



PUBLIC EMPLOYEE Advocate

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION OF AFT PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Budget deficits require decisive action. The question elected officials need to answer is how do we invest in public services for economic growth and the common good?



Budget Options

Expanding the revenue pie

“DIFFICULT TIMES DEMAND bold action. The boldest action that you can take now is the simplest: Invest in the foundations of our country’s strength—jobs, education and healthcare.”

That was the message AFT president Randi Weingarten delivered to members of the U.S. House of Representatives’ Ways and Means Committee during an Oct. 29 hearing on economic recovery, job creation and investment in America.

Weingarten called on Congress to provide assistance to cash-strapped states so they can continue to provide essential public services. Absent federal

assistance, she said, states will be forced to cut services to balance their budgets at a time when citizens need public services the most.

“While the economic landscape is bleak, the worst possible outcome for our nation would be for government at all levels to retreat,” she said.

States cumulatively have cut upward of \$60 billion in spending for the current fiscal year, FY 2009, which for most states began July 1.

Unless you work in one of the several states rich in natural resources, like Alaska, Montana or North Dakota, you are

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Public service

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Challenges and opportunities

RANDI WEINGARTEN, AFT President

ON THE EVE of the November presidential election, I literally rolled into the 17th state I have traveled to since becoming president of the American Federation of Teachers last July. I have thoroughly enjoyed each of those trips. I have talked with our members across the country, heard what's on their minds, and discussed the importance of the elections with them. Many of those visits were connected with our affiliates' efforts to elect Barack Obama and Joe Biden, as well as other candidates who share our priorities and values.

The AFT played an instrumental role in electing candidates who support strengthening vital public services. I am proud of our political program—which included millions of contacts with our members through phone calls, mail, leaflets and direct member-to-member contacts at home and at work—and of our many successes. More than 5,000 AFT members volunteered in the union's education and get-out-the-vote efforts. Thank you all—to those who volunteered and those who voted.

This is a victory to be savored. But given the fragile state of the economy and the many challenges confronting the nation, we know that our expectations must be tempered by the new fiscal realities.

The proverbial confetti hadn't even settled before President-elect Barack Obama spoke of the challenges awaiting his administration.

In his remarks in Chicago's Grant Park the night of his historic election, Barack Obama acknowledged that the challenges the nation faces are the "greatest of our lifetime."

But President-elect Obama also said that "we as a people will get there," that the results of this election provide a "chance for us to make that change," and that such change "cannot happen without you."

With challenges come opportunities. That belief and the American can-do, must-do way of thinking underlie our country's determination to constantly move forward. That outlook is most resolute in the face of our greatest trials.

I will be pressing **policymakers** at every level **to reinvest** in public services—**not to cut** their way out of the current economic fiasco.

The first press conference Barack Obama held after his election was both to introduce the advisors who will be among the first to help his administration stabilize the economy and to call for an economic stimulus package—something I had testified about the week before to the House Ways and Means Committee.

I will be pressing for policymakers at every level to reinvest in public education and other important public services, not to cut their way

out of the current economic fiasco. In these tough times, many important priorities will be in competition for limited resources. It won't be easy to ensure that officials protect these investments that underpin our nation's strength, but it is crucial—perhaps more than ever—to do so.

Someday we will recount to future generations how we were part of a truly historic and transformative presidential election. The election was one of firsts—America's first African-American president, first serious female presidential contender in the primaries, and first woman on a Republican ticket. And it marked the emergence of a new electorate— younger, more diverse, better informed and less beholden to old allegiances. I look forward to seeing where this new civic participation will take us.

President-elect Obama's campaign for the presidency had the feeling of a movement, which is familiar territory for us because we are part of America's labor movement.

You know that a movement is not about one point in time. It is organic and ongoing. As hard as so many of you worked on these elections, some of our most important work is still ahead of us. Even with allies in the White House and Congress, we have a steep hill to climb. I know the leaders and members of the American Federation of Teachers will respond to this challenge and help bring about better days for all Americans.



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State historical society fills the 'void' for teachers, students

THERE'S A STORY behind a new state history textbook. It's a story of public employees who took on a project that no for-profit company was interested in undertaking.

The story is about "Montana: Stories of the Land."

The textbook was nearly a decade in development. Now-deceased Historical Society historian Dave Walter initiated the project in 1999 in response to perennial phone calls from middle and high school history teachers who were assigned the task of teaching state history without an age-appropriate textbook, says Martha Kohl, Society historian who has been project manager of the textbook since August 2006.

"Teachers had to create their own curriculum," says Kohl.

Not any more. Thanks to the initiative of Walter, who was a member of the MEA-MFT, the merged state federation of the AFT and the National Education Association, fundraising by the Montana History Foundation, and collaboration among Society historians, educators and tribal leaders, *Stories of the Land* hit classroom shelves at the beginning of the 2008-09 school year.

Kohl says that *Stories of the Land* tells Montana's story more fully by reflecting the realities of the state's history, including the complicated story of homesteading and dispossession.

"We are changing the way people teach Montana history because we have integrated American Indian history so it is not an afterthought or a separate chapter," says Kohl.

"Including tribal perspectives on Montana's complex history—while recognizing that the tribes' histories did not begin in 1804 or end in 1877—makes this textbook a radical departure from earlier teaching tools," Kohl says.

"There has been an empty void about teaching Montana history," says Stevensville High School history teacher and MEA-MFT member Jeff Waniata. "The Historical Society has filled the void."

The Historical Society, which published the book, distributed 5,000 copies free of charge to schools across the state.

It's a project that didn't appeal to textbook companies, Kohl explains, in part because of the small, not-so lucrative market—there are



JOHN REDDY

about 12,000 8th graders in Montana.

The book also is available in bookstores across the state. Proceeds from general public sales will be used to print additional free copies for schools.

Fingerprints of Montana MEA-MFT members are all over the project. Kohl and other Society professionals and educators who worked on the project, also are represented by the MEA-MFT.

Historian Martha Kohl says the textbook is a "radical departure" from earlier teaching tools.

POINTS OF INTEREST

CONGRESS STRENGTHENS AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

CONGRESS TOOK ACTION this year to set federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, straight on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The ADA Amendments Act, which was signed into law in September, was Congress's response to court decisions over the past 18 years that have eroded the intent of the law.

The ADA Amendments Act takes effect January 2009. The new law expands the definition of disability to include many more major life activities, as well as a new category of major bodily functions.

Moreover, it clarifies that "mitigating measures" like medication or prosthetics may not be taken into account in the determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity.

YOUNG UNIONIZED WORKERS ARE BETTER OFF, STUDY FINDS

YOUNG UNIONIZED WORKERS, those age 18 to 29, earn, on average, 12.4 percent more than their nonunion peers—and they are more likely to have employer-provided health

insurance and pension plans. That is the finding of an October 2008 report by the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

In "Unions and Upward Mobility for Young Workers," author John Schmitt notes that despite an increase in educational attainment for this demographic, there's been stagnate wage growth over the last three decades caused by a combination of political and economic forces that has disproportionately affected young workers.

But young unionized workers, Schmitt notes, make more than their nonunion peers.

"The data, therefore, suggest that better protections of workers' right to unionize would have a substantial positive impact on the pay and benefits of young workers," says Schmitt.

According to the report, unionization raises the pay of young workers by about \$1.75 an hour; young workers in unions were 17 percentage points more likely to have employer-provided health insurance; and 24 percentage points more likely to have an employer-provided pension plan.

The report is available at www.cepr.net.

SAVE THE DATE

Make plans to attend the
2009 AFT HEALTHCARE-PUBLIC EMPLOYEES JOINT CONFERENCE

June 11-14, 2009
Marriott Wardman Park
Washington, DC



A Union of Professionals

AFT Public Employees



Are your holiday gifts union made? Visit the Union Label Web site for products made in the USA:
www.unionlabel.org.

Budget Options

Expanding the revenue pie

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familiar with the quick-fixes your employer is instituting to help reconcile liabilities (public services and payroll and benefits) and receivables (tax revenue).

In addition to across-the-board cuts in department and agency budgets, unpaid furloughs, hiring freezes and early retirement incentive programs to reduce payroll liabilities are becoming the rule—not the exception.

In a statement accompanying Weingarten's congressional testimony, AFT vice president Ken Brynien, president of the New York State Public Employees Federation, wrote:

"With the collapse of Wall Street, New York state is facing its largest deficits in 30

years. For state professionals, this means the services we provide to the most vulnerable citizens are in jeopardy.

"For example, the child protective services registry is under court mandate to respond to every incoming call within one minute. Vacant positions have been eliminated and overtime has been cut. This has delayed response time by as much as 35 minutes because there are not enough staff to answer these critical calls."

Bolder action on taxes and budgets needed in the states

A federal cash infusion is necessary and will help many states. Federal assistance won't, however, solve the inherent problem underlying state budgets: outdated, inadequate tax systems that don't deliver reliable streams of revenue for maintenance of public services, much less new investment whether it's for infrastructure projects like bridge maintenance or to meet growing demands like the increase in food stamps caseloads.

In Weingarten's words, difficult times demand bold action. Modernizing state tax

systems so they are structured in a way that makes them less susceptible to the economy's ups and downs is among the boldest of actions that can be taken by elected officials.

Take it from the experts

"While states already have faced revenue shortfalls from the slowing economy, three more shoes have yet to drop," warns Rockefeller Institute senior fellow Donald Boyd.

First, Boyd says that the financial sector meltdown will lead to reduced revenue collections from corporate taxes paid by businesses in the industry, as well as reduced revenue from taxes on bonuses and other compensation earned by workers in the financial sector.

Second, there will be a large drop in investment income on 2008 tax returns due to the stock market downturn, which will result in large declines in income tax revenue in the final quarter of the fiscal year.

Third, the loss of income and employment, and the credit crunch is likely to make the real economy even weaker.

Experts predict fiscal year 2010 budget shortfalls could top \$100 billion.

Slices of the Revenue Pie State tax revenue by category, second quarter 2008

THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU has established categories and subcategories of taxes that governments collect to fund public services. Experts recommend "balanced" tax systems to avoid overreliance on any one source of revenue.

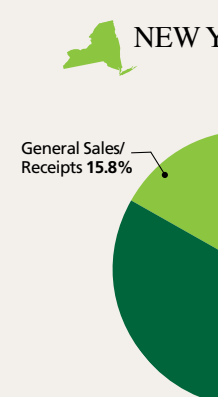
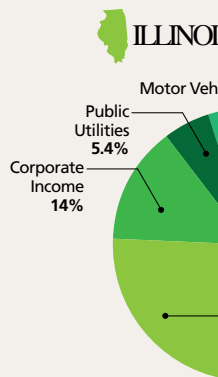
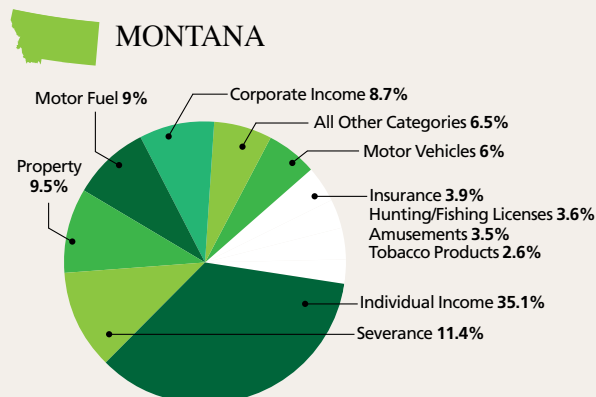
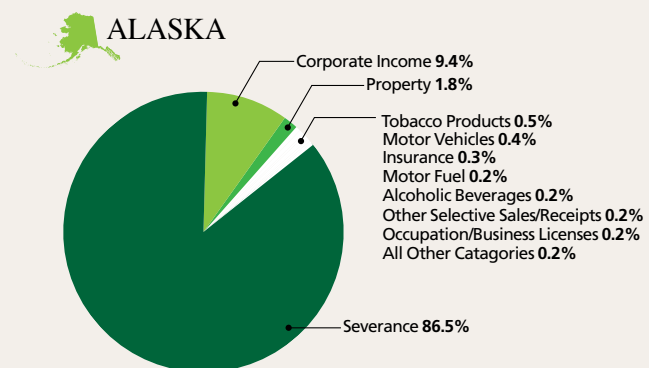
The following is a brief description of the categorization.

- Selective Sales and Gross Receipts Taxes, a subcategory of sales and gross receipts taxes, include taxes on: alcoholic beverages; amusements (tickets to sporting events and so on); insurance premiums; motor fuels; public utilities (telephone and electricity, for example); tobacco products; and "other" (taxes on specific commodities, businesses or services, such as lodging, meals and motor vehicle purchases).

- License Taxes include: fees for hunting and fishing licenses, motor vehicles (title, tags and inspection) and occupation and business licenses.

- "Other Taxes" include: death and gift taxes; documentary and stock transfer taxes (taxes on the recording, registration and transfer of documents, such as mortgages and securities); and severance taxes (taxes on the removal of natural resources from land or water, including oil, coal, gas, timber or fish).

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU





“The boldest action that you can take now is the simplest: Invest in the foundations of our country’s strength ...”

RANDI WEINGARTEN,
AFT President



ERIC WESTBROOK

Which should be given higher priority in determining state and local government budgets: improving public services or holding the line on taxes? Why?

The revenue pie needs to grow

The AFT Public Employees program and policy council (PPC), made up of 14 affiliate leaders representing members who work for state, county and municipal governments, has identified sources of revenue, including improving tax compliance enforcement—collecting money owed but not paid by corporations and individuals—through adequate appropriation of staff and resources; and nonrevenue solutions that will save money, including stopping the costly contracting out of government services to the private sector.

In addition to adequate staffing for tax compliance enforcement, which would help states recoup billions of dollars owed but not paid, other revenue-generating proposals the PPC recommends include:

- Compelling online and catalog retailers like Amazon, LL Bean and QVC to collect sales taxes from purchasers. This will ensure that “remote sales” are taxed just as purchases are from main street retailers.

For years, many states have been working on the Streamlined Sales Tax Initiative,

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“Failing to improve and uphold public services and infrastructure in order to keep the line on taxes is shortsighted. As services and infrastructure decline, the town or state becomes a less hospitable place to live or run a business.”

MARK MOYLE
Connecticut

“Priority number one should be making the richest people in America pay their rightful share of taxes. Be it income, property or school tax. This would help hold the line on raising taxes on the middle class while retaining services.”

THOMAS MORRISSEY
New York

“At this point in time, state and local governments need to work to streamline and consolidate services. I guess that means I’m for improving public services, but without raising taxes. ...Taxpayers don’t have any more money to spend on taxes.”

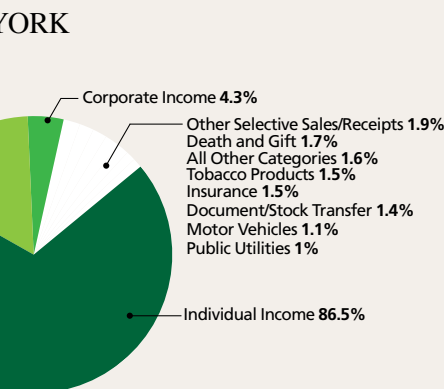
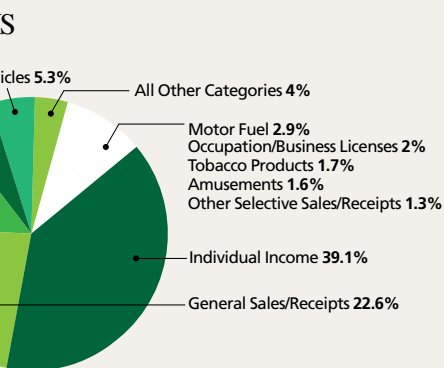
JENNIFER OLDENBURG
Wisconsin

“I think that improving public services should be the bottom line. There comes a point where public services are so starved for funding that they do not operate properly. I think this is where many municipalities stand today. I would rather pay what something costs and have it work than starve it and watch it fail.”

RYAN NOVOSIELSKI
New Jersey

“While I believe unrestrained taxation is the antithesis to a quality existence in this country, it seems that the anti-tax, laissez-faire anarchist philosophy so rampant today is even more antithetical to the quality of life we aspire to.”

RAY TRETTER
Missouri



U.S. averages by tax category

Amusements	0.7%
Alcoholic Beverages	0.6%
Corporate Income	7%
Death and Gift	0.6%
Document/Stock Transfer	0.7%
General Sales/Receipts	26.2%
Hunting/Fishing Licenses	0.2%
Individual Income	41.2%
Insurance	2.2%
Motor Fuel	4%
Motor Vehicles	2.3%
Occupation/Business Licenses	1.6%
Other Selective Sales/Receipts	1.7%
Public Utilities	1.4%
Property	1.5%
Severance	3.2%
Tobacco Products	1.8%

Budget Options

Expanding the revenue pie

Inaction isn't an option for the AFT and its members. The conversation is about the common good, the well-being of our communities.

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which would do just this; however, federal legislation that would allow states to require remote sellers to collect sales taxes is necessary.

"Main street retailers want this legislation," says Michael Mazerov, senior fellow of the State Fiscal Project at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), noting the price advantage remote sellers have over local merchants who must collect sales tax.

States lost an estimated \$45 billion in revenue in 2006 from remote sales, according to the University of Tennessee. The revenue loss is projected to grow to \$55 billion annually by 2011.

PPC member Art Foeste, chair of AFT-Wisconsin's state employees council and a corporate tax auditor, says that his state alone is losing \$300 million a year in uncollected taxes from remote sales.

It should be noted that remote sales technically aren't tax free right now. Specifically, purchasers owe a "use tax" and are legally obligated to self-remit the tax. The problem is that self-remittance by individuals is rare. Compelling remote sellers to collect sales taxes would close this loophole.

- Broadening the sales tax base by taxing

more services. From dry cleaning to landscaping to health club memberships, there are hundreds of services that are not taxed.

As the Federation of Tax Administrators noted in July when it released results of its services taxation survey, certain services are commonly taxed by states, including utility services, amusements and repair services.

Fewer states, FTA found, tax personal and business services, however; and only seven states tax professional services, which include accounting, legal and architectural services.

With services representing almost 60 percent of personal consumption nationally, according to a 2007 report by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, there is a significant amount of revenue that could be captured.

- Penalizing companies that offshore their headquarters to avoid paying U.S. taxes.

Accenture Ltd., Tyco International and Nabors Industries Ltd. are among publicly-traded U.S. companies that have incorporated overseas in places like the Bahamas and Cayman Islands to limit, if not eliminate, their U.S. tax liabilities. Their tax avoidance results in upward of \$70 billion annually in lost revenue.

- Passing a millionaires' tax, a surtax on high-income earners.

Economist Peter Orszag, President-elect Barack Obama's pick to head the Office of Management and Budget, has described tax increases on higher-income families as "the least damaging mechanism for closing state fiscal deficits in the short run."

Cost-saving steps governments can take now

In addition to raising revenue, there are plenty of steps governments can take to cut

Tax and Budget Resources

- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, www.cbpp.org.
- Citizens for Tax Justice, www.ctj.org.
- The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, www.itepnet.org.
- Economic Policy Institute, www.epi.org.

their costs. In addition to stopping the costly contracting out of government services to the private sector, the PPC recommends:

- Bulk purchasing of prescription drugs for state and local government employees.
- Competitive bidding for health insurance for all government employees—state, county and municipal. Right now, it's common for each entity to negotiate plans and rates.
- Education programs on healthcare issues, including suggestions on ways to keep insurance costs low.
- Best practices in flex time, telework and compressed work weeks.

'No' is not an option

The outcome of these policy debates will be influenced by the opinions of individuals and groups.

Advocates for investment in public services can remain silent and let others, including the anti-tax movement and corporate interests, influence lawmakers. Or advocates for investment in public services can invest their time in the process—join the debate, and let your elected officials know what you think.

Inaction isn't an option for the AFT and its members. For as much as the debate will be about the prickly issue of raising revenues, the conversation is ultimately about the common good, the well-being of our communities, your job satisfaction and your job security.

IT'S YOUR VOICE We want to hear from you! Visit www.aft.org/voices to respond to this and other questions about issues important to AFT members.

How has the budget crisis affected the delivery of public services where you work?





A Union of Professionals

AFT offers scholarships and grants

APPLICATIONS FOR the 2009 Robert G. Porter Scholars Program are now available. AFT members and their children are eligible to participate in the program, which awards four \$8,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors and \$1,000 grants to AFT members who are continuing their education.

TO APPLY:

- Download the application from the AFT Web site at www.aft.org/aftplus/scholarships.
- E-mail an application request to: porterscholars@aft.org.

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 31, 2009



A defining moment

With the election of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States, a page in American history has been turned.

"I AM THRILLED that Ohio pulled through for Obama. We worked hard here and we are elated that it all paid off," says Kathy Bruner, executive vice president of the Federation of Franklin County (Ohio) Children's Services, which serves the Columbus area.

Bruner was among the thousands of AFT members who volunteered their time to get out the vote for Barack Obama Nov. 4. Altogether, AFT-affiliated unions made more than 4 million contacts with our members across the country, through phone calls, mail, leaflets and—the means of communication proven to be most effective—direct member-to-member contact at home and at the workplace.

Bruner, a member of the AFT Public Employees program and policy council, canvassed the Saturday before the election with two women from Massachusetts "who had been here for four days on their own dime. We had many people who inspired us and kept us motivated. They were two of mine."

'Your Voice, Your Vote' bus tour

Toledo, Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio, were stops on the AFT's "Your Voice, Your Vote" bus tour, which rolled through key battleground states to fire up activists in the final days leading up to the election. The bus tour, led by AFT president Randi Weingarten and AFT secretary-treasurer Antonia Cortese, kicked off on Oct. 30 in Detroit, with its last stop in Pittsburgh on Nov. 1.

The bus tour drew thousands of members to rallies, labor walks and other campaign activities. Elected officials, including Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Hillary Clin-

ton (D-N.Y.); Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) and Betty Sutton (D-Ohio); and Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland joined the bus tour at various stops.

The grass-roots energy was growing and unmistakable when the bus pulled into the Steel City less than 72 hours before the polls opened. Hundreds of volunteers—some from as far away as New York and Texas—packed a large auditorium at the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers headquarters early that morning to hear Weingarten make an impassioned appeal for an all-out effort in the campaign's final hours.

"This election is going to be won or lost in the last few days," and the stakes couldn't be higher, boomed Weingarten. "Will you help America become a place for people who work hard and play by the rules?" she asked. The AFT members who jammed the auditorium rose to their feet to yell their answer: "Yes, we will."

Moving forward

"We were in more states, with a greater presence, than ever before. And it worked," Weingarten said following Obama's election victory. "I saw this firsthand in the 17 states



MICHAEL CAMPBELL



PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAS/AP PHOTO

AFT president Randi Weingarten got a kick out of members in Pittsburgh who greeted the "Your Voice, Your Vote" bus tour.

I have visited since becoming AFT president in July."

The incredible interest Barack Obama generated, especially

among young, independent and first-time voters; the sea change in voting patterns; and the election of America's first African-American president are all extraordinary milestones for our country, she added. "I am hopeful that this civic excitement and engagement will be sustained for the benefit of our great democracy."

Back in Ohio, Bruner says that "it is nice to look forward to what the future may bring for a change, instead of waking up each morning with a feeling of dread about what [the Bush administration] might do today."

ETC. & THE UNION VOTE ROCKS!

UNION MEMBERS MADE the difference in the presidential election. Here's how:

- Union voters supported President-elect Barack Obama 67 percent to 30 percent over Sen. John McCain.
- Union volunteers helped Obama win by 16 points in Michigan, 10 points in Minnesota, 11 points in Pennsylvania and 13 points in Wisconsin.
- AFT affiliates made more than 4 million contacts with our members

across the country, through phone calls, mail, leaflets and direct member-to-member contact at home and at the workplace.

- More than 5,000 AFT members nationwide, many retirees, volunteered their time to assist affiliates and the AFL-CIO in member education and get-out-the-vote efforts.

The 'other' election results: Measures on public services, workers' rights

Voters soundly reject tax limitations; mixed outcome on union rights

WHILE MAJOR NEWS networks were all about reporting presidential election results, AFT members and leaders in Colorado, Massachusetts and North Dakota were preoccupied with another set of results: ballot questions that could make or break state budgets and workers' rights.

Massachusetts voters soundly rejected an initiative proposed by the Committee for Small Government that would have eliminated the state personal income tax.



AFT Massachusetts members voice their opposition to a ballot initiative that would have eliminated the state income tax.

AFT Massachusetts was part of a broad-based coalition that turned out the vote against this measure, which would have reduced state revenues by nearly \$13 billion—or 40 percent of the state budget.

The loss in revenues would have translated into a reduction in local state aid, which helps fund the public services provided by AFT Massachusetts members, including town librarians and public school teachers.

Voters in North Dakota sided with Partners To Protect North Dakota's Future, which counts the North Dakota Public Employees Association (NDPEA) among its primary sponsors.

The coalition organized an aggressive public education campaign against two ballot measures. One measure called for a 50 percent reduction in the personal income tax and a 15 percent rate cut in the corporate income tax. Seventy percent of voters rejected the income tax reductions.

The second measure sought to severely limit the state's access to the oil and gas trust fund for general fund spending. Sixty-four percent of voters opposed the lockbox. It was a significant victory considering that North Dakota is one of a few states in the country that isn't in fiscal straits.

"Our surplus is \$1.3 billion so with preservation of the income tax, the state will continue to have money to fund infrastructure and provide property tax relief," says NDPEA president Gary Feist, a member of the AFT Public Employees program and policy council.

Preservation of the Legislature's access to oil and gas tax revenue also is an important victory. Feist notes that lawmakers tapped the trust fund for \$200 million during the last legislative session to help meet the state's spending needs.

Key tax issues were on the ballot in two dozen states. For example: Maryland voters legalized slot machines; Missouri voters raised the gambling tax from 20 percent to 21 percent, which is expected to generate at least \$128 million annually; and Montana voters extended a 6 mill statewide property tax levy dedicated for the university system until 2018.

Workers' rights center stage in Colorado

Several of the 14 measures on Colorado's ballot had consequences for AFT Colorado, which

worked in a bipartisan coalition, Protect Colorado's Future, to defeat.

"It was a successful election for us," says AFT Colorado president Dave Sanger. "We built a coalition of business, community and labor groups to defeat paycheck deception and right to work. It's the first time in 30 years voters in any state have defeated right-to-work."

Sixty-one percent of voters rejected the paycheck deception measure, which would have prohibited payroll deduction for union dues for public employees, creating an administrative nightmare for public employee unions, including the AFT's state-employee affiliate, Colorado WINS. Fifty-six percent of voters rejected right-to-work.

Sanger notes, however, that a measure restricting the political activity of "sole source" government contractors narrowly passed 51 percent to 49 percent. Under the measure, a union-negotiated collective bargaining agreement qualifies as a sole source government contract. Legal challenges to the measure are expected, however.

State conventions rejected

Voters in Connecticut and Illinois turned down the chance to rewrite their state constitutions.

AFT Connecticut and the Illinois Federation of Teachers worked hard to educate their members that a constitutional convention was a dangerous proposition that would subject their respective state constitutions to significant changes, and threaten important constitutional protections for public employees.

Both AFT state federations participated in broad-based coalitions to get the message out.