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Nurses celebrate their day by protesting in Washington

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Registered nurses marked International Nurses' Day with two actions in the District of Columbia aimed at protecting patients and caregivers.

First, nurses rallied outside the John A. Wilson Building this morning to urge the District of Columbia Council to pass legislation to protect patients by mandating minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in all DC hospitals.

"Hospitals everywhere are facing a crisis in inadequate patient care because the wealthy corporations that own the hospitals are cutting corners by understaffing registered nurses. That means substandard patient care and increased health risks for patients," said National Nurses United (NNU) Co-President Jean Ross, RN. "Minimum, mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios have been the law in California for years, and they have improved patient care outcomes dramatically. Studies have shown that the California ratios are saving lives, cutting unnecessary readmissions and also reducing costs. That's why we must bring safe patient staffing ratios to every state in the nation, including right here in DC."

"We are here today to celebrate international nurses' day. But more importantly, we're here to take action as nurses to make our values as nurses a reality-values of caring, compassion, and com-

munity," said Touko Leuga, a registered nurse in the medical/surgical unit at MedStar Washington Hospital Center, the largest hospital in DC. "It's time for the DC Council to step up by moving forward on the Patient Protection Act. The health of our patients depends on it."

Later, nurses demonstrated outside the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and delivered a petition signed by thousands of RNs at VA facilities around the country to Secretary of Veterans

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Affairs Robert McDonald, demanding respect for nurses' rights in VA hospitals across the country.

"As we speak, management continues to harass, threaten and intimidate RN's who speak up on behalf of veterans. RNs will always advocate on behalf of our nation's heroes to provide them

National Nurses United in the United States, represents 185,000 RNs across the country.

the best possible care,” said Irma Westmoreland, RN, chair of Veterans Affairs for National Nurses United. “The VA is spending half billion dollars to track RN’s, but doesn’t have enough money to meet its own staffing guidelines for both inpatient and outpatient veterans. VA RNs say, spend that half-billion dollars to properly staff hospitals and provide better access for veterans!”

The registered nurses also spoke out in support of a bill introduced in Congress to improve patient care for veterans, ensure equity among federal health care workers, and enable the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to recruit and retain a strong health care work force to serve the nation’s veterans. The bills (S. 1257 and H.R. 2193), introduced by Sen. Sherrod Brown and Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA), would restore full collective bargaining rights to registered nurses and other clinicians employed by the Veterans Administration.

These events are part of a global week of action organized by Global Nurses United and its U.S. affiliate, National Nurses United. NNU, the largest union and professional association of reg-

istered nurses in the United States, represents 185,000 RNs across the country, including 4,400 in DC and more than 10,000 at 23 VA medical centers.

Global Nurses United is the only international trade union organization devoted exclusively to representing nurses and unites 20 nurses’ unions in 18 countries, including the U.S. Nurses unions around the world are taking action during international nurses’ week, international nurses’ day, marks the birthday of Florence Nightingale.



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Some wins, some losses for workers in state battles

By **Kenneth Quinnell**

Six states have voted to make good or bad laws for working families and their allies.

In many states, legislative sessions have ended recently or are about to end and local governments are often active year-round. This means tons of legislation, both good and bad, is moving, providing opportunities for working families and their allies to pass laws that will help make people’s lives easier or stop laws that will make things worse. Here is a look at some of the key state battles that recently have passed or could be on the agenda this week or next.

Indiana: Gov. Mike Pence (R) signed a series of anti-worker bills, including a repeal of the prevailing wage for construction and the prohibition of local governments from establishing their own local prevailing wage laws, a law that both weakens wage theft rules and allows companies to charge employees up to 5% of their salary for required uniforms and equipment, the undermining of teachers’ voices on the job, and others.

Massachusetts: The Boston City Council unanimously passed a new ordinance providing for up to six weeks of paid parental leave after the

birth or adoption of a child for city employees.

Minnesota: The Minneapolis City Council passed a measure that will allow city workers to earn up to three weeks of paid parental leave.

Missouri: Extreme members of the state legislature used a procedural move to get past a filibuster and ram through “right to work” legislation, although Gov. Jay Nixon (D) has indicated he will veto the measure when it gets to his desk.

New Jersey: Two union members won local elections, bringing to 817 the number of candidates to graduate from the New Jersey State AFL-CIO Labor Candidates program and win election to office. John Amodeo of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 825 won a seat on the Margate City Commission and Harry Kumburis of IUOE Local 68 was elected to the Cedar Grove Township Council.

New Mexico: The Albuquerque City Council passed an equal pay measure that provides incentives for companies that offer equal wages to both female and male employees.

Iraq says ISIS demolishes ruins to cover up looting operations

By Associated Press

The videos of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) militants destroying ancient artifacts in Iraq's museums and blowing up 3,000-year-old temples are chilling enough, but one of Iraq's top antiquities officials is now saying the destruction is a cover for an even more sinister activity—the systematic looting of Iraq's cultural heritage.

In the videos that appeared in April, militants can be seen taking sledge hammers to the iconic winged-bulls of Assyria and sawing apart floral reliefs in the palace of Ashurnasirpal II in Nimrud before the entire site is destroyed with explosives. But according to Qais Hussein Rashid, head of Iraq's State Board for Antiquities and Heritage, that was just the final step in a deeper game.

"According to our sources, the [ISIS] started days before destroying this site by digging in this area, mainly the palace," he told The Associated Press from his office next to Iraq's National Museum—itself a target of looting after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion that ousted Saddam Hussein. "We think that they first started digging around these areas to get the artifacts, then they started demolishing them as a cover up."

While there is no firm evidence of the amount of money being made by ISIS from looting antiquities, satellite photos and anecdotal evidence confirm



widespread plundering of archaeological sites in areas under their control.

Nimrud was also the site of one of the greatest discoveries in Iraqi history, stunning golden jewelry from a royal tomb found in 1989, and Rashid is worried that more such tombs lie beneath the site and have been plundered. He estimated the potential income from looting to be in the millions of dollars. Experts speculate that the large pieces are destroyed with sledgehammers and drills for the benefit of the cameras, while the more portable items like figurines, masks and ancient clay cuneiform tablets are smuggled to dealers in Turkey.

Iraq has sent lists to the International Council of Museums, the UN and Interpol detailing all the artifacts that might have been looted from the museum in Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city overrun by ISIS last June. Harder to stop, however, is the sale of never-before-seen pieces that have been newly dug up and never registered.

As a number of experts point out, though, most sites in Iraq have not been completely excavated and there are likely more winged bull statues and stelae waiting to be found under the earthen mounds scattered throughout this country—assuming ISIS and its diggers do not find them first.

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“Avengers: Age of Ultron”: Wham! Bam! Kaboom!

By Jim Lane

The latest Avengers movie is better than the Transformers series. There is sort of a plot and a little bit of human interaction. It has mega-star actors, several with Academy Awards, and is directed by Joss Whedon. It was Whedon who caused us to go. We feel that we will always owe him allegiance because of Firefly and Buffy the Vampire Slayer on TV.

Age of Ultron humbled this reviewer. I had liked to think that I, as a lifelong movie addict, in some way shared the tastes of other moviegoers and, in a very limited sense, could speak to and for them about movies. But no more. As I remember my opinion of the film, I am forced to confess that I have no taste.

To me, Age of Ultron had all the charm and insight of a fireworks display. Fireworks displays, while impressive, usually last only a few minutes. Age of Ultron is over two hours long. All computer-generated. All noisy. It was bo-o-o-ring. I had to remind my movie buddy that the esteemed Joss Whedon directed it just to get her to stay for the last 90 minutes.

Finally it ended and we trudged away with shoulders sagging and dazed expressions. Fortunately for us, we then went to another movie.

The next day, the newspaper revealed that the Marvel/Disney sequel earned a staggering \$187.7 million in its debut weekend, making it the second-biggest U.S. opening of all time. The biggest was \$207.4 million in the 2012 opening of The Avengers.

Gobierno venezolano jóvenes en las políticas públicas

TeleSur

El presidente de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro aseguró que los jóvenes están conquistando los derechos y serán los encargados de construir la paz en el país. El presidente de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, instaló este domingo el Consejo Presidencial del Gobierno Popular de la Juventud y los Estudiantes, a través del cual le otorga a la generación del futuro venezolano espacios protagónicos dentro de la política en ese país. “La juventud tiene que ser poder, tiene que ser presidente, tiene que ser presidenta de Venezuela. Juventud-pueblo, juventud-presidente”, dijo el mandatario del país suramericano.

EL DATO: Los Consejos Presidenciales de Gobierno Popular son instancias creadas para que el pueblo venezolano pueda articular proyectos y políticas públicas con el apoyo del Ejecutivo Nacional. Son de carácter plural y de consulta permanente, con el fin de fortalecer la unidad pueblo-Gobierno.

A fin de alcanzar el desarrollo y el bienestar de la población juvenil del país, el líder venezolano solicitó que se cumplan siete objetivos fundamentales:

1.-Fortalecer todos los espacios educativos existentes en el territorio nacional, desde las escuelas básicas hasta las universidades.

2.-Crear un plan especial de empleo que contará con el apoyo de la Gran Misión Saber y Trabajo, para garantizar el acceso al campo laboral a los egresados de las instituciones académicas de Venezuela.

3.-Asignación de viviendas a hombres y mujeres entre los 21 y 30 años de edad, a través de la Gran Misión Vivienda Venezuela.

4.-Impulsar actividades de formación e integración cultural y comunicacional, iniciando con la instalación de un núcleo del Sistema Nacional de Orquestas y Coros Juveniles e Infantiles de Venezuela y un núcleo del Movimiento de Teatro César Rengifo, en cada liceo del país.

5.-Incorporación de la juventud a la Misión Jóvenes de la Patria Robert Serra y la Misión Árbol, para darle amor a la tierra y combatir el cambio climático.

6.-Establecer un plan especial por la paz, la vida, la seguridad y la defensa de la patria.

7.-Consolidar organizaciones juveniles en todos sus niveles y reforzar la formación entre los más jóvenes. Los jóvenes “están conquistando sus derechos y juntos vamos a construir la paz. Esto que estamos logrando es un hecho histórico, y debemos asumirlo con la mayor disciplina, con la mejor voluntad”, puntualizó el Presidente.