

President's Message

Three Years In The Woodshed (a jay morgan reality show)

The Truth About Social Security in the United States

Social Security is not in crisis. Social Security does not need radical changes to keep the program solvent. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office assesses that Social Security will be able to meet 100% of its obligations through the year 2052 with no changes whatsoever in terms of benefits disbursed and revenue collected. Starting in 2019, surplus reserves from the Social Security trust fund (Al Gore's famous lockbox from the 2000 Election) estimated to be at 6 trillion dollars will be used to complement existing payroll tax revenue to pay benefits. **SOCIAL SECURITY HAS LARGE RESERVES THAT WILL ENSURE FULL BENEFITS WILL BE PAID TO BABY BOOMERS, GEN X AND Y ERS!** The only thing that will send Social Security into cardiac arrest is an assault from the White House.

Bush Jr. and the mainstream media (which is highly conservative, folks) is spreading misinformation and using scare tactics to undermine an invaluable successful program that came out of the morass of the Great Depression. Social Security was created to be insurance for retirees that protects ALL people from risk of poverty. It was NOT meant to be an individual investment. It was NOT created to be capital subject to stock market risks and fluctuations. (How many of us had our 401(K)s hammered from 2000-2003 because we thought we were experts in dealing with the stock market???)

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The General Membership meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

Next General Membership Meeting:

Tuesday, February 15, 2005 - 5:30 P.M.

Administration Building - Large TRC

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President's Message (cont.)

Bush Jr.'s assault on Social Security would result in a huge reduction of guaranteed benefits. As we have learned here at EBMUD, never trade a defined benefit (fixed holiday/predetermined pension plan) for an unknown quantity (floating holiday). In these uncertain times, it is disheartening that Bush Jr. has chosen to wage war on Social Security, a strong and successful social program that helps so many people in times of need. Bush Jr.'s irresponsible plan would divert billions of dollars in Social Security reserves to stock brokers and investment firms.

Social Security is a commitment by the majority to protect those most vulnerable to economic suffering in their golden years. The desire of a society to protect its weakest members is an example of a moral value for those who vote on such issues. Social Security is a progressive system where benefits go to those who need it the most. A worker who earned \$10,000 a year during their working lifetime can expect to see a benefit that is equal to approximately 75 percent of their average wage. A worker who earned \$33,000 a year will get a benefit that is equal to approximately 45 percent of their wage, while a worker who earned \$50,000 on average will get a benefit that is equal to 39 percent of their wage.

For more information, go to these links:

http://www.cepr.net/Bytes/social_security_2004.htm
http://www.cepr.net/publications/facts_social_security.htm

In Solidarity,

Jay Morgan,
President, Local 2019

Did you know...?

...that the District finally (finally!!) granted Local 2019 the right to register people to vote? Nice to see that District management actually believes in the concepts of democracy and free speech.

...that, according to an alleged District tradition, part-time employees are restricted to 50%, or two hours, of the four hours of special holiday leave granted annually by the General Manager? The Union is investigating—more on this issue in a future newsletter.

...that 2019 member Tim McGowan was elected to the Board of Directors of the Castro Valley Sanitary District? Congratulations Tim!

...that 2019's Chief Steward, Pat Patrick, is celebrating her 30th anniversary with EBMUD? Congratulations Pat!

Overtime Battle Lost

It was a long and hard fight but on Nov. 18, facing a presidential veto threat, Republican members of Congress removed important overtime pay protections from final 2005 spending bills.

You made a big difference with your letters pressuring Congress to pass overtime pay protections. We won votes, but the Bush administration threatened to veto any bill reversing its overtime pay take-away. Facing a government shutdown, members of Congress removed the overtime pay protections from the legislation.

Losing this important vote on overtime pay is a disappointing setback. We all worked hard, we won votes in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, but in the end President George W. Bush and congressional Republican leaders got their way.

Things look like they may get worse before they get better. The Bush administration and Republicans in Congress weren't content to take overtime pay rights from some 6 million workers. Now, they're reviving the second part of their two-pronged assault on workers' paychecks. This new pay cut would mean that employers would no longer have to pay extra for overtime work. Instead, they would be able to offer time off in lieu of pay—kind of ridiculous, since it lets the boss decide if and when you ever can take any time off.

We'll keep you up to date on what is going on and where the fight will continue—including in state legislatures, the courts and in Congress. A number of states have laws better than the Bush administration's overtime rules. Activists in other states will be pushing for reforms to strengthen and restore overtime pay protections. We'll let you know when your action is needed to help enact these protections.

For now, the most important thing we can do is to give you, your family, friends and colleagues some tools to protect your rights, including Working America's overtime pay survey. Remember: The best ways to protect your right to overtime pay is in a union contract.

How to Know if You're Entitled to Overtime Pay

If you are unsure whether you could be "exempt" from receiving overtime pay under new Bush administration overtime rules, find out using Working America's overtime pay survey. The Web site address is:

http://www.workingamerica.org/issues/ot_quiz.cfm

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Our Mission

To promote the welfare of the membership and to provide a voice in the determination of the terms and conditions of employment. We are committed to the process of collective bargaining as the most desirable, democratic, and effective method to achieve this. Both as union members and as citizens, we shall employ available legislative and political action.

To unite the Clerical, Technical, Service and Inspection, and Professional employees of EBMUD into a single cohesive labor union.

To promote career service, job growth and development of the membership during their employment at EBMUD.

DISCLAIMER: Any opinion expressed by a contributor about a controversial subject is to be considered his/her own personal opinion, not the opinion of Local 2019 as a whole and should not be considered as an endorsement.

Upcoming Events

The Executive Board meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of every month.

Next Executive Board Meeting:

Thursday, February 3, 2005 - 5:30 P.M.

Administration Building - 7th Floor Conference Room