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AFSCME AFL-CIO

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Winter 2000

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**International convention is 2000 highlight**

The major national union event for the year 2000 will be the AFSCME International Convention. It will be held in Philadelphia from June 26 to 30. Further details will be mailed to Local presidents and posted on our Web site: www.council2.com.

**Check out session on the Internet**

This year's short session of the Washington State Legislature promises to be a critical one for members of Council 2.

To keep up with events relating to the union, check out our Web site. In addition to watching the site itself, access www.council2.com/reports where you will be able to read regularly updated legislative reports on issues and events that relate directly to Council 2.

**150 attend Northwest Regional conference**

About 150 delegates from Washington, Alaska, Oregon, Idaho and Montana attended the AFSCME Northwest Regional Conference held in Wenatchee Sept. 17 and 18.

Workshops were held on communicating with membership, organizing, trends in collective bargaining, and key legislative and political developments at the federal level.

Featured speakers at lunch on Saturday, Sept. 18 were Chris Dugovich, President/Executive Director of Council 2; Greg Devereux, Executive Director of Council 28; Ken Allen, Executive Director of Council 75; and Vinnie O'Connor, President of ASEA Local 52.

**INSIDE**

- 2 Council 2 members avert major tragedy
- 3 Full list of 2000 Legislature
- 4 Arbitrator rules against Lakehaven

**I-695 fallout**

**Protecting members' jobs is first priority**

Council 2 will work hard to protect its members from the impact of Initiative 695. Protecting their jobs will be the first priority.

That's the pledge as the Washington State Legislature prepares to meet for its 2000 session, which starts on Jan. 10.

Time will be of the essence as the ses-

**SESSION 2000**

sion is a short one.

The initiative, which lowers auto tabs to \$30 a year, was approved by voters in

November. It will sharply reduce revenue from the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax, which was the state's fourth biggest tax source after sales tax, business-and-occupation tax, and the state property tax. It funded a host of state and local projects, from tran-

See SESSION, Page 4



Sue Lee, left, of AFSCME's California office with Laidlaw para-transit driver Vinnie Watts.

**Incredible win**

**Council 2 turns narrow victory into landslide**

When Laidlaw transit workers in Spokane were asked at the end of October whether they wanted to be represented by Council 2, their answer was overwhelming.

Twice as many said "Yes" as said "No."

What makes the result even more stunning is that only a year and a half ago the same workers had voted in favor of Council 2 by only 3 votes. This time the majority was 68 votes.

The story of how Council 2 turned a narrow victory into a landslide is a dramatic and exciting one that is testimony to what can happen when officers and workers — with help from the International — throw all they have into a campaign.

The saga began in 1996 when Spokane employees of Chicago-based Laidlaw Transit, North America's biggest school bus company, voted to join Council 2. Consisting of bus drivers, para-transit van drivers and school bus attendants, the

employees all work in School District 81 in Spokane. Laidlaw is the only transit company in the district.

Their action marked the first time employees from the private sector had become members of Council 2, which until then had represented only those who worked for public bodies.

When Council 2 began to bargain the contract, Laidlaw adopted various stalling tactics to tie down the negotiations. The stalemate continued throughout all of 1997.

"We were down to three issues," says Council 2 Staff Representative Bill Keenan. "Everything was agreed to except wages, medical benefits and union security."

In December 1997, Laidlaw assisted employees to file an application for decertification of the union.

The election was held in May 1998. The union won the election to defeat the decertification application by the narrow margin of three votes

See LAIDLAW, Page 4

**WTO and Council 2**  
Read what Council 2 President/Executive Director Chris Dugovich says on the events surrounding the WTO talks  
— Page 2

**1999 was record year for Council 2 growth**

Council 2 grew more during 1999 than it has in any other year.

About 850 new members were added, says Bill Keenan, Council 2 Organizer.

The largest group were the 300 Laidlaw employees who reaffirmed their commitment to Council 2 in an election at the end of October (see report on this page).



Among the other new additions to the ranks of Council 2 during 1999 were:

- **Mid Columbia Library, Pasco** —54 members added Feb. 9
- **City of Mercer Island** —15 members added Feb. 17
- **Children Center, Clark County** —25 members added June 25
- **Columbia River Mental Health, Clark County** —153 members added July 7
- **Clallam County Mid Managers** —41 members added July
- **Kitsap County Correctional Sergeants** —7 members added July
- **City of Longview Police Support Staff** —15 members added Aug. 13
- **City of Cheney Managerial and Professional Association** —20 members added Sept. 27.

# WTO events taught us a real lesson

Chris Dugovich



*Letter from the president*

On November 30, somewhere in the neighborhood of 500 AFSCME members from Council 75, Council 28 and Council 2 took part in the labor march protesting the policies of the World Trade Organization. In all, more than 40,000 trade unionists took part in a peaceful march through downtown Seattle.

The most important message that came through is that everyone—Union members and non-members—needs to be aware of the current state of trade throughout the world. That message is that whole manufacturing sectors of our economy are being transferred overseas where low-paid workers, in sometimes unsafe conditions, produce the goods we buy.

The WTO is the organization that can wipe out even minimal wage and environmental standards and declare them trade barriers. And it's done in closed sessions.

### My thoughts on the event

As a native Washingtonian, a number of thoughts struck me about the total event.

The total volume of individuals downtown was something that I never thought I would witness. All the main streets including 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, were filled with people as far as one could see.

Secondly, as was fairly reported 99% of all the demonstrators were peaceful. It was only a small handful that created the vivid TV images beamed across the world.

Last, but certainly not least, the chaos that occurred was certainly not any one individual's fault but the individuals who initially promoted and brought this event to Seattle.

### Maybe we don't want certain events

In my lifetime, since the '62 Worlds Fair, certain promoters of Seattle have attempted to bring every major event possible to our city. We have grown into a big city with big league sports. Soon we will have our third world-class stadium and, at every convention and conference possible, the promoters pitch our beautiful scenery and gentle populace.

Make no mistake, Seattle is much different from the days when Kalakala plied the Puget Sound Waters and the Smith Tower was the tallest building west of the Mississippi. The real lesson, however, for Seattle is that there are certain events that maybe we don't even want.

For years, Emmett Watson—a noted columnist for the Seattle Times—wrote tongue-in-cheek of his fictitious organization "Lesser Seattle".

He gave directives to his membership, such as "call a friend in California and tell them it's raining"; he jokes of keeping Seattle small and its beauty a secret.

In reality, maybe we shouldn't keep it a secret, but maybe we shouldn't be so quick to continually bring every event in before its ramifications are fully realized.

In short maybe next time we'll tell them "it's raining."

## Bellingham pipeline explosion

# Prompt action by Council 2 members prevents even worse catastrophe

An explosion on a pipeline put Bellingham City employees Local 114 to one of the biggest challenges they have faced.

But their prompt action kept the explosion—as bad as it was—from turning into a city-wide catastrophe.

The drama began when Don Alderson, a Water Department employee, called in to report an outdoor odor. Whatever the smell was, he told dispatchers, it was coming from Whatcom Creek, near his house. And it was sending his dog into seizures.

Fire Department dispatcher Cindy Sleuys issued an evacuation alert to fire fighters who had by now arrived at the creek. But it was too late. Fumes from 277,000 gallons of gasoline that had leaked from the ruptured pipeline exploded in a fireball that burned more than a mile of park land.

The explosion claimed the lives of a teenage boy and two 10-year-old boys who, authorities said, set off the explosion by playing with a fireplace lighter.

**Council 2 members who helped**

**These Council 2 members assisted in the 1999 Bellingham pipeline explosion:**

**Dispatchers: Stephanie Haller, Faith Foster and Cindy Sleuys.**

**Public Works Employees: Harvey Berwick, Jay Greenwood, Myron Hendrickson, Robyn Arbogast, Keith Smith, Myron Carlson, Kip Dunlap, Chuck Berlemann, Gary Gilfrilen and Ricky McWilliams.**

Alderson was unhurt, but his home was destroyed.

Sleuys, the most senior of six dispatchers in the room at the time,

stayed at her post to direct emergency personnel. Two hours elapsed before she knew whether her husband, a fireman whom she had dispatched to the scene, was alive.

AFSCME members throughout the city rushed to respond to the emergency. The explosion nearly destroyed the city's wastewater treatment plant, which serves about 70,000 people. Restoring power to the plant was necessary to prevent a more widespread disaster from exposure to contaminated water.

"At one time, we were down to a foot-and-a-half in one of the reservoirs," says Chuck Berlemann, a maintenance technician with the Public Works Department. The level represents about an hour's supply or less.

Power was finally restored to the pumps, water pressure was raised and a localized disaster—as bad as it was—was kept from turning into a major catastrophe.

*(Information for this report was obtained from AFSCME Public Employee.)*

# Four honored in naming of Council 2 scholarships

The Council 2 scholarships for 2000 will be named in honor of four people. Details are given below.

### The Dependant Scholarship will be named for Valarie Davis.

Davis was a member of Local 1811-CA for many years. She personally was responsible for deferred compensation and retirement contribution adjustments being improved this summer.

She also assisted in educating not only her bargaining unit but also the entire Local on retirement issues.

"Valarie's warm personality, friendship and many contributions will be greatly missed," said Cammy Hart-Anderson, president of Local 1811-CA.

### The Continuing Education Scholarships will be named for Chris Fecht and George Zelko.

Chris Fecht, a member of Local 109 for almost nine years, was a hard-working man, a good husband and a fine father, said Roger Moller, president of Local 109.

"At the age of 44, Chris was taken from us by coronary disease," Moller said. He leaves his wife

Brenda (a member of AFSCME affiliate 109-E) and his son Christopher.

George Zelko worked for the City of Kelso for 25 years. During

who was always there for his fellow worker even through the adverse situations that met him due to his heart condition."



### The Summer School for Women Scholarship will be named for Katie Bell Hall.

Katie Bell Hall, the grand-daughter of Rozelle Hall who has been a member of Local 120 for more than 10 years, was killed in a car wreck in the Spring.

Katie, her mother, Wendy, and her grandmother were active participants in Local functions, said Harold Withrow, president of Local 120.

She took part in informational picketing at the Health Department and the Tacoma Public Library as well as dressing up as a clown and entertaining children at a Local picnic, he added.

"Katie may have been 19, but she had a real grasp of worker issues and had planned to make a career as a labor advocate," Withrow said. "I can think of no other person that would exemplify what these scholarships are all about than Katie Bell Hall."

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# 2000 WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

Listed on this page are the names of the members of the 1999-2000 Legislature, including the senator and two representatives from your district. Keep this information and post a copy at your worksite for others to use. Your three legislators will pay attention to a letter, postcard or telephone call from you.  
**NOTE:** Telephone numbers with 786- prefix are in the 360 area code.

**Letters and postcards:** Address letters and postcards to your legislators (Sen. Jane Doe or Rep. John Doe), State Legislature, Olympia, WA 98504. When writing, be brief, specific and polite. Ask for a response.  
**Telephone calls:** In addition to the specific numbers on this page, you can contact your legislators by calling the Legislature's toll-free hotline at **1-800-562-6000**.

**Governor:**  
 Gary Locke, Democrat

**Lieut. Governor:**  
 Brad Owen, Democrat

**District 1**  
 Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, D. 786-7600  
 Rep. Jeanne Edwards, D. 786-7900  
 Rep. Al O'Brien, D. 786-7928

**District 2**  
 Sen. Marilyn Rasmussen, D. 786-7602  
 Rep. Roger Bush, R. 786-7824  
 Rep. Tom Campbell, R. 786-7912

**District 3**  
 Sen. Lisa Brown, D. 786-7604  
 Rep. Alex Wood, D. 786-7888  
 Rep. Jeff Gombosky, D. 786-7946

**District 4**  
 Sen. Bob McCaslin, R. 786-7606  
 Rep. Larry Crouse, R. 786-7820  
 Rep. Lynn Schindler, R. 786-7984

**District 5**  
 Sen. Dino Rossi, R. 786-7608  
 Rep. Brian Thomas, R. 786-7876  
 Rep. Cheryl Pflug, R. 786-7852

**District 6**  
 Sen. James West, R. 786-7610  
 Rep. Brad Benson, R. 786-7922  
 Rep. Duane Sommers, R. 786-7962

**District 7**  
 Sen. Bob Morton, R. 786-7612  
 Rep. Bob Sump, R. 786-7908  
 Rep. Cathy McMorris, R. 786-7988

**District 8**  
 Sen. Patricia Hale, R. 786-7614  
 Rep. Shirley W. Hankins, R. 786-7882  
 Rep. Jerome Delvin, R. 786-7986

**District 9**  
 Sen. Larry Sheahan, R. 786-7620  
 Rep. Don Cox, R. 786-7942  
 Rep. Mark G. Schoesler, R. 786-7844

**District 10**  
 Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen, D. 786-7618  
 Rep. Dave Anderson, D. 786-7884  
 Rep. Kelly Barlean, R. 786-7914

**District 11**  
 Sen. Margarita Prentice, D. 786-7616  
 Rep. Eileen L. Cody, D. 786-7978  
 Rep. Velma Voloria, D. 786-7862

**District 12**  
 Sen. George Sellar, R. 786-7622  
 Rep. Clyde Ballard, R. 786-7999  
 Rep. Linda Evans Parlette, R. 786-7832

**District 13**  
 Sen. Harold Hochstatter, R. 786-7624  
 Rep. Gary Chandler, R. 786-7932  
 Rep. Joyce Mulliken, R. 786-7808

**District 14**  
 Sen. Alex Deccio, R. 786-7626  
 Rep. Mary Skinner, R. 786-7810  
 Rep. Jim Clements, R. 786-7856

**District 15**  
 Sen. Jim Honeyford, R. 786-7684  
 Rep. Bruce Chandler, R. 786-7960  
 Rep. Barbara Lisk, R. 786-7874

**District 16**  
 Sen. Valoria Loveland, D. 786-7630  
 Rep. Dave Mastin, R. 786-7836  
 Rep. William A. Grant, D. 786-7828

**District 17**  
 Sen. Don Benton, R. 786-7632  
 Rep. Marc Boldt, R. 786-7994  
 Rep. Jim Dunn, R. 786-7976

**District 18**  
 Sen. Joseph Zarelli, R. 786-7634  
 Rep. Tom Mielke, R. 786-7850  
 Rep. John Pennington, R. 786-7812

**District 19**  
 Sen. Sid Snyder, D. 786-7636  
 Rep. Brian Hatfield, D. 786-7806  
 Rep. Mark Doumit, D. 786-7870

**District 20**  
 Sen. Dan Swecker, R. 786-7638  
 Rep. Richard DeBolt, R. 786-7896  
 Rep. Gary C. Alexander, R. 786-7990

**District 21**  
 Sen. Paull Shin, D. 786-7640  
 Rep. Mike Cooper, D. 786-7950  
 Rep. Renee Radcliff, R. 786-7972

**District 22**  
 Sen. Karen Fraser, D. 786-7642  
 Rep. Sandra Romero, D. 786-7940  
 Rep. Cathy Wolfe, D. 786-7992

**District 23**  
 Sen. Betti Sheldon, D. 786-7644  
 Rep. Phil Rockefeller, D. 786-7934  
 Rep. Beverly Woods, R. 786-7842

**District 24**  
 Sen. Jim Hargrove, D. 786-7646  
 Rep. Jim Buck, R. 786-7916  
 Rep. Lynn Kessler, D. 786-7904

**District 25**  
 Sen. Calvin Goings, D. 786-7648  
 Rep. Joyce McDonald, R. 786-7948  
 Rep. Jim Kastama, D. 786-7968

**District 26**  
 Sen. Bob Oke, R. 786-7650  
 Rep. Patricia Lantz, D. 786-7964  
 Rep. Tom Huff, R. 786-7802

**District 27**  
 Sen. Lorraine R. Wojahn, D. 786-7652  
 Rep. Ruth Fisher, D. 786-7930  
 Rep. Debbie Regala, D. 786-7974

**District 28**  
 Sen. Shirley Winsley, R. 786-7654  
 Rep. Gigi Talcott, R. 786-7890  
 Rep. Michael Carrell, R. 786-7958

**District 29**  
 Sen. Rosa Franklin, D. 786-7656  
 Rep. Steve Conway, D. 786-7906  
 Rep. Brian Sullivan, D. 786-7996

**District 30**  
 Sen. Tracey Eide, D. 786-7658  
 Rep. Mark Miloscia, D. 786-7898  
 Rep. Maryann Mitchell, R. 786-7830

**District 31**  
 Sen. Pam Roach, R. 786-7660  
 Rep. Micheal Stensen, D. 786-7846  
 Rep. Christopher Hurst, D. 786-7866

**District 32**  
 Sen. Darlene Fairley, D. 786-7662  
 Rep. Carolyn Edmonds, D. 786-7880  
 Rep. Ruth Kagi, D. 786-7910

**District 33**  
 Sen. Julia Patterson, D. 786-7664  
 Rep. Shay Schual-Berke, D. 786-7834  
 Rep. Karen Keiser, D. 786-7868

**District 34**  
 Sen. Michael Heavey, D. 786-7667  
 Rep. Erik Poulsen, D. 786-7938  
 Rep. Dow Constantine, D. 786-7952

**District 35**  
 Sen. Tim Sheldon, D. 786-7668  
 Rep. Bill Eickmeyer, D. 786-7902  
 Rep. Kathy Haigh, D. 786-7966

**District 36**  
 Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles, D. 786-7670  
 Rep. Helen Sommers, D. 786-7814  
 Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson, D. 786-7860

**District 37**  
 Sen. Adam Kline, D. 786-7688  
 Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos, D. 786-7944  
 Rep. Kip Tokuda, D. 786-7838



**District 38**  
 Sen. Jeralita "Jeri" Costa, D. 786-7674  
 Rep. Aaron Reardon, D. 786-7864  
 Rep. Patricia "Pat" Scott, D. 786-7840

**District 39**  
 Sen. Val Stevens, R. 786-7676  
 Rep. Hans Dunshee, D. 786-7804  
 Rep. John Koster, R. 786-7816

**District 40**  
 Sen. Harriet Spanel, D. 786-7678  
 Rep. Dave Quall, D. 786-7800  
 Rep. Jeff Morris, D. 786-7970

**District 41**  
 Sen. Jim Horn, R. 786-7680  
 Rep. Mike Wensman, R. 786-7894  
 Rep. Ida Ballasiotes, R. 786-7926

**District 42**  
 Sen. Georgia Anne Gardner, D. 786-7682  
 Rep. Doug Ericksen, R. 786-7980  
 Rep. Kelli Linville, D. 786-7854

**District 43**  
 Sen. Pat Thibadeau, D. 786-7628  
 Rep. Edward Murray, D. 786-7826  
 Rep. Frank Chopp, D. 786-7920

**District 44**  
 Sen. Jeanine Long, R. 786-7686  
 Rep. Dave Schmidt, R. 786-7982  
 Rep. John Lovick, D. 786-7892

**District 45**  
 Sen. Bill Finkbeiner, R. 786-7672  
 Rep. Kathy Lambert, R. 786-7878  
 Rep. Laura Ruderman, D. 786-7822

**District 46**  
 Sen. Ken Jacobsen, D. 786-7690  
 Rep. Jim McIntire, D. 786-7886  
 Rep. Phyllis Kenney, D. 786-7818

**District 47**  
 Sen. Stephen Johnson, R. 786-7692  
 Rep. Phil Fortunato, R. 786-7918  
 Rep. Jack Cairnes, R. 786-7858

**District 48**  
 Sen. Dan McDonald, R. 786-7694  
 Rep. Luke Esser, R. 786-7936  
 Rep. Steve Van Luven, R. 786-7848

**District 49**  
 Sen. Albert Bauer, D. 360-696-6434  
 Rep. Don Carlson, R. 786-7924  
 Rep. Val Ogden, D. 786-7872





### Local helps sponsor barbecue

AFSCME Local 275 was one of five sponsors who took part in a community barbecue held before the Aberdeen Town Meeting.

Members served food to citizens who showed up to eat and then listen to Governor Gary Locke.

Seen here are, from left, Marv Townsend, Gloria Day, Terri Korst, Jane Lauzon, Gov. Gary Locke, Brian Garrow, vice president of Local 275, and Shayne Lester.

## Lakehaven violated 'no-subcontracting' provision, arbitrator finds

An arbitrator has found that Lakehaven Utility District in Federal Way violated a "no-subcontracting" provision of its collective bargaining agreement with Council 2.

Thomas F. Levak found that the district contracted out a janitorial position after the person who had held it retired. That action, he ruled, was contrary to the agreement.

Levak ordered the district to stop hiring the outside contractor, to advertise the janitorial position, and to fill it.

The hearing was told that on May 28, 1998, Bill Jackson retired from the posi-

tion of janitor at the Lakota Administrative Building and Water Maintenance Shop run by the district.

Following his retirement, the district assigned the work to members of the International Operating Engineers Union, building managers and others. The district did not notify the union that it was doing so.

In late-1998, Don Perry, the district's General Manager, subcontracted the janitorial work that had been performed by Jackson. In December, he placed the work up for bid.

He said he did not feel it was neces-

sary to notify the union of his decision because "members of the IOE unit had been performing the work for some time."

On Jan. 28, 1999, the district executed a 3-year contract with Little Bell Building Maintenance for the work, which would start on March 1.

Perry said the district felt it was preferable to go to an outside company to handle the janitorial work as it was more efficient that the work be done at night at all locations. A single company working at night was the best option for the district, he said.

On Feb. 19, Council 2 filed a griev-

ance.

The union said that the efficiency of having the work performed at night by a single company is irrelevant in determining whether the labor agreement was violated. It added that failure to notify the union was, in itself, a violation.

Levak found that the union proved that the district violated the agreement and found that the grievance must be sustained. He issued a cease-and-desist order and a directive to the district to declare a janitor position vacancy immediately and to fill it.

Audrey Eide represented Council 2 at the hearing.

### LAIDLAW, from Page 1

out of 300.

Laidlaw challenged six ballots, an action that put the entire election results on ice.

In August 1998, Council 2 won the hearing held on the contested ballots. Laidlaw, in turn, challenged that decision. In November 1998, the company appealed to the regional National Labor Relations Board in Seattle.

"We won there, too," Keenan says. The ruling in favor of Council 2 was made in February 1999.

Laidlaw was not done yet.

"They then appealed to the national board in Washington D.C.," explains Keenan. The national board remanded the issue back to the regional board in Seattle.

"At this stage, Council 2 finally said, enough is enough," Keenan says. "We said, let's let the workers decide what they want to do. Let's get it out of the court and out of the hands of the appeals procedures."

Laidlaw agreed, in effect, to hold the decertification election again. The company believed that the union was facing sufficient opposition at that time and was confident it could win the replay. So it dropped the litigation and consented to an election. The election was set for Oct. 28, 1999. Council 2 had little time to wage its campaign as the election date was set only at the end of September.

"That gave us 30 days to campaign," Keenan says.

Council 2 enlisted the support of AFSCME and threw all its resources into the campaign.

"This campaign was unlike any other we have conducted," says Keenan.

Among the actions that were taken:

- Special radio advertisements were aired.

- AFSCME sent David Miller from their regional office in California to assist Council 2 in putting together professional brochures.

- AFSCME sent organizer Sue Lee to work full-time on the campaign.

- The Carpenters Union sent in voluntary organizers to help.



### COUNCIL 2 VERSUS LAIDLAW: THE TIME LINE

**December 1996:** Laidlaw employees in Spokane vote to join Council 2.

**1997:** Laidlaw ties down contract negotiations throughout the entire year.

**April 1998:** Laidlaw assists employees to file an application for decertification of the union.

**May 1998:** Council 2 wins decertification contest by three votes (110-107).

Laidlaw challenges six ballots, putting entire election result on ice.

**August 1998:** Council 2 wins hearing on contested ballots.

- Council 2 officers and members visited the homes of 250 of the 300 employees who were eligible to vote in the month covered by the campaign.

"We worked weekends, evenings, seven days a week for the whole month," says Keenan, who is based in Everett, but spent the entire month in Spokane working virtually every waking hour on the campaign. "We never took a day off because all we had was 30 days. It was a make-or-break effort."

"I really needed a break after that. But I was not alone. Everyone involved put all they had into the campaign."

- Laidlaw employees put together a strong organizing committee that allowed their names to be used both in the brochures and on radio advertisements.

**November 1998:** Laidlaw appeals ruling to the regional National Labor Relations Board in Seattle.

**February 1999:** Regional NLRB overthrows appeal. Laidlaw appeals to national NLRB in Washington, D.C., which remands issue back to regional board.

Laidlaw agrees to Council 2 suggestion that workers be asked to decide again whether they want union representation.

**September 1999: Campaign for election starts.**

**October 1999:** Council 2 wins twice as many votes as Laidlaw in election.

"That helped turn the campaign around," Keenan adds. "One employee said, 'I voted against the union before, but now I am supporting them.'"

The result was that 142 said "yes" to the union and 79 said "no."

The workers had spoken — and they had spoken loudly.

As Council 2 prepares to enter contract negotiations once again with Laidlaw on behalf of Local 780, Keenan says their actions will be different this time than they were last time.

"We will conduct a community campaign to educate the Parent Teachers Associations, the School Board and the citizens of Spokane to the atrocities going on in Laidlaw and why they need the contract," Keenan says.

### SESSION, from Page 1

sit and transportation to public health and criminal justice.

Council 2 members in local government face several concerns as a result of the initiative. One is layoffs. Another is the lack of funding for cost of living adjustments as well as medical benefits for the remaining employees.

"Council 2, along with other unions, will be working hard with the Legislature to find solutions to the loss of revenue," says Chris Dugovich, Council 2 President/Executive Director. "We will work hard to make sure the impact on our members is the least possible." While the voters might have stated that the license tab fees had grown to fairly significant levels, that does not mean that they want drastic cuts to public services, Dugovich adds.

Pat Thompson, Director of Legislation/Political Action, says Council 2's concern is to protect its members in local government who are hardest hit by the shortfalls in funding that the initiative created.

"There's a strong sentiment that local governments need relief to continue to provide the vital services," Thompson says. "Just how that will be done will be the focus of the debate."

Consensus will be much harder to reach because of the 49-49 tie between the House and the Senate, he adds.

Even though the I-695 debate will dominate the session, three other issues also will be featured.

#### • Retirement.

Many meetings have taken place between sessions with the Joint Committee on Pension Policy, Thompson explains.

"Our focus has been twofold," he adds.

"One is to decrease the retirement age from the current 65 for PERS II members, either through simply lowering the age, or through reducing the actuarial penalty for retiring early, which at present is 8 percent.

The other is governance of the retirement system itself. "The whole system needs to change. We need a voice and a vote at the table where policy is discussed."

- **Collective bargaining for deputy prosecutors.**

- **Increasing the bid limits for local government work.**