



SERVING THE WORKING PERSON *November 2002*

Thank You

Thank you to all the members, active and retired, who did so much in getting fellow workers, relatives and friends registered to vote. Thank you to the COPE Committee who met at night to interview, review questionnaires and then choose the candidates to endorse; to the members who worked at phone banks, Labor to Neighbor walks; to those who worked Election Day. This was the largest turn-out by members in the history of your Union.

Imagine what the future would hold if the State Senate went Republican.

For the last 18 months, members were constantly reminded that the budget deficit was going to be enormous and, depending on who got elected, would dictate how pain and suffering would be addressed.

The newly-elected General Assembly will begin in January and continue in regular session until early June. I do not expect a budget in place, which will require a Special Session to finish business. Unlike 1991, the year in which the income tax was approved providing a fairer tax structure than before, there isn't a revenue generator available this time. This leaves two choices—cut spending or increase taxes.

On October 28, the Governor skirted questions about his plan to deal with the deficit. He did say before increasing taxes he wanted to re-examine employee benefit packages and union contracts.

The fight has begun and it has become nasty again. The enthusiasm and renewed involvement generated by your successes over the last two years will be a testament in going forward. For those who will sit on the sidelines and only criticize what you lose will be greater than what is won!

On behalf of the Union staff, Executive Board and my family, I wish a healthy and happy holiday season to all!