428 and 1442.

Mike Straeter, President of Local 1442, says the secret to their success is simple. "It takes hard work, dedication, setting high goals and having the will to succeed," he says. Mark Ramos, Political Representative from Local 1428, cites the Citizens United ruling and corporate campaign spending as a driving reason behind members getting involved with ABC. "With all that money out there on the anti-worker side," says Ramos, "somebody needs to get behind a pro-worker agenda, and that somebody has got to be us."

Congratulations and a job well done to all of our participating locals, and especially those in California, for their hard work and willingness to take a stand against the corporate special interests. UFCW members are proving—as they always do—that when we stand together, we truly are more powerful. **OP**

Contest Highlights: Region 8

The overall leader for Region 8 is currently UFCW Local 324, who has signed up over 4,000 members at the dollar level. This is a truly amazing level of participation, exceeding any other local in the country, and one that Local 324 members and staff can be proud of achieving through their hard work. Throughout the ABC contest, both Local 324 and Local 770 have showed tremendous drive in signing up members for contributions. Rod Diamond, Political Director for Local 770,

attributes his local's ABC success the most basic principle of what being UFCW is all about: the voice and will of members. Over 3,000 members of Local 770 chose to contribute \$1 to ABC this summer, and their effort sparked a statewide contest that yielded enormously successful results. And all the locals in Region 8 have contributed to the outstanding success in the region, making Region 8 the overall leader in the ABC contest. Congrats to all these locals, and remember that there's still time to catch up to their success! **OP**



For more information on the 2010 Elections, go to

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