

*February 2007 – Organized Labor Article*

*Dear Brothers/Sisters:*

*There are several issues that have come up that I would like to make the membership aware of.*

*As you know, work is currently very busy and there is a lot of pressure to get the jobs completed and move on to the next one. Manpower is tight, however, Local 483 has been able to fill every request for help from our contractors. We have a good number of travelers working in our area and we are currently getting ready to bring in a new class of apprentices. This, along with our organizing efforts have enabled us to stay up with the requests for manpower. I will do whatever I can to make sure we are fulfilling job requests, as I do not want to see our work given away to the non-union or to other crafts. We have seen an increase in the use of subcontractors doing the fire caulking of hole penetrations and other aspects of our trade. We will not let this go on. I can't tell you how often I am asked "why did we give up our underground work? No matter what the historical facts are, it remains today, that we do a very small percentage of this work. I do not want to see our trade chopped up and subbed out any further. If you are on a job and are told that someone else is going to be doing the fire caulking or any other part of our work, please call a business agent right away. It makes it very tough if you wait until after the work has started. This work is ours to do and we need to protect it as best we can. Remember, manhours equal more money into our benefit funds and more money into the pockets of our members and that's the bottom line.*

*Another issue at hand that I am working on is the paid sick time in the City and County of San Francisco. An ordinance was passed last year, that give employees of all companies doing work in San Francisco one (1) hour of paid sick time for every thirty (3) hours worked, with a maximum of seventy two (72) hours accumulated. This is on all work preformed, both public and private. Sick time is not something that the construction industry has and some of the Locals in the area are working out an agreement with their contractor associations. I have been in contact with the National Fire Sprinkler Association with regards to this matter, and though we have not come to an agreement as yet, I am hopeful that we will soon. I will keep you informed, however, in the meantime, should you work in the City/County of San Francisco, please keep track of your time.*

*As I have recently reported, I have asked the Segal Company to do a study of our RESA Program and project what we need to do to keep this Program in place and funded properly in order to make sure our Retirees can continue to afford to stay in our health care plan. While the report shows that the fund is doing well, it clearly shows that we will need to address funding soon because of projected increases in health care costs as well as the increase in future retirees. With these increases in mind, we will not be able to sustain the program with the current rate of twenty five cents (\$.25) per hour. I will be going over the report in detail with the Executive Board as well as at the upcoming union meetings. We have a contract increase July 30, 2007, between now and then we will need to discuss and decide on some of these issues that will affect us all.*

*As indicated earlier, we have a lot of new people coming into our area to work and we need to make sure they understand we don't want our wages and conditions broken down. We must protect our work and our contract if we want to keep our area strong.*

*Work Safe, Keep the Faith*

*Stan Smith  
Business Manager*