

PA Voter Suppression Law

By Paul O’Hanlon

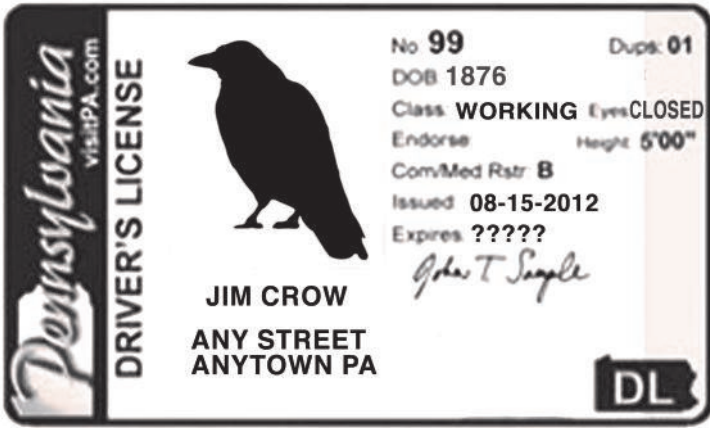
On August 15, Judge Robert E. Simpson Jr., refused to grant an injunction against the state’s brand new voter ID law. He called the new ID requirement "a reasonable, non-discriminatory, non-severe burden...." despite the fact that the number of state residents without photo ID considered valid by the law has been estimated between 760,000 and more than 1 million—and that the only kind of vote fraud it prevents is voter impersonation, a crime that even the lawyers arguing for the law admitted was virtually nonexistent.

The fight against the law will next go to the state Supreme Court, but it won’t be resolved before November’s presidential election—which is exactly what many Republicans were hoping, since the number of people disenfranchised by this law are mostly minorities, the poor, and the young: demographic groups that usually vote Democrat.

Back in March, Pennsylvania’s legislature passed a law requiring voters to produce specific forms of photo ID at the polls in order to prevent voter impersonation fraud, even though there are no recorded examples of this crime in the state.

The rushed implementation of this law is apparent in the disorganization within PennDOT photo ID centers. Almost half of Pennsylvania’s counties have no photo ID center, or have centers that are rarely open. Only 13% of PennDOT ID centers have signage about the new ID requirements. And the state has conceded that it have no plan for issuing the almost 1 million photo ID cards to voters who will need them to vote in November.

Even now, with the election only weeks away, an estimated 34% of Pennsylvania voters don’t know about the



law, or believe they have valid ID when they do not.

Even having a driver’s license is no guarantee of being able to vote if there are spelling discrepancies or errors between your license and other forms of ID. Frank Dermody, Democratic legislator, discovered he could have a problem voting in November because one ID said Frank, and the other said Francis. Judy O’Connor, widow of Bob O’Connor is listed as “Connor” on her ID. Imagine the chaos on Election Day if these errors determine whether citizens are stripped of their right to vote. Some election officials have already said they would not enforce the voter ID law, but with observers from both parties at all polling places, the chances for this kind of protest will be few.

Adoption of this law was driven by a national campaign by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a collaboration between multinational corporate interests like Koch Industries Inc., Wal-Mart Stores Inc., and Coca-Cola Co. and conservative state legislators. ALEC produces model legislation for state legislatures and promotes free-

market and conservative ideas. Pennsylvania is one of 30 states where voter ID laws are being pushed by ALEC forces.

Compared to other states, Pennsylvania’s voter ID law has the fewest types of ID which will be acceptable, and it’s specifically designed to make it difficult for certain people to vote: college students; people with disabilities; older people who no longer drive; poor and urban voters.

For example, in Congressional District 8 (Republican Fitzpatrick; Bucks, Montgomery and part of Philadelphia County) 19% of seniors are without ID, 10% of voters aged 18 – 24 years. But in Congressional District 2 (Democrat Fattah; Philadelphia and Montgomery Counties) 46% of seniors are without ID, and 58% of voters aged 18 - 24.

The United States already makes it more difficult to vote than other democracies in the world. Every other democracy affirmatively registers its citizens to vote: in the U.S., it is the voter’s burden. Most other democracies have elections on weekends, or make Election Day a holiday: we hold our elections in the middle of the week on a work day. Absentee voting (voting by mail) is available only to voters who fit certain exceptions.

The chances of this law being overturned in the state Supreme Court are not good. Normally, the Supreme Court would be expected to be the real “deciders” in this process, but the Pennsylvania Supreme Court has one member under indictment (for real election fraud, no less), leaving six members, 3 Democrats and 3 Republicans. A majority of justices would be required to overrule the lower court.

If you want your vote heard this year, you may have a fight on your hands.

(More on page 4)

JUSTICE DELAYED

By Helen Gerhardt and Kate Luce Angell

On August 8, the jury in a civil suit that was brought by Jordan Miles against the 3 Pittsburgh police officers who arrested him January 12, 2010 returned a not-guilty verdict on the count of malicious prosecution and deadlocked on the other counts, of false arrest and excessive force. Judge Gary Lancaster declared a mistrial on those two counts. Miles’ attorneys have said they will file a motion for a new trial on the malicious prosecution claim and will proceed to a second trial on the other two claims.

The following are some facts. These facts are not in dispute.

On January 12, 2010, the day after his eighteenth birthday, Jordan Miles left his mother's house in Homewood around 11 p.m. to go back to his grandmother's house to sleep.

According to the 2000 census, the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Homewood is more than 98% African American.

Before he reached his mother’s house, Miles encountered 3 City of Pittsburgh police officers on Tioga St. They got out of their unmarked car and spoke to him. The officers, David Sisak, Michael Saldutte and Richard Ewing, are white.

The officers say they identified themselves as police; Miles says they did not. He has testified that he was relieved when the police paddy wagon arrived on the scene, assuming he was being rescued.

These officers later testified in court that they thought Miles was armed, as they saw something in his pocket. After they had handcuffed him, they said they found a bottle of Mountain Dew. The bottle was not entered into evidence; it has never been found.

The doctor who examined Miles after his release from jail found multiple abrasions to his face, bruises on many parts of his body, and bleeding in one eye. He attributed these injuries to blunt force injury or trauma. Neighbors found braids of Miles’ hair in bushes on Tioga St. Pictures taken after his release show Miles’ face grotesquely swollen. His mother, Terez Miles, has said she did not recognize him at first. The charges against Mr. Miles — aggravated assault, loitering, resisting arrest and escape--were dismissed in March 2010. Although urged to do so by Miles’ family and multiple community and justice organizations, federal and county prosecutors refused to charge the officers with any crime.

Officer David Wright was called as an expert witness on the use of force by police officers during the civil trial by lawyers for the officers’ defense. He is often asked to testify in this capacity. He testified that the use of force was appropriate in this case. Wright also operates “Wright’s Gym,” in Crafton, where Officer Saldutte teaches members Krav Maga, the Israeli martial art.

Jordan Miles was a senior and honor student at CAPA, Pittsburgh’s performing arts magnet school, at the time of his arrest. He has no criminal record. He plays the viola.

At the civil trial, Pittsburgh Police Commander Rashall Brackney stood ready to testify about Sisak, Saldutte and Ewing. In a deposition taken beforehand, she referred to the three officers’ “history of lying and taking action” even when a suspect’s actions did not “rise to [the] level of reasonable suspicion,” and had ordered that Sisak and Ewing be monitored and supervised. But her testimony was never heard. Judge Lancaster ruled she could only testify in rebuttal. Police Officer Ewing declared on the stand that he would “do it all over again.”

After the trial, Jordan Miles released a statement: "Thank you to all the people that supported me thus far. It is far from over."



Jordan Miles in January 2010, after he was beaten, arrested and hospitalized.
(Photo by Terez Miles)

Shedding Light on Police Weapons

By Jeff Cech

Central to the Jordan Miles civil trial was the question of whether or not Miles was struck on the head with what he testified was a "very hard object" while handcuffed, and if that blow resulted in brain damage.

During the trial, it emerged for the first time that one of the three officers, David Sisak, had "lost" his police flashlight during the scuffle, and despite exhaustive searches by multiple police officers, it was never found.

The emergency room doctor who treated Miles on the night of his arrest testified that the bump on his head and the adjacent laceration could have been caused by a police officer’s flashlight.

In many areas of the U.S., law enforcement often carry Maglite® flashlights, advertised as having “rugged, machined aluminum construction with knurled design.” They’re also “shock resistant.”

Ranging from just over twelve inches in length to just under twenty, with three to six D batteries inside, they weigh around two or three pounds.

The weight and length of these flashlights give them some of the same

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CORBETT: “PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE”

By Charlie Humphrey

“My hypocrisy goes only so far.”
-Doc Holliday, From the 1993 movie *Tombstone*

I made a little bit of a public stink a few weeks back when I resigned from the board of the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, an organization I helped to create in the 1990’s. It was a non-paying job and you could say I was exhibiting what my father likes to call “Bail-bondsman bravery.” Or, as my kids used to say, “No big whoop.”

It’s not a big whoop.
Kevin Harley, a spokesperson for Governor, Tom Corbett, was quoted in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette saying “Mr. Humphrey, who pays himself a six-figure salary from his nonprofit arts organization, has the luxury of resigning in protest whenever he doesn’t get his way.”

Never mind that the board of directors of Pittsburgh Filmmakers/Pittsburgh Center for the Arts decides my salary. Harley is implying that I’m something of a brat, and I don’t think he’s entirely wrong.

I was protesting the fact that GPAC had issued a point-by-point defense of Pittsburgh Opera’s decision to award Governor Tom Corbett and his wife, Susan, a lifetime achievement award in the arts. I actually think Susan deserves it. I think her husband deserves little more than a recall, if such a thing were possible in Pennsylvania.

Pittsburgh Opera is entitled to honor anyone they want, for any reason they want. I was pissed off because GPAC took a tone-deaf position on the matter, ignoring a subject that seriously divides the local arts community. Had GPAC not issued its pandering defense of the Opera’s decision, I would have kept my mouth shut. And by the way, GPAC remains conspicuously mute on the matter. Ah, yeah, right. It has already

blown over.
So, what is a one percent (okay, two percent), BMW-driving, scion brat of Pittsburgh industry doing writing in these pages, much less taking shots at a bulletproof Republican governor in a publication called Occupy Pittsburgh Now? Please refer to the quote at the start of this piece.



Corbett’s Draconian cuts to education, combined with his steadfast unwillingness to tax gas extraction in the Marcellus Shale region, make Governor Corbett public enemy number one, metaphorically speaking. I say *metaphorically speaking* because so many of my fellow one

percenters long ago had their sense of humor surgically removed. Heaven forbid anyone should find a way to laugh at themselves in times like these.

Corbett’s approval rating, as of June, is 35%, according to Quinnipiac University in Connecticut (Pennlive.com). How did that happen? Let’s start with nearly a billion dollars in cuts to public education and

of Pennsylvania. Corbett is in favor of less government, except when he isn’t.

If ever there was a time when we needed someone like Gore Vidal, it’s now:

Liberal comes from the Latin liberalis, which means pertaining to a free man. In politics, to be liberal is to want to extend democracy through change and reform. One can see why the word had to be erased from our political lexicon.

Vidal was an unapologetic liberal, and he was damn smart too. (Another irresistible Vidal quote: “Andy Warhol is the only genius I’ve ever known with an I.Q. of 60.”) Vidal, who was decidedly part of the 1%, actually coined the term in Oregon in 1999. (Oregon Live August 1, 2012).

The point here is that you don’t have to be anywhere specific on the 100% spectrum to understand that something is very wrong. No, I am not going to camp out in a tent and use the local Bruegger’s as my restroom. No, I am not going carry a sign, though I have spent a fair amount of time this past year photographing the Occupy movement in Pittsburgh. This doesn’t mean I’m not writing lawmakers and chewing their ears off when I get close enough. State House Majority Leader, Mike Turzai, is a friend of mine, and he knows I disagree with him on pretty much every issue before the state.

And yes I am purposefully focused on the arts. And while I do not think the arts can be parsed from the fabric of civil society, I also recognize that hunger, under employment, poor public transportation, terrible air quality and ineffective local government are hurting everyone, in real and significant ways. As an asthmatic I am reminded every day that Pittsburgh ranks worse than most comparable cities in both ozone and particulate matter. (For information on this subject, see www.pittsburghtoday.org)

A friend of mine, who occupies space in the one percent, told me that the Occupy Pittsburgh movement isn’t really a movement, and admonished me not to write for this publication because no one takes it seriously. Well, he’s my good friend but he’s not seeing it. While the Occupy numbers are relatively small, there are a great many people, in Pittsburgh and elsewhere, who are suffering needlessly. Is the gas extraction industry going help public transportation in Pittsburgh and elsewhere in the state? I highly doubt it. So while the diner owners and motel owners and landowners are doing well, there is a lot of public good that could be affected if we reassemble the tax code, make the wealthiest Americans pay a little more, make the gas extraction industry pay a lot more. (What are they going to do, leave?) There is plenty of good that can happen with resources that are readily available.

Time to make a stink.

Charlie Humphrey is Executive Director of Pittsburgh Filmmakers/Pittsburgh Center for the Arts and writes frequently about issues surrounding the arts.

Flashlights as Weapons

(Continued from page 1)

qualities as a mace, and they have been used the same way by many police officers. After more than 50 incidents involving Los Angeles police using Maglite flashlights as weapons between 2002 and 2007, the LAPD banned the devices.

Even then, the market for law enforcement flashlights offers newer alternatives. One online forum asking, “Best flashlight for a cop?” got the response (sic): “...the flashlight that has best suited me is the SureFire E2D LED Defender flashlight. The thing is small. It’s rugged. It’s got fucking TEETH on the front and back ends. TEETH, my friend. These teeth are good for a number of things...It’s bright. Bright as hell. 200 lumens...when badguys are all around you, or on the attack, i just press the button to 200 lumen mode and blind the motherfucker. 200 lumens is BLINDING.”



“The Defender’s crenellated Strike Bezel® and scalloped tailcap provide further defensive options should the need arise.” (Photo and quote from www.surefire.com)

The LAPD, along with police forces in Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, and several other cities now use rubber flashlights designed so that they are less effective as weapons. However, according to Beth Pittinger from the Citizen Police Review Board, the heavy, metal models are still considered acceptable for use by the Pittsburgh Police.

Pittinger says there is no regulation which restricts or precludes Pittsburgh Police from carrying a flashlight of any kind. Flashlights are not part of the required uniform, nor is there a standard issue flashlight used by Pittsburgh Police. Therefore, any flashlight a member of the Pittsburgh Police chooses to use would be considered acceptable.

However, she asserts, they are not an approved tactical weapon. “If they are used as a weapon,” she adds, “they would be considered a ‘weapon of last resort.’” There is no real restriction keeping Pittsburgh Police from using flashlights, which are unregulated and unrestricted, as defensive weapons.

According to Miles’ testimony, the “very hard object” struck him on the right side of his head and felt different from all of the other blows. Dr. Maria Twichell, director of UPMC Mercy’s General Rehabilitation Unit, who specializes in concussion injuries for among others, the Pittsburgh Steelers players, testified that a four-hour neurological test showed Jordan Miles has problems with juggling multiple tasks at the same time and short- term recall of complicated information. “All those brain functions are located on the right side of the head,” she said, where the blow landed.

On the stand, Miles’ doctor described his injuries as an ongoing problem, and that it is unlikely he will ever fully recover from them.

universities and tax credits to drillers and chemical companies of \$1.7 billion, when fully enacted. The counter argument is that the tax credits create jobs. Yeah? How many, exactly? And how permanent? I’m certainly not going to refer back to the Governor’s industry stacked Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission for answers. A better, and more balanced, study was released a year ago by Penn State Extension and Penn College. It shows that there is real and meaningful economic impact in areas where the drilling occurs. But it does not accrue across the state. You’d need a statewide tax for that. Also, to quote from the study:

Because only about half of the land in a typical Marcellus county is owned by residents of that county, it would suggest that a large portion of the economic benefits immediately leaves the communities being impacted by drilling.

What if we instead funded public transportation? If proposed cuts to PAT bus routes goes through, how many Pittsburghers are going to take it on the chin, financially, when they can’t get to work? According to a May 2, 2012 Pittsburgh City paper article, the cuts will mean a 35% reduction in service along with a generous hike in fares. And it isn’t just workers who will be affected. School districts will get stomped. Corbett has left municipalities statewide twisting in a vortex of dead air.

Another reason I find it hard to support the Governor is his backing of the voter ID bill. The Mayor of Philadelphia, Michael Nutter called the law “a bad solution looking for a problem.” There isn’t voter fraud in the State

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Neoliberal Education and Student Revolt

by Nick Stefanski

The University of Pittsburgh’s Board of Trustees recently raised tuition at a school already ranking among the most expensive public universities in the United States, and therefore, the world. High tuition costs necessitate hefty student loans for those seeking education, debts which will take a lifetime to repay even for the few lucky enough to find employment after graduation.

The situation for Pitt students is dire, but not unique. Across the country and around the world, universities have been converted from public institutions of learning and free inquiry to corporate job training centers, but with costs increasingly borne by the trainees themselves, the students. The high cost of higher education and borrowing increasingly functions as a form of modern indentured servitude: students must borrow to get where the jobs (theoretically) are, then they must work for a lifetime to pay retroactively for getting there. This state of affairs did not arise naturally and inevitably. The corporate university results from deliberate ideological and political choices.

This ideology is called neoliberalism. Wikipedia defines neoliberalism thus: an ideology based on the advocacy of economic liberalizations, free trade, and open markets. Neoliberalism supports privatization of state-owned enterprises, deregulation of markets, and promotion of the private sector's role in society. In the 1980s, much of neoliberal theory was incorporated into mainstream economics.

It dangerously elevates the operation of the “free market” from a tool for our use to an end in itself, an end to which all incompatible human virtues must be sacrificed. In the realm of higher education, neoliberalism posits students as robotic, autonomous choosers, borrowing and investing their human capital to maximize future output. Fundamentally incompatible with the idea of education as a virtue in itself, neoliberalism serves the corporations and the 1 percent not only by tying indebted students to future employers like modern serfs, but also by foreclosing educational opportunities deemed not “profitable” enough to justify the crushing financial investment. At Pitt, programs in German, classics, and philosophy had their graduate programs suspended or crippled in the past year, even while the Board



of Trustees ratified an over \$9 million upgrade to The Book Center and Chancellor Nordenberg continues to collect his \$561,000 salary. Though the neoliberal disease has spread its deleterious effects on education around the world, students everywhere are now fighting to reject this ideology in favor of

an idea of public higher education as a human right rather than a capital investment, and as a catalyst for public free inquiry rather than private profits.

Only a few hundred miles north, Quebec’s student unions recently mobilized over 400,000 students in response to tuition increases proposed by the provincial government. The Quebec student protests have continued over several months, retaining a strong yet festive atmosphere despite thousands of arrests and severe police repression. Asked how the Quebec movement succeeded in such massive mobilizations, Jérémie Bédard-Wien of the CLASSE union replied, “Our student unions are inherently political and they operate according to principles of direct democracy, therefore involving a maximum amount of students in General Assemblies...Students are able to participate in the daily political life of their student unions, instead of dedicating power to a group of individuals.” Though Quebec benefits from a history of low public tuition and strong student activism, not all recent student protests have such a pedigree. Faced with an utterly cynical institutional neoliberalism much like our own, students in Chile have successfully mobilized over 500,000 students and allies in hopes of completely reforming a higher education system dominated by a legacy of privatization, profits, and Pinochet.

The Pittsburgh region has historically led the way in the union movement, beginning with the organization of steel and railroad workers in the nineteenth century. Recent efforts by adjuncts at Duquesne University to unionize made national news and shed light on the shabby state of employment practices at corporate universities. Pittsburgh and the United States sorely need student unionism and the Occupy movement has now provided students with the rhetoric and strategy needed to reclaim their universities and their futures. Join Occupy Your Mind on September 14 at 7 p.m. in the William Pitt Student Union Building for a discussion on how a coalition of Occupiers and local students can take back our public campuses from the corporations on behalf of the 99 percent. For updates and information on the event, visit www.occupyyourmindpgh.net.

Our Shared Wealth: Reclaiming the Commons for the 99%

By Marybeth Steisslinger

THE COMMONS, *n.*, gifts of nature and society; the wealth we inherit or create together and must pass on, undiminished or enhanced, to our children; a sector of the economy that complements and counterweights the corporate sector. Civic-based commons governance provides a check and balance to the corporate drive for profit and undue influence on government.

Across the world, the commons movement is gaining attention from those who want to reclaim what the 1% has taken from the rest of us.

If you’ve never heard of them, the commons are the collective heritage of humanity, the shared natural, genetic, material, intellectual, digital, social and cultural resources that we inherit, create and use, and transmit to future generations. The commons also embody the relationships between people, communities and these shared resources. It is time for government and business to honor the foundation from which they emerge; if it were not for the Commons, government and business could not exist.

The tragedy of the commons is that this shared wealth is being enclosed and privatized. This has gone on for centuries with the strongest, most powerful, or politically adept, taking for themselves resources that were formerly shared by the larger community, and then using power over the resource for their own profit. Today, this is done on a large scale by corporations, often with the help of selfish politicians. An example of a commons resource being enclosed and exploited for profit of the few at the expense of the many is the Marcellus Gas deposits.

Other examples of commons:

Social, Cultural & Intellectual – indigenous culture and traditions, community support systems, neighborhoods, social connectedness, voluntary associations, labor relations, women and children’s rights, family life, health, education, sacredness, religions, ethnicity, racial values, recreation, silence, creative works, languages, words, numbers, symbols, stores of human knowledge and wisdom, scientific knowledge, ethnobotanical knowledge, ideas, intellectual property, data, information, communication flows, airwaves, internet, free culture, sports, games, playgrounds, roads, streets, sidewalks, plazas, public spaces, national parks, historical sites, museums, libraries, universities, music, dance, arts, crafts, money

Solar, Natural & Genetic – solar energy, wind energy, tides, water power, oceans, lakes, springs, streams, beaches, fisheries, agriculture, forests, wetlands, ecosystems, watersheds, aquifers, land, pastures, parks, gardens, plants, seeds, algae, topsoil, food crops, photosynthesis, pollination, DNA, life forms and species, living creatures

Material – the elements, rocks, minerals, hyrdocarbons, technological hardware, buildings, inorganic energy, atmosphere, ozone layer, stratosphere

In forthcoming issues, we'll give more examples of local and national projects that are working to formalize people's shared rights, benefits and responsibilities as stakeholders for commons. For now, here's 2 projects that are impacting Pittsburgh:

1. Community Bill of Rights

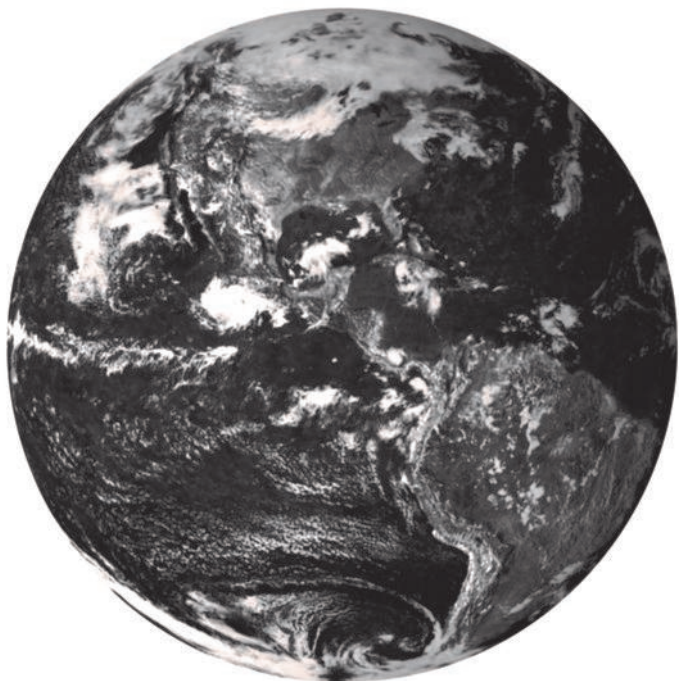
The model Community Bill of Rights template is derived from ongoing work by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), such as Ecuador adding “Rights for Nature” to its constitution, Spokane, Washington’s Community Bill of Rights initiative, and Pittsburgh’s efforts to prevent drilling corporations from executing corporate constitutional “rights.”

Today, monied interests are intent on undoing or discrediting these efforts. For example, right here in Pittsburgh, our Mayor is now lobbying to reverse the Community Bill of Rights "Ban on Marcellus Gas Drilling.” Many people in communities around the world have attended CELDF’s **Democracy School** and workshops, and so they understand the fundamental ways in which private interests have usurped constitutional rights and influence governments, and citizens are fighting these efforts.

2. Transition Towns

Also known as Transition Network or Transition Movement, TT is a grassroots network of communities that are working to build resilience in response to peak oil, climate destruction, and economic instability. Transition Towns are founded in part upon the principles of Permaculture, based originally on Bill Mollison’s seminal *Permaculture, a Designers Manual*, 1988. An essential aspect of transition is that the outer work of transition needs to be matched by inner transition. That is, in order to move down the energy descent pathways effectively, we need to rebuild our relations with our selves, with each other and with the "natural" worlds. Small working groups and group collaborations with government, business and other communities and organizations is the hallmark of Transition success. Pittsburgh has active Transition Town projects underway. Transition Pittsburgh: <http://transitionpgh.org/>

For more information on commons, see GlobalCommonsTrust.org.



A Slice of Justice

By Karl Nagy

On August 11, members of the United Steelworkers Union (USW) and local labor supporters rallied outside of Costco in West Homestead to pressure the company to stop selling Palermo's Pizza products. The rally was held as part of a national boycott of Palermo's Pizza being organized by the Palermo's Workers Union, USW, the AFL-CIO and Voces de la Frontera, an immigrant workers' center.

Workers at Palermo's, a frozen pizza factory in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, have been on strike since June 1 in response to their management's aggressive anti-union tactics and to protest low wages and dangerous working conditions. Just days after the mostly immigrant workers presented Palermo with a petition to form a union, management responded by requesting workers' immigration documentation, firing almost 90 of them soon after.

The strike was immediately met with labor and community support both in Milwaukee and nationally. "We've had faith groups, student groups, Occupy, and even bands playing on the picket line," says Rachel Matteson, an organizer for the Palermo's Workers Union. The strong showing of support has helped workers weather this summer's heat waves during the two and a half-month strike. "This makes us feel very supported and it gives us the strength to continue with the struggle," remarked Raul de la Torre, a worker at Palermo's.

However, organizers have realized that simply striking will not be enough, nor can they rely on the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to remedy the situation. "Palermo's management has been determined from the outset to stop employees from forming a union. It hired union-busting law firm Jackson Lewis and brought in permanent replacement workers to circumvent the strike," says Maria Somma, Assistant Organizing Director for the United Steelworkers. "The company has created a climate of fear in the workplace and used legal maneuvers with the NLRB to make it so newly-hired replacement workers could vote against the union in an election."

To pressure Palermo's management to bring back fired workers and allow an untainted union election, organizers have turned to Costco, which buys more than half of all Palermo's frozen pizza. "Costco has a strong supplier code of conduct that requires suppliers to follow labor laws and provide a safe workplace," says Somma. "Palermo has violated it many times over, so we're asking Costco to drop its products until it's in compliance."

Organizers staged rallies at fifteen Costcos in eleven cities around the country last



Saturday and have even more planned in coming weeks. At The Waterfront mall outside of Pittsburgh, roughly twenty people showed up to speak with Costco customers and management about the strike. A smaller delegation of USW members also met with management at Costco's Robinson Township location to ask them to drop Palermo's.

Soon after Saturday's actions, Costco management called the AFL-CIO to ask for time to work with Palermo to address the situation. Since then, it has changed course, saying it would prefer to wait to see whether the NLRB issues a complaint over Palermo's behavior. However, organizers from USW and the Palermo Workers Union are not letting up. According to Somma, they will escalate the campaign as long as Palermo's workers are still on strike.

"Our actions last Saturday were just the beginning and we have local unions and allies ready to march at Costcos in even more cities. We know we're going to win, it's just a matter of when."

Support the Palermo's Workers Union: go to sliceofjustice.com or email Costco directly at customerservice@costco.com to tell them to stop stocking Palermo's pizza.

ID INFO FOR PA VOTERS

(Continued from page 1)

All voters are required to show a photo ID before voting. All photo IDs must contain an expiration date that is current, unless noted otherwise.

Acceptable IDs include:

- ▶ Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver's license photo ID (IDs are valid for voting purposes 12 months past expiration date)
- ▶ Valid U.S. passport
- ▶ U.S. military ID - active duty and retired military (a military or veteran's ID must designate an expiration date or designate that the expiration date is indefinite). Military dependents' ID must contain an expiration date.
- ▶ Employee photo ID issued by Federal, PA, County or Municipal government
- ▶ Photo ID cards from an accredited Pennsylvania public or private institution of higher learning
- ▶ Photo ID cards issued by a Pennsylvania care facility, including long-term care facilities, assisted living residences or personal care homes

If you do not have one of these IDs, you may be entitled to get one free of charge at a PennDOT Driver License Center. To learn more, visit PennDOT's Voter ID website or call the Department of State's Voter ID Hotline at 1-877-868-3772. For more on voting, go to www.vote411.org



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