

State Council Report

April 7, 2018

Eric Heins, CTA president – spoke about gun violence in our country. He stated the number of students, parents, and teachers who have been affected in our schools. 50 years ago Martin Luther King was killed by just one gun shot. Today, there are far too many deaths caused by gun violence now in our schools. He thanked the students of Stoneman Douglas High School for organizing themselves to march to the Florida State Capitol. Hundreds of thousands of supporters marched on March 24th in Washington, D.C. Over 800 cities participated across the United States. Technology in social media made this possible. We need to break the stranglehold of the gun lobby on our policymakers.

On April 20th, support our students again by marching with them against gun violence. It marks the 19th anniversary of the shooting of Columbine High School. There will be student walk-ins before school, school assemblies, and discussions on finding solutions to gun violence in our school. **Wear orange on that day to symbolize opposition to gun violence. We do not need more guns in the classrooms! We need more counselors, more support for our students, smaller classrooms, not guns in the hands of teachers.**

The Janus decision will come down at the end of June. We have to prepare for that decision. Have conversations with your colleagues about the importance of staying in our union. Look at what is happening in West Virginia, Arizona, Michigan, Kentucky, and Oklahoma, states where collective bargaining has been outlawed and where the “right to work” [for less] is the law.

Labor unions are standing up for many issues valued by its members; i.e. San Diego Teachers Association recently bargained for better maternity leave for its members. Our opponents are fighting to defund our union. They want to take away our voice at the bargaining table. Teachers need to tell their story of why they belong to CTA. We advocate for our students.

CTA is supporting Tony Thurmond for our next State Superintendent of Public Education. He is running against Marshall Tuck who wants to privatize education.

Tuck also wants to tie teacher evaluations to teacher pay based on students' standardized test scores.

Gavin Newsom – guest speaker, candidate for governor of California. As mayor of San Francisco, he helped overturn Prop. 8. He has his own initiative to reduce gun violence. He's running against Antonio Villaraigosa, who favors school vouchers and evaluations for teachers based on student test scores.

Gavin spoke about the gun laws in our state. California has some of the most successful and progressive gun safety laws in the country. We've had background checks on guns for 25 years. The gun murder rate has dropped 67% in California. Gun safety laws save lives! In January, 2019, California will require background checks for all ammunition purchases.

Gavin's motivation for running for governor come from his upbringing; his mom raised two children on her own. She lived through the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy, but she raised her children to live with moral authority. We need a governor who will fight the privatization efforts of Betsy DeVos, the Koch brothers, and others who wish to destroy public education. He asks that we instill in our students' minds the capacity to step up and do what's right for all, just King and Kennedy did. We need bold leadership. Gavin stated that we will survive the Janus decision and the Trump administration, but we need to be organized. He asks for your vote to help us through all of the future decisions that are before us.

CTA created STRS, the state retirement system for California's teachers. Our union has protected this system to fully fund and benefit our teachers when they retire. CTA successfully passed Prop. 30 that stopped further cuts to public education. Over \$53 million was spent by our opponents to prevent this victory, but CTA's \$50 million and organized teachers fought for its passage so our students' schools have the funding they deserve for their education. As a result, the state budget for education has increased by 67% over the past 3 years.

Respectfully submitted,

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