Ohio’s Future: Which Direction?

This fall, Ohio voters have a choice between two different futures for our state and how its policies and economy will affect working people. Over the past four years, with one-party rule in Columbus, Governor Kasich and corporate-backed politicians have passed laws that put the needs of Ohio’s wealthiest above everyone else and hurt hard-working Ohioans. They have attacked voting rights, collective bargaining rights, and the financial stability of local communities.

Ohio needs an economy that works for all its citizens. We need a Governor and Lieutenant Governor who will fight to bring good jobs that pay a fair, living wage, enough for workers to support their families and live a decent life out of poverty. Ed FitzGerald and Sharon Neuharth support raising the minimum wage. They will crack down on corporations that cheat workers out of pay for hours worked (wage theft).

Governor Kasich’s changes in Ohio’s tax policy raised taxes on seniors and Ohio’s middle class by raising the sales tax and eliminating the Homestead Property Exemption for senior citizens, while massive tax cuts went to the wealthy. Ed FitzGerald will work to create an economy that benefits everyone, and will end tax breaks for companies that send jobs overseas.

Governor Kasich’s tax cuts at the state level, which disproportionately benefited the wealthiest, have caused devastating cuts to local communities, schools, and public services. As Cuyahoga County Executive, Ed FitzGerald balanced the county budget without cutting funds to local communities, and created a transparent economic development fund that brought thousands of jobs to the area.

It’s time to bring some balance to Columbus, to put a stop to the attacks on workers and their unions, and elect a Governor and Lieutenant Governor who will stand up for working families and for workers’ rights.

**District 16: Western Cuyahoga County**

**CMSD Teacher Todd LeVeck Runs for State Rep**

“I want to represent you, not special interests or extreme agendas,” promised Todd LeVeck, CMSD teacher and candidate for Ohio House of Representatives, District 16.

Mr. LeVeck, currently in his 16th year in the classroom, is a teacher and the athletic director at Max S. Hayes High School. He has served the CTU membership as chapter chair and delegate, delegate to the North Shore Federation of Labor, and is a past member of the CTU Executive Board. His service also includes eight years in the U.S. Navy.

“In my career as an educator and in the military, I’ve been successful by listening to the concerns of all, being open-minded to new ideas, and bringing people together to collaborate and find common ground,” said Mr. LeVeck.

As a member of the Ohio House, he will support genuine education reform, end the over-emphasis on standardized testing, and reinvest in fine arts, physical education, and career and technical education.

Among his other priorities are fighting for the rights of workers and for good-paying jobs, protecting seniors and homeowners by opposing unnecessary property tax increases, ending handouts to special interest groups, and bringing tax money home to support local schools and communities. By contrast, his opponent touted her understanding of laws and policies, to bet-ter appreciate and support your work (as public educators) as well as respect your voice on the job.”

Mr. LeVeck was born in Cleveland. He and his wife...

**County Commissioner**

Eliza Kazek, CTU Officer, in Race in Medina County

Eliza Kazek, 22-year CMSD teacher and long-time CTU leader, is running for Medina County Commissioner. She decided to get into the race because she felt that after years of one-party leadership, her county “needed some balance and a differing point of view regarding policy on the County Commission.”

Mrs. Kazek disagrees with the current County Commissioner’s actions and policies. Mrs. Kazek is an art teacher at Marion C. Selzer and has been the CTU chapter chair for many years. She was recently appointed to serve on the CTU Executive Board as Legislative Chair.

“Medina is the fourth-wealthiest county in the state,” she explained, “yet many of our citizens who are disabled and mentally challenged, and seniors who want to continue living in their homes, are facing serious cutbacks to vital services.”

Mrs. Kazek disagrees with the current commissioners’ favorable views of privatizing the public services that many citizens depend on. “We need to make common-sense decisions to spend our tax dollars more wisely and efficiently as a county, and move our county forward without hurting our most vulnerable citizens.”

Mrs. Kazek and her husband are new “empty-nesters,” with two children away in college. A strong union advocate, she would appreciate the support of her CTU brothers and sisters who live and vote in Medina County.
Decorated Air Force Veteran

Connie Pillich Brings Bi-Partisan Outlook, Workers’ Viewpoint to Treasurer’s Race

In the race for State Treasurer, Ohioans have a great opportunity to elect a new State Treasurer who believes in transparency and stands up for working people. Connie Pillich, from the Cincinnati area, is a third-term Democrat who represents a district that is 56% Republican. In her last election victory, she defeated the leader of the local Tea Party. In the legislature, unlike her opponent, she earned a reputation as a bi-partisan problem solver. During her time in office, more than 76% of the bills she sponsored or co-sponsored received bi-partisan support.

As a legislator, Connie Pillich has always supported the working class. She fought to end tax breaks for corporations that ship jobs overseas, and fought against attacks on Ohio workers’ collective bargaining rights such as Senate Bill 5 and so-called Right-to-Work.

What’s Wrong with This Picture?

There should never be an empty seat at the CTU phone bank! With thousands of members, these chairs should be filled every night with CTU educators, working for candidates who will support public education and working families.

Let’s remember this November (and help fellow Ohioans remember what’s at stake in this election). In 2010, too many voters stayed home and didn’t vote in the midterm elections. The subsequently-elected politicians won by small margins, but brought big agendas that work against public educators, labor, the middle class. You know what’s happened since then in Ohio. The CTU phone bank is open from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays. There are snacks and prizes for volunteers. Contact the CTU office at 216-861-7676 to reserve a seat at the phone bank. And don’t forget to check with your Chapter Chair for information about labor walks and other campaign activities that need your help.

This seat has your name on it. Do your part this election season to elect candidates who will work for working people.

Ohio Tax Credit

Support Ohio Candidates, Get $ Back on Taxes

Did you know that you can make a political contribution to certain Ohio political candidates and get a tax credit back from the state of Ohio for your contribution? The maximum credit is $50 for single or married separate filers, and $100 for married filing joint returns, if both spouses made contributions of $50 or more.

This applies to contributions made during the year to the campaign committee of candidates for any of the following Ohio offices: Governor; Lieutenant Governor; Secretary of State; Auditor of State; Treasurer of State; Attorney General; Ohio Board of Education; Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court; Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court; Ohio Senate; or Ohio House of Representatives.

Remember, this is a tax credit, not a deduction, so you get the entire $50/$100 back, dollar for dollar, on your Ohio income taxes the following year.

So if you expect to owe more than $50 in Ohio state income taxes or over $100 per couple, now is the perfect time to make a $50/$100 contribution to an endorsed candidate. It will reduce your tax bill by that amount when you file your 2014 Ohio state income taxes next spring.

It’s like free money that you get back when you file your taxes — and it can help our candidates this fall. Make a contribution today!

Todd LeVeck

continued from page 1

have three young children. His district covers the west side of Cuyahoga County, including Bay Village, Fairview Park, North Olmsted, Rocky River, and Westlake.

If you’d like to learn more about Todd LeVeck, volunteer for his campaign, or make a donation, go to www.levleckforohio.com, or call Todd at 216-944-6903.

State Board of Ed Races Significant for Public Educators

Can you imagine working under the guidelines, decisions and policies of a State Board of Education that has zero members with any actual classroom experience?

That’s what we are facing as Ohio educators, depending on the outcome of the races for State Board of Education members this November. The Ohio Board has 19 members. Eight are appointed by the Governor, so the only say educators have in those eight is by proxy, depending on whom we elect as Governor. Of the other 11 seats, voters in each Board district get to elect one member to the Board.

This fall, there are three outstanding OPTAFT endorsed candidates who are retired veteran Ohio public school teachers and union leaders, and have earned our support. One, Pat Bruns, is running in District 4 in Southwest Ohio in the Cincinnati area. Fortunately, the other two candidates are here in Northeast Ohio.

Michael Charney taught social studies for 30 years in CMSD schools. He was a long-time member of the CTU Executive Board and an OPTAFT delegate for many years. A strong labor, public education, and social justice activist, he worked to advance teacher leadership, and develop programs that used the expertise of classroom teachers to improve teaching and learning. He is running in District 7 in Northeast Ohio, which includes Ashtabula, Geauga, Portage and Trumbull counties, and parts of Lake and Summit counties.

Roslyn Painter-Goffi spent 32 years as a teacher and librarian. She retired this past June after 22 years in the Berexa Federation of Teachers, OPT Local #4699, where she served the last six years as its President. She was lauded nationally for her leadership in successful union-management collaboration and on-site access for educators to high-quality professional development opportunities. She is running in District 5 in Northwest Ohio, which includes Ashland, Medina, Richland and Wayne counties, and parts of Cuyahoga, Holmes, Stark and Summit counties.

Both of these candidates strongly support more regulation and accountability for charter schools. Mr. Charney’s opponent is a homeschooler. Mrs. Painter-Goffi’s opponent has no classroom experience. If you live in these Board districts, please help put Union teachers’ voices on the Board and elect these outstanding educators.

If you don’t vote in these Board districts, check the list of endorsed Board of Education candidates, and vote for teacher-friendly candidates who will work to listen to educators and make genuine improvements in Ohio’s public education system.
jobs which would boost the local economy. The Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD) has built or renovated 41 schools. Overseen by the independent Bond Accountability Commission, the district even saved $42.2 million by wisely refinancing in 2012.

The bond issue would have an estimated net economic impact of $456.8 million in local and state funds. It would create hundreds of local construction jobs which would boost the local economy. Vote YES, endorsed by CTU.

Cleveland voters are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this rare two-for-one funding opportunity from the state while it’s still available. Vote YES on Issue 4, and help provide up-to-date, safe, quality schools and equipment for Cleveland students and staff.

October 2014
THE CRITIQUE
Page 3

ENDORSEMENTS

United States Congress
- For United States Congress, District 6: Jennifer Garrison
- For United States Congress, District 9: Marcy Kaptur
- For United States Congress, District 11: Marcia Fudge
- For United States Congress, District 13: Tim Ryan
- For United States Congress, District 14: Michael Wagner

Ohio Statewide Offices
- For Ohio Governor: Joe Schiavonni
- For Ohio Secretary of State: Nina Turner
- For Ohio Auditor: John Patrick Carney
- For Ohio Treasurer: David Pepper
- For Ohio Supreme Court: John O’Donnell

Ohio Senate
- District 2, Richland County: Don Bryant
- District 4, Cuyahoga County: Anthony Fossaceca
- District 5, Cuyahoga County: Kent Smith
- District 6, Cuyahoga County: Janine Boyd
- District 7, Cuyahoga County: Nickie Antonio
- District 8, Cuyahoga County: Nicholas Celebrezze
- District 9, Cuyahoga County: Todd LeVeck
- District 10, Cuyahoga County: Emilia Sykes
- District 11, Cuyahoga County: Paula Prentice
- District 12, Cuyahoga County: David Worhatch
- District 13, Cuyahoga County: Tim Crawford
- District 14, Stark County: Stephen Slesnick
- District 15, Lorain County: Brendan Mackin
- District 16, Cuyahoga County:Matt Lark
- District 17, Mahoning County: Michele Lepore-Hagan
- District 18, Mahoning County: Ron Gerberry
- District 19, Mahoning County: John Rogers
- District 20, Mahoning County: Rick Walker
- District 21, Stark County: Richard Javorek
- District 22, Stark County: Kathleen Clyde
- District 23, Stark County: Jeffrey Lehart
- District 24, Summit and Stark Counties: Bill Young
- District 25, Summit and Stark Counties: Chris Redfern
- District 26, Summit and Stark Counties: John Patterson

Ohio House of Representatives
- District 1, Richland County: Don Bryant
- District 2, Richland County: Anthony Fossaceca
- District 3, Richland County: Kent Smith
- District 4, Cuyahoga County: Janine Boyd
- District 5, Cuyahoga County: Nickie Antonio
- District 6, Cuyahoga County: Nicholas Celebrezze
- District 7, Cuyahoga County: Todd LeVeck
- District 8, Cuyahoga County: Emilia Sykes
- District 9, Cuyahoga County: Paula Prentice
- District 10, Cuyahoga County: David Worhatch
- District 11, Cuyahoga County: Tim Crawford
- District 12, Cuyahoga County: Stephen Slesnick
- District 13, Cuyahoga County: Brendan Mackin

Ohio Board of Education
- District 1: Kim Redfern
- District 2: Roslyn Painter-Goffi
- District 3: Michael Charney
- District 4: Bob Hagan

Endorsements

Cuyahoga County Judicial
- Court of Appeals, 9th District: Anita Laster Mays
- Court of Appeals, 9th District: Sherrie Miday
- Court of Appeals, 9th District: Shannon Gallagher

Cuyahoga County Issues
- Tri-C Levy: YES

CMSD Bond Issue
- YES, endorsed by CTU

President’s Report
- continued from page 4

The bond issue would have an estimated net economic impact of $456.8 million in local and state funds. It would create hundreds of local construction jobs which would boost the local economy. Since the original bond issue was passed, CMSD voters are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this rare two-for-one funding opportunity from the state while it’s still available. Vote YES on Issue 4, and help provide up-to-date, safe, quality schools and equipment for Cleveland students and staff.

Third, we need your participation. As when we were fighting SB 5, it’s not time to be shy. Come to the phone bank, attend a labor walk, participate in one of the many CTU-sponsored campaign activities. Contact Kurt Richards at 216-861-7676 x222 or krichards@ctu279.org for more information.

We can’t leave this battle for others to fight on our behalf. If the same people who have been supporting policies that hurt workers get sent back to Columbus, the attacks on educators and workers will continue.

We can’t be surprised at what happens; we’ve seen it before. We must remember this November.
Union members and public educators, we need to internalize it, the current one-party rule in our state pending in the Ohio legislature. With some other high-profile measures are...

We Remember This November

This is labor’s theme as we approach the 2014 elections. As Union members and public educators, we need to internalize it, then act on it.


Union leaders are concerned about a “lame-duck” effort in Columbus to pass right-to-work or other SB 5-type legislation after the November election. Some other high-profile measures are pending in the Ohio legislature. With the current one-party rule in our state house and all major state offices, there are no checks and balances.

As a public educator, have you had enough?

The OPT’s 2014 Election Guide, recently mailed to OPTF members’ homes, urged us to “vote your job.” We know what’s happened to public education in Ohio, and CMSD in particular, over the last several years. As professional public educators, we need to make that our priority when we vote this fall. We have an opportunity to elect people who will work to genuinely support and improve teaching and learning in our public schools.

Governor Kasich brought us SB 5, tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the richest Ohioans at the expense of the rest, and increased privatizing. Under this governor, charter school funding increased by 27%. Ohio charter schools now receive more money per pupil than traditional public schools, according to Innovation Ohio. Private school vouchers doubled under Governor Kasich. In Innovation Ohio. Private school vouchers doubled under Governor Kasich.

In Ohio, and CMSD in particular, over the last several years. As professional public educators, we need to make that our priority when we vote this fall. We have an opportunity to elect people who will work to genuinely support and improve teaching and learning in our public schools.

Governor Kasich brought us SB 5, tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the richest Ohioans at the expense of the rest, and increased privatizing. Under this governor, charter school funding increased by 27%. Ohio charter schools now receive more money per pupil than traditional public schools, according to Innovation Ohio. Private school vouchers doubled under Governor Kasich. In Innovation Ohio. Private school vouchers doubled under Governor Kasich.

As Auditor, John Patrick Carney will have the authority to invest Ohio’s pension funds has been moved to costlier institutions because they are donors to the current Treasurer. Connie Pillich has pledged to select the custodial institutions based on costs, security, and benefits to pension members, not her campaign fund. The Treasurer also makes appointments to the boards that manage our state pension funds (STRS, SERS, PERFS).

David Pepper, candidate for Attorney General, testified against SB 5 and worked on the We Are Ohio campaign to defeat it. He is a strong supporter of workers’ rights. As Attorney General, he will form a Taxpayer Protection Unit to recover misspent taxpayer funds, including those owed by failed charter school operators. Currently, failed charter school operators owe $30 million to the state of Ohio, which his opponent has failed to collect. In addition, his opponent dropped out of a key case before the Ohio Supreme Court concerning public funds spent on equipment for charter school buildings, failing again to protect our tax dollars. David Pepper also believes school safety should be a top priority for the Attorney General, and will work to increase personnel, resources, training, and cooperation with local law enforcement.

In Ohio House and Senate races, there are many exemplary candidates who opposed the OPT endorsement by demonstrating their intentions to improve Ohio for all citizens. One of our own CTU members, Todd LeVeck, is a candidate in House District 16 (western Cuyahoga County). Todd teaches at Max Hayes, and is a Navy veteran. He is a past member of the CTU Executive Board, served as CTU Chapter Chairman and Delegate, and was a delegate to the North Shore Federation of Labor. He certainly understands the concerns of public educators and working families, and will represent them well.

There are many fine candidates who will bring a much-needed balance to the statehouse. We must reward candidates from any party who have stood up for public education by giving them our votes, and send the others home. Please check the endorsement list and support your endorsed candidate when you vote.

AFT, OFT Local 279

Marion C. Selzer, and serves on the CTU Executive Board as Legislative Chair.

Here’s a sad fact about Ohio’s current educational leadership: did you know that depending on the results of this election, the Ohio Board of Education could be headed by 19 members, 11 elected and 8 appointed — could end up with no member with any teaching experience? We must make sure that doesn’t happen. Two candidates in Northeast Ohio are former teachers and Union leaders, and have earned our support.

Michael Charney, District 7, is a retired 30-year CMSD teacher and was a member of the CTU Executive Board for years. He organized many projects to improve teaching and learning, focusing on teacher leadership, and was named National Teacher of the Year by the AFT in 1996. His opponent is a homeschooler with no association with the public school.

Roslyn Painter-Goffi, District 5, is a just-retired 32-year teacher and librarian, spending the last 22 years in Berea schools. She was the President of the Berea Federation of Teachers, OPT Local 91699, for the past 6 years. Under her leadership, she worked to develop high-quality, on-site professional development opportunities and nationally-recognized union-management collaboration. Her opponents have no classroom experience.

You’ve probably heard this quote: “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” We can’t expect things to change for the better in Ohio if we re-elect the same leadership to power.

And we can’t make those changes without your help.

First, we need you to vote, and vote for our endorsed candidates.

Second, we need you to do what you do best: educate. Educate your family members, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, those at your place of worship and in your clubs and other groups, about the importance of this election, and encourage them to vote for candidates who will support the rights of...