

Local 195 News

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL ENGINEERS, AFL-CIO



IFPTE Victories During the Mid-term Elections

This November produced mixed results for unions and working families. However, IFPTE was able to support proven pro-worker candidates who prevailed at the ballot box, enabling them to continue the fight for our members. Some of these victories included candidates who will directly impact the work and livelihoods of Local 195 members.

In New Jersey, IFPTE endorsed New Jersey Representative Andy Kim and ran a mobilization program encouraging our members to support his reelection. Rep. Kim was targeted by anti-union special interests, as he was in the last election, because of what they perceived as a receptive voting population in his district. However, his constituents, which include hundreds of our members, clearly based their vote on Rep. Kim's record and not partisan political attacks. In New Jersey IFPTE also endorsed Representatives Don Norcross, Chris Smith, Bonnie Watson Coleman and Donald Payne, Jr, all who won their races.

In Pennsylvania, where many members from Local 195 and other IFPTE affiliates live, we were able to help several pro-union candidates win on election day. This included targeted endorsements and contributions from IFPTE's Political Action Committee, as well as participating in grassroots voter outreach efforts. These labor-to-neighbor programs made all the difference for a number of candidates, including Governor-elect Josh Shapiro, Senator-elected John Fetterman, Representative Brian Fitzpatrick, and many running for city or county offices.

When it convenes its new session in January, the United States House of Representatives will be under new management. While many leaders who will likely control the House agenda are avowed opponents of unions and working families, IFPTE will continue its practice of working to build bipartisan support for our legislative agenda. By putting policy over party in the past, we have been able to effectively represent IFPTE members in Congress, and we believe this more thoughtful approach remains in our best interest.

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Finally, we salute the thousands of IFPTE households, including our Local 195 Sisters and Brothers, whose members exercised their right to vote. While we may not agree on every candidate for public office, we are united by our shared commitment to those ideals and principles that keep us all moving toward a more perfect union.



Message from Business Manager Gerald Newsome

As we enter the holiday season, this is a good time to reflect on the highlights and challenges that we have faced this year as a union, as working families and as Americans. Personally, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve my sisters, brothers and siblings this past year as the business manager of our great local union.

That said, the circumstances under which I came to run the day-to-day operations of Local 195 were very difficult. When our President and beloved union brother Tim Rudolph passed away earlier this year, we were all shocked and saddened by the sudden loss. Brother Rudolph dedicated his life to serving others, both within labor and throughout the greater community, and our memories of Tim as a happy warrior have served to temper our grief over the last eight months since his passing.

Thanks to the members of Local 195, we have been able to keep our union moving forward and our solidarity growing by the day. Just as the members of Local 195 have done throughout the pandemic,

you put your personal interests aside and got to work on the task at hand. We all are elevated by your selfless example.

In addition to challenges at work, many of us faced tough choices and trying times at home. While the economy has improved in some ways, it is far from a rising tide that lifts all boats. Working with our IFPTE leadership at the international level and the broader labor movement, we will continue our fight for economic justice and to spread the word about the benefits of union membership. On that note, I encourage you to read President Biggs and Secretary-Treasurer Henson's update on the midterm elections in this newsletter.

Whatever holidays you may celebrate in the coming weeks or moments of quiet reflection you may enjoy with your loved ones, I hope they bring you all the blessings this season has to offer. As I reflect upon my own blessings, I will count the opportunity to serve the members of Local 195 among them. Thank you for that honor.

Know the facts about the Freedom Foundation:
Recently an anti-worker special interest group has been contacting our members and urging them to withdraw from the union. They want to weaken your union so that they can try to defund your jobs. Don't fall for their lies.

Learn more at:
accountablenw.org

Local 195 Wins Significant Improvements in Health Benefits Negotiations

Working with a coalition of unions throughout New Jersey, Local 195 was able to roll back some of the more draconian proposed changes in the state's health benefits plan. Earlier this year, the board of the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) announced a plan to significantly shift healthcare costs to participants. These changes would have affected workers covered by the SHBP at the state, county and municipal level.

Local 195 and other unions with affected members began the fight against this anti-worker initiative immediately. Lobbying in the legislature and rallying in the streets, a united New Jersey labor movement was able to effectively push back against some of the worst aspects of this proposed plan.

However, the final policy still represents a move in the wrong direction. Local 195 will continue the fight against such anti-worker cost shifting measures and support our allies in elected office, both Democratic and Republican, who agree with us that this backroom deal by the SHBP board is wrong for New Jersey's civil servants and taxpayers.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION ABOUT
CHANGES TO THE SHPB
HEALTH PLAN FOR
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES IN
NEW JERSEY**

**PLEASE
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