

The *Public i*, a project of the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center, is an independent, collectively-run, community-oriented publication that provides a forum for topics underreported and voices under-represented in the dominant media. All contributors to the paper are volunteers. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to submit articles or story ideas to the editorial collective. We prefer, but do not necessarily restrict ourselves to, articles on issues of local impact written by authors with local ties.

*The opinions are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the IMC as a whole.*

**EDITORS/FACILITATORS:**

- Brian Dolinar
- davep
- Shara Esbenshade
- Belden Fields
- Bob Illyes
- Paul Mueth
- Laura Stengrim
- Marcia Zumbahlen

**THE PUBLIC I**

Urbana-Champaign IMC  
202 South Broadway  
Urbana, IL, 61801  
217-344-8820  
www.ucimc.org



**Get Involved with the *Public i***

You don't need a degree in journalism to be a citizen journalist. We are all experts in something, and we have the ability to share our information and knowledge with others. The *Public i* is always looking for writers and story ideas. We invite you to submit ideas or proposals during our weekly meetings (Thursdays at 5:30pm at the UCIMC), to post a story to the web site (<http://www.ucimc.org>), or to contact one of the editors.

- Become a citizen journalist; write a news story or opinion piece.
- Make a tax-deductible contribution.
- Help distribute the *Public i* around the Champaign-Urbana area.
- Help with fund-raisers.
- Join the editorial board.

**SUPPORT YOUR IMC!!!**

**Rent Parking:**

Convenient downtown Urbana parking @ the IMC (old PO building) \$40/month for a three-month lease (\$5 month cheaper than other options)

Contact [finance@ucimc.org](mailto:finance@ucimc.org) or call 217-344-8820

**Rent an Art Studio or Office Space**

A variety of affordable art studio and office space available now for \$130-\$350 including utilities in the historic building of the Independent Media Center. Enjoy access to shared resources including teaching, gallery, & performance space.

Contact [finance@ucimc.org](mailto:finance@ucimc.org) or call 217-344-8820

**Get a show on WRFU, Radio Free Urbana, 104.5**

*Attention All Potential Radio DJs and Radio Interns!*

Are you interested in being on the radio? Do you want to get involved in a community radio station? Are you interested in getting a show for the summer ONLY? Are you interested in having a show throughout the year?

Well, come to the next WRFU general meeting which occurs the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month in the Family Room of the Independent Media Center located at 202 S. Broadway, Urbana, IL to find out how YOU can get involved.

Members need to be trained for about 2 hours and pay dues (\$20/per person) to be eligible to broadcast on the air. It's simple and it's fun. Become a part of WRFU and take back the media!

Contact [wrfu@ucimc.org](mailto:wrfu@ucimc.org)

**SUSTAINING CONTRIBUTORS**

The *Public i* wishes to express its deep appreciation to the following sustaining contributors for their financial and material support:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SocialistForum: An Open Discussion and Action Group</b> , Meets 3rd Saturdays of the month, 3-5 pm, at IMC, Broadway & Elm. (U) | <b>Jerusalem Cafe</b><br>601 S. Wright St, Champaign; 398-9022  |
| <b>World Harvest International and Gourmet Foods</b><br>519 E. University, Champaign   | <b>The AFL-CIO of Champaign County</b>  |
| <b>Union of Professional Employees (UPE)</b>   | <b>That's Rentertainment</b><br>516 E. John, Champaign; 384-0977                                      |
| <b>The Natural Gourmet</b><br>2225 S. Neil, Champaign; 355-6365  | <b>National Fish Therapeutic Massage</b><br>113 N. Race, Urbana, 239-3400                             |
| <b>Progressive Asset Management, Financial West Group</b><br>Socially Responsible Investing  | <b>AWARE, the Anti-War, Anti-Racism Effort</b><br>Meetings every Sunday at 5pm at the IMC             |
|  | <b>Tribal Life, Inc.</b><br>217-766-6531, <a href="http://triballife.net/">http://triballife.net/</a> |

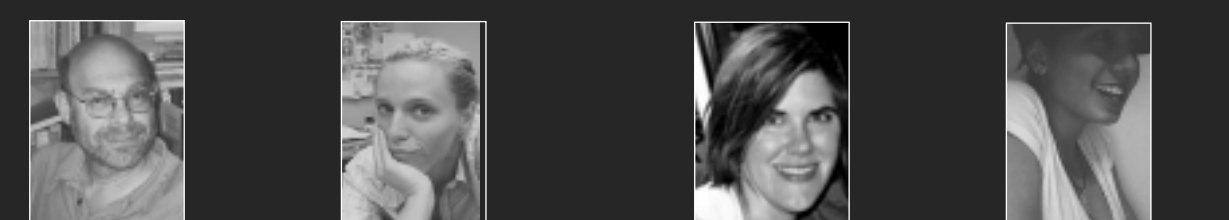
If you or your organization would like to become a sustaining contributor to the *Public i*, or would like more information, please call 344-7265, or email [imc-print@ucimc.org](mailto:imc-print@ucimc.org).

Published by the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center

A Paper of the People  
JUNE/JULY 2007  
V7 #5



**Students staging a 'die-in' against the Iraq War in the intersection of Green and Wright Streets in Campustown.**



- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Illinois Gross Reciepts Tax</b><br>Michael Brün<br>Page 1 | <b>Huger Awareness Day</b><br>Lisa Bralts<br>Page 4 | <b>Midwives and the Law in Illinois</b><br>Marci Zumbahlen<br>Page 5 | <b>The U-C Anti-War Die in</b><br>Shara esbenshade<br>Page 6 |
|--|---|--|--|

# THE GROSS RECEIPTS TAX: A GREAT TAX FOR A GLOBAL ECONOMY

By Michael Brün



*Michael Brün teaches economics wherever they let him, off and on at ISU in Normal, at the UI in Urbana-Champaign, SDAS at the IMC, U. of Agriculture in Nitra, Slovakia. Obviously, he likes taxes.*

Pick a tax, and you pick who pays directly, and also who pays indirectly when the cost of the tax is passed along to others in the current of buying and selling. Pick a program on which to spend tax revenues, and it's the same: you pick who benefits directly, and also who benefits indirectly when earnings or savings are passed along to others in that same current.

So, what is Governor Blagojevich proposing to do, trying to fund universal health insurance in Illinois with a Gross Receipts Tax? Universal state-funded health insurance? The son of a right-wing Serbian military officer who long ago found it best to leave Tito's Yugoslavia--has he suddenly turned socialist? And what about Senator Emil Jones, who appears to come in equal parts from Commonwealth Edison and Chicago's south side? What is a Gross Receipts Tax? All this is high drama, but nobody seems to realize it quite.

I'll leave it to others to discuss the health insurance side of the story, exciting as it is, and focus here on the Gross Receipts Tax, the GRT.

## WHAT IS A GROSS RECEIPTS TAX?

It is a straight percentage levy on everything that comes into the cash register. The Governor's office came up with several different proposed versions, but the proportion typically varies between one and two percent of receipts, depending on the type and size of the business taxed. However, small businesses are completely exempted. Depending on which proposed version you look at, small is defined in terms of receipts, as less than either \$2 million or \$5 million.

Unlike a sales tax, which in legal terms is paid by consumers and accordingly added on top of the sales price, a GRT is paid by sellers and therefore included in the sales price. This difference is not likely to be important. If people are aware of the taxing techniques, only market conditions will determine how the burden of the new tax would be shared between seller and customer.

More important is that a sales tax is levied only on consumers and exempts business customers, while a GRT is levied on all sales regardless of the type of customer. This is the feature of the GRT that has drawn the most criticism, because of the potential effects of "pyramiding." Suppose for example (1) coal is sold to an aluminum smelting plant and then (2) the aluminum to an aircraft parts firm and then (3) the aluminum parts to an aircraft manufacturer and then (4) the finished airplane to an airline company and (5) airline tickets to passengers. In that case, if all five sellers are big businesses, and if all sales take place in Illinois, then the GRT will be collected five times before the passenger takes off from O'Hare. That seems like quite a pile of tax. But how bad is it really? I hope to show you that it is not bad at all. In fact, just this much-maligned feature, combined with the exemption for small businesses, makes the GRT such a good tax both economically and politically.

## THE ECONOMICS OF THE GROSS RECEIPTS TAX

If Illinois were an island unto itself, a "closed economy", then the burden of the GRT would be divided somehow between Illinois corporate shareholders receiving lower dividends and Illinois consumers paying higher prices. Due to the "pyramid-

ing" just described, if the GRT rate were high enough, say maybe 20 percent instead of just one or two percent, there would be enough pressure to reduce the number of sales turnovers to encourage "vertical integration." For example, the aluminum company might buy up the coal, aircraft parts and airline businesses so the only remaining sale would be to the passenger, and the tax would be imposed just once instead of five times. But this is all fantasy. A tax rate as low as one or two percent, even accumulated five times, will come to as much as 10 percent of the final product price only if inputs purchased from big businesses amount to 100 percent of each company's costs, with no labor, no overhead, and no purchases from small businesses. It is reasonable to expect instead, even in this weird example, a final accumulated tax rate well below that now collected in sales taxes, not enough to spur any kind of change in business organization.

In reality, Illinois is not an island unto itself, not a closed economy. Most big businesses selling in Illinois are nationwide or even global operations, and their sales in Illinois are a small fraction of their total business worldwide. The tax imposed by the Illinois state government on sales taking place in Illinois will make only a small impact on their total costs. And who will bear the burden? Not just Illinois shareholders, but shareholders worldwide will reap reduced dividends; not just Illinois consumers, but consumers worldwide will pay higher prices. But the effect, when spread over the world, will be very, very small.

For the same reason, in a global economy, pyramiding won't be much of a problem. Only the occasional transaction between big businesses will take place in Illinois; most will take place elsewhere. The chance of five pyramiding transactions all taking place (1) between taxably big businesses (2) within Illinois leading (3) to a final sale to an Illinois consumer, is vanishingly small.

The truth is the burden of the Illinois GRT would be spread across the world market in the same way pollution from Illinois spreads throughout earth's atmosphere.

To suppose otherwise is to expect global corporations to adopt state-by-state, country-by-country pricing strategies ignoring general market conditions and focusing only on appropriately rewarding or punishing tax policy. That doesn't seem at all likely.

In effect, then, the GRT is an ingenious device for raising money from out of state. A modern tax adapted to the modern global economy, it is designed to collect revenue at least cost to actual residents of our great state. It is similar to the royalties the state of Alaska and the various oil producing countries collect from oil mining revenues, the cost of which we all bear.

## THE POLITICS OF THE GROSS RECEIPTS TAX

If the burden of the Illinois GRT is so small when spread all across the globe, why the fuss? From our new global perspective, it's obvious. What if every state and every country, what if every taxing authority decided to do as Illinois might? It would be a conservative's nightmare.

Right now, people moan about the "race to the bottom". Every state and every country competes with every other one to cut taxes and social services and offer subsidies to businesses to get them to invest there. The public sector shrinks, the private sector grows.

With the GRT, however, there is little point to a company moving a production facility into or out of state because it still would pay taxes, as before, on its sales to Illinois customers.

To avoid the tax, the company would have to move its customers out of state.

This of course can be done to some extent, as will be illustrated in an example below, which is why the tax rate cannot be raised too far over rates nearby. But it is not at all simple to avoid this tax.

With the GRT, in other words, the "race to the bottom" can be reversed. Instead of cutting taxes, states and countries gain by raising them. Whoever raises more tax draws in more funds from the rest of the world. It could rapidly turn into a "race to the top".

It is fun to speculate about this kind of future, might be fun even to speculate on it. Maybe the specter of such a "race to the top" would force the Federal Government to step in with a new national tax policy to take over the funding of health insurance and education and so on, so as to stop the states from upping the ante on each other. Maybe this story could even repeat itself somehow on the world stage.

But here I will end this line of thought and take us back to Illinois.

## WHAT ABOUT HIGH-VOLUME, LOW MARGIN BUSINESSES?

These are businesses, typically distributors and retailers, where profit, whether large or small, is an unusually small proportion of the transacted volume. Typical would be an auto dealership, where the items dealt in are expensive and margins proportionately small. Sell a \$20,000 car and profit \$1,000 on it, and that's a great deal for a few hours work: wonderful business. But the GRT tax is on the \$20,000 received from the customer, not on the \$1,000 actually remaining as profit after costs have been paid. So a GRT of 2 percent would be \$400 and the after tax profit would then be \$600. That's quite a chunk out of the pocket of the dealership owners, and they have a right to complain. But do we have to listen?

It is one thing to be driven out of business; another to have to live more modestly off it, knowing it is still a better deal than closing it down and selling the assets for cash. And this is how we can tell if the tax is really too high.

Suppose there are 20 auto dealerships before the tax is imposed. If after the tax one closes and the other 19 remain in business, it is polite to say that that one closed because of the tax. Really it must have been on the edge for other reasons, however; why did the other 19 not close? Conclusion: no problem with the tax. But now suppose 15 dealerships close in Illinois, and five reopen in Indiana and send brochures and ads back to Illinois declaring that it is worth the trip for the customer to come out to Indiana to buy cars where prices are lower. Uh-oh—that would indeed be a sign that the tax is too high.

## WHY TAX CORPORATIONS?

Though persons legally, corporations are not persons. So why tax them? If shareholder dividends are taxed, why tax the corporation also? This is the question of "double taxation". There are the three good answers.

1. Retained earnings. These are profits not distributed as dividends among shareholders. They may be used for productive investment, for advertising and lobbying, or else to prepare for a takeover. In any case, retained earnings are a source of corporate power; and a tax could restrain that power.

2. Money leaving the state. This was discussed above. Many shareholders live outside Illinois, and pay their taxes elsewhere. One chance to get at their money is to tax operations in Illinois: to wit, the corporations themselves.

Continued on page 7



## Now we celebrate war

by Rev. Mike Mulberry

*Rev. Mike Mulberry is a pastor at the Community United Church of Christ. The following was submitted to the News-Gazette, which declined to publish it as an op-ed.*

King Ahab once greeted the prophet Elijah with the title "the troubler of Israel." Elijah rightly responded to King Ahab by calling him "the troubler of Israel"—the one who had abandoned all the values and deeply held beliefs of the Jewish people in favor of brute, raw power. We face such a critical juncture in our own country. We face a time when people who stand for peace in our own communities are referred to as "loonies." A hobby shop owner who does not believe a mother, who has lost her son in this war, has a right to speak, tries his level best to silence her criticism of our government. This man is hailed as a hero.

As another Memorial Day passed, we made the prosecution of war in this country such an idol that we do not dare grieve the dead (both American and Iraqi), critique the government, or call for peace, or we will be marginalized by those who think this is all some political gambit. Not one word of critique from the editorial staff of our community newspaper about war without a cogent reason, torture, secret prisons, private war contractors, war profiteers, the rape of a teenage girl and the burning of her family, the killing of civilians, the planned bombing of an alternative media outlet, the use of weapons of mass destruction by our own country, and the loss of basic human rights. Memorial Day used to be a day when we grieved our war dead and promised that we would never, ever let the world come to this necessary evil again.

Now we celebrate war. In full military dress our soldiers show up at our public schools to encourage our children to

enjoy the toys of war. Our teachers openly advocate for such play. Our school administrators throw up their hands and say, "I don't know what we can do."

Now proponents of peace are roundly mocked. Faith communities do not dare lift up the word "peace" unless the word is romanticized and irrelevant.

Iran looms on the horizon and the drumbeat has started. The only real chance we have is people, enough people in our communities, who will transcend their political viewpoints to recognize values that are more deeply held. "Loonies" or "troublers" though they may be, we need soldiers, mothers of soldiers, former soldiers, editorialists, reporters, administrators, teachers, and faith leaders who care less about being right and winning and more about walking the hard road of peace.

## IMC Reporter Kicked Out of Press Conference

by Brian Dolinar

There was a press conference called by Champaign Police Chief R.T. Finney on Friday, June 8, 2007 at 1 p.m. This was a chance for Finney to explain to the press, and to the public, what happened the previous night in Westside Park when three Champaign police officers were shot. The officers hurt included Shannon Bridges, John Murphy, and Jack Armstrong. They were shot by Donnell Clemons, a black man who was homeless and, like many who are on the streets, mentally ill. Officer Bridges was shot in the shoulder, was released from the hospital and is recovering. Donnell Clemons was shot six times by police and remains in the hospital.

First, it is important to state that I personally condemn all violence and believe that each life is precious—both the lives of the three police officers, as well as the life of a homeless man.

But we can see a trend of Champaign police to keep a tight control of information and squash any calls for accountability in the department. In 2004, Patrick Thompson and Martel Miller were charged with felony eavesdropping for audio and videotaping Champaign police officers. Chief Finney has been against any independent police review board in Champaign. Now my ousting from one of his

press conferences shows his unwillingness to hear any critical murmur about his police department.

As I walked into the press conference, the room was full of members from the local press. I sat down next to Steve Bauer of the News-Gazette and we said "hello" to one another. I got out my pencil and paper to take notes.

I then was tapped on the shoulder by Troy Daniels, Deputy Chief of the Champaign Police Department, and asked to step out of the room. At the back of the room, I told Daniels that I was a member of the press. Chief R.T. Finney then stepped in and told me I was not a legitimate member of the press. He said, "I choose who I want to talk to." I told him he could call Rene Dunn, assistant to the chief of police for community services, to confirm that I was indeed a member of the press. Finney said, "Rene Dunn works for me."

Rene Dunn was hired in early March to handle the press. I spoke with her several times after the March 30 incident where Champaign police sent a 17 year-old black youth to the hospital. She then verified that I was a member of the press. I was given access to the police blotter. Dunn gave me her card and she has been very forthcoming in answering my questions.

I talked to Dunn on the phone after the press conference and she told me it was not the wish of the chief that she grant me press credentials. Dunn said it was "my mistake." I asked her if Champaign supported freedom of the press. She did not answer my question.

Troy Daniels and another officer escorted me out of the press conference like a common criminal. As we were standing outside, I had the opportunity to thank Daniels for fulfilling my FOIA requests, the most recent of which was delivered May 16, 2007. He has helped to complete two of my FOIA requests that I requested back in February. On March 1, 2007, I met personally with Chief Finney and Trisha Crowley about my FOIA requests. I told them I was a journalist for the *Public i* newspaper and the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center. They questioned my about my intentions and agreed to answer my FOIA in an amended form. Crowley sent me a fee waiver form to complete as a member of the press, which I signed and returned.

I later spoke with Urbana Police Chief Mike Bily and asked him about his policy on press conferences. "I make no differentiation between the public and the press," he told me. I was welcome at his press conferences. His department, which is smaller and does-

n't have the resources, does not have any spokespeople. "That's not my style," he said. "Even if I disagree with someone, I will sit down and talk with them."

I also talked to Steve Bauer of the News-Gazette. He said he had never seen a journalist kicked out of a press conference.

Despite Chief Finney's attempt to maintain strict control of his press conference, one tough question was asked by a reporter for conservative radio station WDWS 1400 who asked, "When the officers approached the man, did they say anything to him, was there any contact with him that may have, or could have, provoked this shooting?"

Finney replied with contempt, "Provoking someone shooting us is an absurdly ridiculous question."

I was kicked out of the press conference because, as an independent media journalist, I have been consistently asking tough questions of Chief Finney and the Champaign Police Department. Finney reacts as if any criticism of his department is "absurdly ridiculous." If the Champaign police department was to have its way, the local press would simply reprint their press releases.

As Chairman Fred Hampton, Jr. says, "We've got freedom of speech—so long as you don't say the wrong thing."

## An Injury to One is an Injury to All

by Robert Wahlfeldt

A few days ago I celebrated my 82nd birthday. Today I am speaking about one of the groups I am proud to be a part of and that will shortly celebrate its 102nd year. This group about to turn 102 is called the IWW, or better known as the Industrial Workers of the World. Wobblies for short.

The IWW was formed back in 1905 and is the true defender of union solidarity. Today we can thank this group, for representing the spirit of the US labors movement's best contributions to society. For example, the brave folks of the IWW fought hard and won the eight-hour workday. Unique to this group was the willingness to organize women and minorities....All workers.

**The credo was and still is: An injury to one is an injury to all**

The Wobblies were willing to be involved in direct action and defend fellow workers, and to impede the business of abusive companies as necessary. Throughout history, from its origin in the early 1900s through a resurgence in the 1960s and continuing into the year 2007, the IWW has always been innovative and resilient.

I am thankful to be a member of the newly reemerging IWW. One Big Union. Thankful and hopeful that the gains made by labor in the past such as the 5 day work-week, the eight-hour day, child labor laws, and the ability to form a union remain important today. Some see Unions as bad for business, but based on my years of Union membership and leadership I know the importance of solidarity, boycotts, direct action and strikes to make gains for the workers and their families.

The IWW is as vital to democracy today as it was 102 years ago. At 82 I am hopeful that the younger members of the labor movement will continue to make progress as we did at the beginning many years ago!

To let you know who we are and what we are about the IWW has a presence at Urbana Farmer's Market. Come by and say hi and find out how important a labor organization can be to preserving and securing fair wages, job security and health care benefits for its members. In today's society, with an ever-shrinking middle class, the IWW may be our best hope.

We are proud to have a branch of the IWW right here in our own community: The Central Illinois General Membership Branch of the IWW meets every second Saturday of each month, at 1pm, in the Family Room of the Independent Media Center inside the old Urbana Post Office. (Entrance on Elm Street).

Remember our credo: An injury to one is an injury to all. Let us stand together and stop the exploitation of working people! Visit us this Saturday at Urbana Farmer's Market and find out why we continue to proudly say "Solidarity Forever!"

*The preceding commentary was heard on public broadcasting station, WILL-AM 580, during "The Public Square," a weekly 3-minute opinion piece from any member of the community on any subject of interest to him/her. "The Public Square" airs at 4:45 pm and 6:45 pm Fridays. Commentaries are archived on WILL's website. To submit a commentary of your own for broadcast, visit <http://www.will.uiuc.edu/community/publicsquare>.*



# The Persistence of Racial Conflict in American Labor Unions: The Case of Henry Bell

By David Green

On January 20, 2006, Henry W. Bell III, a 41-year-old African-American journeyman electrician, resident of Champaign, and member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 601, filed a civil lawsuit against his union. Bell's allegations of racial discrimination against his local, stemming from events of January 2005, were presented to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which subsequently issued a Notice of a Right to Sue, resulting in a court trial by jury scheduled for this coming November (2007) in the U.S. District Court in Urbana.

Bell's charges have been documented both in the court records and in numerous interviews with the local mainstream press, with Carol and Aaron Ammons on the WEFT program "Higher Ground," and with this writer. Bell claims that in January 2005, his union's local officials violated his rights by failing to refer him to an electrical contractor who had been hired to perform work at the UIUC Alumni Center, and who had requested a minority electrician in accordance with the University of Illinois' "goals of good faith" regarding affirmative action in the hiring of minorities and women. Bell's lawsuit is based on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which established the EEOC as a means of evaluating allegations of workplace racial discrimination for potential legal action.

As stated in the *Daily Illini* of February 23, 2007, Michael Herbert, the union's business manager and representative in the lawsuit, denies charges of discrimination and asserts that the union properly and legally followed its referral procedures. According to Herbert's comments to the DI, IBEW Local 601 will defend itself in court. Herbert declined to be interviewed for this article. In a letter to the requesting contractor, Rich Grissom of Egizii Electric in Decatur, dated January 26, 2005, Herbert wrote "there are no available minority electricians at this time."

A photocopy of the IBEW Local 601 "Job Referral - Unemployed Position List" of the same date, provided by Bell, has Bell placed in the 11th position of seniority, and as the 1st minority listed. The same document indicates that Bell's union dues were paid through February 1, 2005. Central to Bell's lawsuit is his claim that his union failed to provide services for which he had paid—in this

case, referral to a local job opportunity to which he was entitled.

Aside from the merits or future outcome of this particular case, it undoubtedly takes place in a well-documented historical and social context of persistent exclusion and discrimination on the basis of race in the American labor movement in general and in the relatively more lucrative building trades unions in particular. This history is reflected in the presence, according to Bell, of only 12 African-American electricians (and four white women) out of 550-600 working members of IBEW Local 601, and in the only four or five African-Americans of about 100 fulltime electricians employed by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as civil servants.

If the representation of African Americans among electricians and the other skilled building trades poorly reflects their 13% proportion of the local population, it even more poorly reflects their percentage among the working classes from which these vocations overwhelmingly draw their prospects. This racialized occupational structure is primarily the result of a history of white dominance among established contractors most able to offer low bids, informal recruitment into the vocations on the basis of family relationships, union seniority referral procedures that generally favor more experienced white workers over less experienced black workers, informal union procedures such as the interview process that may consciously or unconsciously discriminate against African American applicants, and an educational system that has made little effort to prepare and recruit minorities and women for successful entrance into the building trades, and has been poorly coordinated with the recruitment process of those trades.

It is illustrative that in 1998, the most successful black contractor in Chicago noted that that \$7 billion volume of the top three construction firms in Chicago is more than double the total revenues (\$2.65 billion) of all African-American construction firms in the entire U.S.

The late Herbert Hill, longtime (1951-77) Labor Director of the NAACP (though white), struggled tenaciously in the legal arena against racism in the American labor movement for that period and longer, in relation to both the

more conservative trade unions of the AFL (including the construction trade unions), and more radical industrial unions of the CIO. In the former, African Americans were discriminated against primarily by exclusion. In the latter, they were discriminated against by inclusion and subsequent segregation and subordination.

In regard to the 1963 March on Washington that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and specifically Title VII regarding equal employment opportunity, Hill wrote in 1998: "Notable for its absence from the list of participants, or even sponsors and supporters of the march was the AFL-CIO. This was no accident or oversight. The executive council of the AFL-CIO, after extensive discussion and debate, refused to give its endorsement or even to recommend that affiliated unions give their support. The best they could do was to leave it to 'individual union determination.'"

A central aspect of the Civil Rights Movement during and since the 1960s has been a struggle against entrenched white privilege within organized labor, a condition that could not but have contributed to the decline of organized labor as a whole in the face of the neoliberal/neoconservative and corporate globalization onslaught. A primary tactic in that struggle has been affirmative action in hiring in relation to publicly funded spending. Another tactic must become the reform of public education to better prepare students for more diverse academic and vocational opportunities in a non-elitist school environment.

One would hope that in a community with a major public university/employer and an ostensibly reform-minded public educational system, those factors would converge to create a bottom-up movement for concrete steps toward racial and economic inclusion in those sectors that have been historically restricted against African Americans. Again, whatever the outcome of Bell vs. IBEW Local 601, one would hope that this would be seen as indicative of the opportunity to more closely examine the persistence of institutionalized racism and opportunities for both the affirmation of rights and structural reform, all in the spirit of non-racist solidarity.

## Another View of Amnesty for Illegal Workers

by James Thindwa, Illinois Director of Jobs with Justice

It is beyond dispute that undocumented immigration disproportionately impacts low-wage, mostly African American workers. The debate ought to be about what the solution is.

Certainly, black Americans should view with suspicion the right wing's newfound interest in their economic plight. If Republicans cared about low-wage black workers, they would have supported the proposed minimum wage hike, living wage protocols across the country and health care reform, all of which disproportionately impact poor blacks. So, we know their motives are suspect. They are simply exploiting the plight of black workers to advance an anti-immigrant agenda.

The fact is, what conservatives are prescribing as a solution will exacerbate, rather than ameliorate, the job crisis in the black community. Their insistence on punitive measures to further isolate and marginalize immigrants will guarantee a permanent reservoir of exploitable labor for employers. Undocumented immigrants with no rights cannot exercise basic workplace rights, such as joining a union. That is exactly what employers want. It is that vulnerability that puts downward pressure on wages and hurts native-born workers.

If we agree that it is not feasible to deport 12 million undocumented people, then we must ask what is the best solution? Our (the progressive) solution that calls for status legalization will confer rights on undocumented immigrants, and thus deny employers the cheap labor they want. With their newfound rights, immigrant workers can work with African American workers to build power in the

workplace, form or join unions, and fight for better wages together. They can join other movements and organize around a broader, far reaching political agenda that includes national health care, global warming, school funding, Iraq War, post-Bush civil rights restoration, and so on.

We need to force a public debate on these two alternative visions of immigration reform. The marginalization course sought by conservatives will ensure continued distress for low-wage American workers, while the more humane, morally compelling course advocated by progressives promises to benefit both categories of workers, is consistent with American constitutional tenets of "freedom and equality for all" and imposes accountability on policy makers who have supported NAFTA-style trade deals.

Indeed, policy makers should be put on the defensive for these trade agreements. That NAFTA and CAFTA have exacerbated undocumented immigration is no longer debatable. Where is the accountability of politicians who continue to push these trade deals, even as we speak? I think we spend way too much time defending immigrants, instead of attacking trade policy. The Democrats and Republicans who gave us these trade agreements should be put on trial, not their immigrant victims.

Finally, we should force Americans to reflect on what America will look like with 12 million people existing on the margins of politics and economy, devoid of all rights. Is that an America people can be comfortable with? And what about the "border wall" as a solution? Few believe it will work and, in a post-Cold War era, it should be an insult to

those who always believed that free societies do not build walls around themselves.

### Mothers and Midwives Pancake Breakfast! a community event

June 30th 9-11 am McKinley Foundation  
809 S. Fifth Street (corner of 5th and John)  
Champaign, IL 61820

Guest Speaker: Pat Cole, President of Illinois Families for Midwifery. Pancakes, bagels, quiche, fresh fruit, juice, coffee, tea, will be served. Help to keep the option of homebirth safe and available to Illinois families who choose to birth their babies at home!

Tickets are \$10 per family, \$6 an individual and \$5 for students. Please contact Sarah Stalzer if you wish to purchase tickets 217.384.0429 or stalzer02@yahoo.com

Tickets also available at the door

\*Ticket donations will be used by the Coalition for Illinois Midwifery to support the efforts to pass Senate Bill 385, the Midwifery Licensure Act.



# Illinois Covered = Health Security – Health Care Reform For ALL

By Jim Duffett

*Jim Duffett, an Urbana resident, is the Executive Director of Campaign for Better Health [www.cbhconline.org](http://www.cbhconline.org) CBHC. Founded in 1989, it is the largest health care coalition in Illinois, representing 330 diverse organizations.*

As the General Assembly is now in overtime, health care reform and education funding continue to be two of the major issues yet to be decided. Will members (primarily the Democrats) of the General Assembly have the "Profiles of Courage" to help working families or will it be business as usual and corporate interests once again prevail? Currently our State Senator Frerichs' position on health care reform is the opposite of what his yard sign states: "working for our future." More on this later.

Every time that the pendulum moves back into the public debate for affordable, accessible and quality health care, the opponents of fairness and those profiting over the current disjointed system succeed by instilling fear and rolling out lie after lie.

By "Doing Nothing," which is currently State Senator Frerichs' position—in just the next four years the following will occur:

- Another 150-200,000 working Illinois families will lose their health insurance;
- Our medical providers and the un/underinsured will

be going more in debt;

- Illinois taxpayers will continue to subsidize the health care of major profitable corporations at the tune of over \$100 million because many of their employees (who are paid below a living wage) are being dumped into public programs for their health insurance instead of having the same health insurance that these corporations provide their management; and
- Those Illinois businesses and individuals still lucky enough to have insurance will be forced to pay an additional \$15.6 billion in unnecessary health care costs.

How can that be? The uninsured pay for about 35 percent of the cost of the care they receive. Most are forced to use credit cards to pay for this care, which leads many into bankruptcy. The remaining amount is paid in the form of higher insurance premiums. This remaining amount – sometimes called "uncompensated care" – is built into the rates that hospitals and doctors charge insurance plans. Insurance plans then pass this cost on to insured Illinoisans by raising insurance premiums. In 2007, premiums for Illinois families with job-based coverage will be \$1,130 higher due to this cost shifting.

Illinois Covered tackles the health care crisis in many ways:

First, there is major system change. For once, policy makers are not just throwing money at the problem. Major

cost containment measures and delivery system changes that will occur will improve the quality of care. Because of this, when fully implemented in 2011, these cost containment measures would result in reductions in private health insurance premium growth by \$1,775 per year for a family policy and a 9% decrease for businesses.

Second, Illinois Covered contains business sector relief. Small businesses contributing at least 70% of cost of health insurance premiums would save \$2,273 per employee under Illinois Covered. Small businesses that are currently unable to afford health care could choose from a number of plans and save thousands of dollars per employee per year versus what it would cost them now.

Third, Illinois Covered expands consumer choice and protects the middle class. Individuals and families making 400% of poverty (\$40,000 for an individual, \$82,500 for a family of four) would be eligible for affordable coverage on a sliding scale on their current health care plan or choice another plan. Illinois families will have control and for once will have peace of mind and health security. Pre-existing conditions and discriminatory premiums pricing will no longer occur.

Fourth, Illinois Covered expands coverage for low-income adults by expanding a number of existing programs and expands access to people with disabilities.

*Continued on next page*

## Hunger Awareness Day 2007

by Lisa Bralts



For the past 6 years, the first Tuesday in June has marked the observance of Hunger Awareness Day—a nationwide initiative to inform the general public about hunger issues affecting far too many of our friends and neighbors. While we're all familiar with the hunger and malnutrition plaguing Third World nations, many people are surprised to discover that hunger and malnutrition—"food insecurity" in current parlance—exist in the United States. 35 million people in the US fit the definition of "food insecure"—defined by the USDA as "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways" - with an increasing number of people threatening to fall between the cracks as the cost of living increases without a corresponding rise in wages or opportunity. It's important to remember that nearly half the clients the Foodbank serves through its 180 agencies and programs are employed; they're working, but are still unable to acquire enough food for their households while dealing with other expenses. Other clients are between jobs or paychecks. Still others are elders living on fixed incomes.

The Eastern Illinois Foodbank exists to alleviate hunger through a network of food pantries and other agencies in a 14-county area of eastern Illinois. On June 4, 2007—the eve of this year's Hunger Awareness Day—the Foodbank presented "Working For Food: Food Insecurity in Eastern Illinois", a symposium designed to frame hunger awareness through several different food-system lenses. Speakers included Andrea Rundell, the Foodbank's Director of External and Agency Relations; Teola Trowbridge, former Logistics Manager for Kraft

Foods; Martha Trenkamp, Registered Dietitian with Carle Clinic; Dennis Riggs, Executive Director of Broadlands Food Pantry (he's also a farmer); Robin Orr, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, University of Illinois; Cheryl O'Leary, Principal of Garden Hills Elementary School; and Nathan Montgomery, Executive Director of Salt & Light in Champaign. The discussion was moderated by Jim Hires, Executive Director of the Eastern Illinois Foodbank.

Each speaker touched on food insecurity as delineated by their own professional experience—Ms. O'Leary's school, for example, was the pilot school in 2006-2007 for the Foodbank's BackPack program, designed to send kid-friendly food home with kids in need on Fridays so they're able to supplement what they eat over the weekend and return to school fed and ready to learn. Ms. Trowbridge touched on the reality of the efficiencies of food manufacturing (more efficiency means less food on the donated market). Mr. Riggs spoke of his pantry's attempt to address rural poverty, while Mr. Montgomery spoke of Salt & Light's attempts to help the urban poor. Ms. Orr explained the relationship of Farm Bill legislation to the funding and administration of the Food Stamp Program (a large portion of the Farm Bill deals specifically with the food stamp program and other food assistance and nutrition programs), while Ms. Trenkamp spoke about the increase in low-income patients coming to her practice with maladies directly related to poor nutrition, such as obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease.

Members of the audience seemed surprised, at times, by the scope of the problem—the number of people in eastern Illinois, for example, at risk of food insecurity (meaning they're either already there or are flirting with being there) is 136,000. Families

who technically earn a gross income just above the Federal poverty line - \$20,650/year for a household of four—have \$1 per person per day for food after basic expenses such as housing, utilities, childcare and transportation are subtracted.

Addressing hunger in our community—any community - requires two approaches by citizens: the legislative, long-term, sys-

temic approach, and the logistic, boots-on-the-ground, immediate approach. All members of our community can use these approaches—the former by urging state and national legislators to work together to raise the minimum wage for workers, to provide affordable-to-all health care for all citizens, and to legislate, via the Farm Bill, for an increase in food stamp benefits for

### FOOD BUDGET EXERCISE

*(original source for exercise—"Hunger: A Picture of Washington", Jan 2002; available at [www.childrensalliance.org](http://www.childrensalliance.org))*

A single parent with three children takes a job paying \$10 per hour, without benefits, working 40 hours per week for 52 weeks. Is this family's income above or below the poverty line? Below, we subtract the following monthly expenses from this family's income and then calculate how much money is available for their food budget

Total number of household members: 4  
Annual income (before taxes): \$20,800  
Monthly income (divide #2 by 12): \$1,733.33

#### Total monthly expenses:

Rent=\$700  
Utilities=\$150  
Transportation=\$213  
Phone=\$50  
Childcare=\$500  
Total expenses \$1,613

Money left for food (subtract expenses from monthly income): \$122.33

Food money for one person per day (divide by number in household, then divide by 30 days): \$1.00

These numbers do not include savings, medical expenses, clothing/diapers, books/school supplies, household supplies, personal care items, etc... The 2007 Federal Poverty Level for a family of 4 is \$20,650/year. This family is ABOVE the poverty line.



# Illinois Covered = Health Security – Health Care Reform For ALL

Continued from previous page

In addition, young adults up to 29 years old will have the ability to stay on their parents' health plan.

For each \$1 of investment spent on Illinois Covered will generate more than \$2 in new health care savings—mainly through reduction in growth of health insurance premiums paid by Illinois businesses, families and individuals.

Weighing both these new costs and savings generated by Illinois Covered, the net financial effect on Illinois private businesses and households is equivalent to a significant tax cut.

**Big Lie #1:** It is not about the GRT or any new revenue source—it's about health care reform:

**FACT:** We all know if the funding mechanism were a tax on aliens, the doom and gloom scenario and the same lies would be rolled out. It has worked for the opponents of health care reform for decades, so why change the strategy. The "Do Nothing" Illinois Chamber of Commerce states that they would prefer "healthcare be deferred until another day." They are more interested in protecting the big insurance companies and those "free loafing" corporations on Wall Street who have the means to pay for health insurance.

**Big Lie #2:** Illinois Covered has had no input and the legislature has not been consulted.

**FACT:** This isn't about the Governor, it is larger than him and the whole Illinois General Assembly. The debate for affordable and accessible health care has been around for at least two decades in the General Assembly. Over the past ten years many of the current members have debated and embraced expansion programs like Kid Care, Family Care, and ALL Kids. In 2004 the General Assembly passed the Health Care Justice Act (HCJA), whose main sponsor was then State Senator Barack Obama.

The Health Care Justice Act did the following: established a Task Force appointed by both GOP and Democratic leaders, which held 22 public hearings where over 2500 people attended. It received testimony from over 400 people, and all the major stakeholders. The plans submitted by both the Chamber of Commerce and the insurance industry were, in the end, opposed by an overwhelming majority of HCJA Task Force members. Both GOP and Democratic task force members reached consensus on a plan. This was nearly a two-year public process. Illinois Covered contains nearly 85% of the Task Force's recommendations.

So Where is our "Progressive" Senator on Illinois Covered? Currently AWOL

During the last week in May, Illinois Covered could have passed the Senate if State Senator Frerichs had voted for it. It missed passage by just one vote – Senator Frerichs' vote.

Senator Frerichs criticized the plan as a massive Medicaid expansion program. Quite the contrary. State Senator Righter and State Representative Black, both Republicans quoted Senator Frerichs and thanked him at a "Do Nothing" Champaign Chamber of Commerce event for making these remarks. Coincidentally the words that Senator Frerichs used in describing Illinois Covered

were identical to the propaganda that the Illinois Chamber has been using.

Next Senator Frerichs stated to the Campaign for Better Health Care, to labor unions, and to other organizations that he did not run on health care and that his top concerns are education funding and future state pensioners. Many of us attended events and debates that occurred during his fall's election campaign and health care was definitely discussed. Then-candidate Frerichs even attended the public hearing that the Adequate Health Care Task Force held at the Champaign train station in February of 2006.

Next he stated that Illinois Covered did not have a payment mechanism to finance the program. Illinois Covered has several revenue sources to pay for the plan, some of which he opposes. While, we support initiatives for additional education funding, we do not subscribe to the either education funding or health care funding argument that has also been voiced. Currently the funding mechanism for education (tax swap), which Senator Frerichs supports, is as dead as the Governor's original GRT proposal. There is currently no funding mechanism for education funding. Yet, Senator Frerichs continues to state that a funding mechanism exists for education and no funding mechanism exists for health care reform.

Now Senator Frerichs is quoted as saying "I just don't think the timing is right or that the particular bill is the right way to address our health care problem in the state, and I am not willing to trade a vote for 30 pieces of silver in order to do that." Once again those comments are totally wrong. Let's look at the facts:

"I just don't think the timing is right"

- 21.4 percent (26,974 adults) are uninsured in the 52nd district. Illinois Covered would help all these people. When will the timing be right? When 30% of your constituents are uninsured?
- Thousands of working families who currently have health insurance and live at below 400% of poverty (\$82,500 for a family of four) would be helped by Illinois Covered;
- Tens of thousands of college students (graduate assistants) attending Parkland College, Danville Area Community College, and the U of I would all have access to health care through Illinois Covered;
- Businesses providing health insurance would see a 9% reduction of their health care premiums by 2011;
- An average family with insurance would see premium reductions of \$1,775 a year by 2011;
- An additional \$13 million in direct support for local hospitals and millions of additional dollars to the physician community in higher reimbursement rates would occur.

"I just don't think... that this particular bill is the right way to address our health care problem in the state"

- Consumers, labor, hospitals, majority of doctors, numerous other health care providers and the list goes on all have endorsed Illinois Covered. Reaching

consensus among these groups has never happened until now.

- 20 International union presidents have signed a letter to Senator Frerichs expressing their support for Illinois Covered and urging his support;
- 10 major national organizations have signed a letter stating their support of Illinois Covered as one of the best current plans being submitted in any state so far;

For many of us who supported Senator Frerichs in his election last year and believed in his message on his yard sign "working for our future" are bewildered at his current regressive (un Democratic Party) position. Illinois Covered is a plan built on shared opportunities and shared responsibilities. The taxpayers are currently subsidizing Senator Frerichs' health care insurance. Why does Senator Frerichs want to deny the opportunity to tens of thousands of his constituents to be able to afford health insurance?

If health care reform does not pass this year, serious reform will never pass in Illinois. That is the goal that the opponents of Illinois Covered want to see happen. While, all the democratic presidential candidates are talking about national health care, which is positive, we will be lucky to pass some form of national health care by 2014/15. Now is the time to pass Illinois Covered. We can no longer afford to wait.

History has a strange way of repeating itself. The Democratically-controlled Congress in the early 1990s used the same excuses that our current State Senator is saying by not passing health care reform, and they and all of us paid the price in the 1994 election. The same will be true in 2008 and 2010 election if the Democrats, or "progressive" Democrats as Senator Frerichs refers to himself, continue to line up behind the big insurance companies and the big business.

The time is NOW to show your vision and your commitment to "working for our future." This is the time for a profile of courage not a profile of politics as usual in Springfield to occur. Call Senator Frerichs at 355.5252. Tell him: 1) to vote for Illinois Covered; 2) to support the funding for Illinois Covered; and 3) to understand the importance that you place on this issue as a citizen and a voter.

## Hunger Awareness Day 2007

Continued from page 4

clients. The latter approach can be addressed by helping the Foodbank and its agencies feed people NOW through donations of money, food and time. This fight is happening on two fronts, and we must be able to feed people—and better our communities—while trying to effect change.

Changing an existing paradigm within a large system takes time, but working together to provide access to nutritious and healthy emergency food to fellow citizens when they need it is something that is crucial and can happen immediately—and happens every day here in Eastern Illinois.

### Resources:

Eastern Illinois Foodbank—www.eifoodbank.org or call 328-3663

Illinois Food Bank Association—www.illinoisfoodbanks.org

Great documents about the 2007 Farm Bill—www.agobservatory.org/issue\_farmbill2007.cfm

World Hunger Year—www.worldhungeryear.org

Community Food Security Coalition:  
www.foodsecurity.org





# Legalizing the Oldest Profession

by Marcia Zumbahlen



Now that I have your attention, let me clarify that I'm referring to midwifery, the practice of helping women throughout the childbearing cycle by offering support, advice, and special birthing techniques. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, you can help this age-old profession win back legal rights to practice outside of medical institutions in Illinois.

Illinois Families for Midwifery (IFFM) is sponsoring a 9-11 am pancake breakfast at McKinley Foundation to support efforts to pass Senate Bill 385, the Midwifery Licensure Act.

## AREN'T MIDWIVES ALREADY LICENSED IN ILLINOIS?

For Illinois midwives to legally practice, they must work under a licensed obstetrician in a hospital setting. These midwives are Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) who can be licensed. They are trained in both nursing and midwifery (advanced practice nurses with at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited university).

But Direct Entry Midwives (DEMs), those who enter directly into the midwifery profession without being nurses first and maintain autonomous practices outside of institutions, cannot be licensed in Illinois. Some acquire their skills through apprenticeships (the "Farm" in Tennessee) others through formal classes or programs like Seattle Midwifery School. A college degree is not required. DEMs can be Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) in some states to reflect the extensive clinical training they receive (cfmidwifery.org). This requires attendance at an accredited midwifery school where they have met rigorous requirements and passed written exams and hands-on skills evaluation.

lies find themselves searching for whatever care they can find, or, worse, doing without maternity and delivery care."

Licensure would also ensure continuity of care when complications arise. In the words of a local woman who needed to go to the hospital after a prolonged labor at home, "In order to legally protect my midwife I had to go to the hospital without her. She told me what to tell the doctor but I can't say that I got it right. It would have been nice if she could have communicated with the doctors herself."

## WHY DO PEOPLE CHOOSE A HOME BIRTH?

Some choose a home birth for financial reasons. Uninsured women must pay hospital costs out of pocket (e.g., the Amish). Hiring a midwife is cheaper than a basic hospital birth (\$2000 v. \$5000).

Others choose home births due to their personal philosophy: religion, cultural preference, modesty/privacy, and a desire to avoid excessive interference to the natural process of labor and delivery. One local woman believed that routine hospital procedures caused her to have a cesarean on her first birth (Google the "cascade effect") so she chose the Midwifery Model of Care for her second birth. "My doctor wasn't going to let me attempt a v-bac [vaginal birth after cesarean] so I got my vaginal birth at home." Although she could have chosen a hospital CNM, she knew that even though they are lighter on medical interventions, they still operate within the Medical Model of Care due to the fact that they are in a medical institution that regulates their actions. (See table on next page.)

These differences leave some women feeling that a home birth is safer. They point to data showing that planned home births with an experienced midwife have a lower perinatal death rate than hospital births. To some extent this may

In the back of many people's minds, midwifery is synonymous with "witch work." When Druidism evolved in Europe, one group of Druids, the Ovates, were known to be healers, herbalists and midwives, the type of person many would call a Witch. Christianity forced Druidism underground in the 6th century but Druidism resurfaced in the 17th century as the Cunning Folk, witches in modern perception (druidry.org). Many people wrongly assume that these "healers and midwives" were persecuted during the Puritan Era. But the records reveal few trials persecuting midwives who were deemed respectable and trustworthy by the locals (Harley, 1990). Midwives were actually the least likely women to be targeted as witches. In the few cases where midwives were accused of witchcraft, the accusations stemmed from theologians (the educated working in institutions) who mistrusted midwives' access to potions and knowledge of the birth cycle, including birth control (afwh.org).

The educated working in institutions continued to diminish the status of midwives with the rise of Modern Medicine and the attitude of superiority that came with this model of care. For example, at the inception of modern obstetrics in the late 1800's, there was an increase in "childbed fever," an illness that usually resulted in maternal death. The illness was nearly absent in clinics run by midwives. Basically, the medical students were not "washing up" before leaving their cadavers to deliver babies. The midwives had no cadavers so they were not spreading the infection. Did this strengthen the respect for midwives by the medical community? No. In fact, the doctor who discovered the problem was fired from the clinic.

Was firing the doctor who made the discovery easier than asking doctors to admit to having caused "countless unnecessary deaths"? To what extent was this attitude of superiority in the medical community protecting economic profit? During the Industrial Revolution factory owners had to "care" about the health of skilled workers. Did modern medicine spread as an almost "necessary step in the development of capitalist economies"?

One look at the billboards around town and Carle's new wing for birthing women will tell you that childbirth is big business. While CNMs help bring in clientele for a hospital, DEMs are in direct competition with the medical establishment's ability to make money. Is that why medical practitioners are one of DEMs' key persecutors today? Or is it because medical practitioners have reason to believe their way is the better way and get to use a tradition of paternalism to legislate their beliefs?

Laws regulating maternity care can be connected to profit. For example, the Chicago Maternity Center (est. 1895) was delivering about 2000 babies a year at home by 1929. During the Great Depression the primary hospital supporter closed the center down for economic reasons. The originator began running the center through separate funds. "As more and more babies were being delivered by doctors, in or out of hospitals, states around the country were passing laws about midwifery. In some states it became illegal for a midwife to practice." (cwlulherstory.com).

This history has biased our reactions to stories we hear about home births. Rather than reinforcing the stories of positive home birth outcomes and chastising the problematic hospital births we do otherwise. We blame the "botched homebirth" on the midwife or mother and praise the doctors for having "done all they could" or "being there to save a terrible situation" even if their own actions might have contributed to the process (and as a doula I've seen this happen several times).

Rather than think about the modern-day midwives that carry oxygen and dopplers, etc., and how they are trained to watch for danger signs, sending women to hospitals when something goes awry, we merely focus on their use of natural medicines. And rather than focusing on the statistics showing fewer problems in midwife-attended home births than hospital births we focus on the few complicated home birth cases and ignore the complications and deaths caused by doctors in hospital settings.

The purpose of IFFM is to increase public awareness of the safety, availability, and benefits of the Midwifery Model of Care and lobbying for a Certified Professional Midwife

Legality of Direct-Entry Midwifery by State (as of 4/2007)			
Legalized regulation (e.g., licensure, certification, registration, permit)	Legal but unregulated status (e.g., legal by judicial interpretation or statutory inference)	DEM not legally defined but not prohibited either	DEM prohibited
AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, MD, MO, NC, SD, WY LA, MN, MT, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OR, RI, SC, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WI	GA, HI, ID, KS, MA, ME, MI, MS, NV, ND, OK, PA	CT, NE, OH, WV	AL, DC, IA, IL, IN, KY,

*\*Taken from Midwives Alliance of North America and the North American Registry of Midwives.*

## WHY DO WE NEED SO MANY KINDS OF MIDWIVES TO BE LICENSED?

Every year in Illinois approximately 1,000 women and their families choose to give birth at home, so being able to find someone well trained in home birth is critical. OB/GYNs and CNMs are not trained to do home births, DEMs are. But at this time anyone can call herself a midwife and lay people may have difficulty judging whether said midwife is qualified. For example, people often confuse my work as a doula with midwifery, but doulas and midwives are not the same. Although doulas provide support to mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and post-partum recovery, they do not perform medical checks or offer medical advice like many midwives do because doulas do not have clinical training in catching or guiding babies at birth. Yet, even though midwives have clinical training it is important not to confuse them with obstetricians because midwives are not medical doctors. Licensure would ensure that a home midwife has passed certain standards so each mother does not have to extensively research whether the home midwife is appropriately qualified and experienced.

Licensure would also facilitate locating a home-birth midwife. Currently Illinois citizens must go underground to find a home-birth midwife. According to the IFFM website, "With the hostile legal climate in Illinois, many midwives have left or stopped practicing in our state making it harder and harder for families to find qualified care. People will keep on having home births for a variety of reasons. Fam-

reflect self-selection (women with high risk pregnancies rarely opt to deliver at home and will not find midwives to assist them). However, it could reflect the quality of midwifery care. The US has a higher infant mortality rate than 21 other industrialized countries—countries that primarily use the midwifery model of care. "In the five nations with the world's lowest infant mortality and lowest rates of technological intervention, midwives attend 70% of all births without a physician in the birth room" (MANA).

In the US if a woman is in danger then the home-birth midwife takes her to the hospital. The midwife is trained to know what's a problem and how to complete a hospital transport. Home-birth midwives also screen for potential problems before birth and if a situation is beyond their expertise they refer women elsewhere.

*In short, it's not just the hippies and fringe people that are choosing home births.*

## WHY HAS IT TAKEN SO LONG TO LICENSE MIDWIVES IN ILLINOIS?

In the 80s DEMs in Illinois were legal by judicial interpretation. In 1997, the state investigated five midwives for practicing medicine without a license and served them cease and desist orders. Shortly thereafter, DEMs were prohibited from practicing in Illinois. This change was spearheaded primarily by medical establishments (Illinois Department of Public Health, The Illinois State Medical Society and the Illinois chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives) and fueled by public myths regarding midwifery.



# Legalizing the Oldest Profession

Continued from previous page

## Medical Model of Care

- Hospital-based Practice
- Care provided by a variety of overworked professionals
- women often not informed of procedures and choices available to them
- hospital-births only
- medical practitioners have final say in procedures
- accountability and evidence-based practice
- focuses on the dangers of birth so birth must be strictly monitored and managed (pregnant women are treated as pre-operative patients, newborns are quick to be removed from mothers and treated elsewhere)
- psychological concerns are rarely addressed, the professional commands the birthing process and the woman's decision process is shaped through fear.

## Midwifery Model of Care

- Autonomous, community-based practice
- continuity of care
- informed consumer choice
- choice of birth setting
- collaborative care
- accountability and evidence-based practice
- assumes that birth is a safe, beautiful and normal process (pregnant and birthing women are not sick, birth is not inherently dangerous, and newborns are no where safer than in their mother's care)
- psychological impact of pregnancy and birth on the woman, baby, and the family is respected so attendant truly listens to her, honors her choices, and offers their experience and encouragement and nurturance.

Licensing Law in the State of Illinois. IFFM states, "Illinois women deserve to have access to all the nationally certified maternity care providers that women in 22 other states, including nearby Wisconsin and Minnesota, can choose from." Contact Pat Cole, the President of IFFM at 309-722-3345 or [ilfamiliesformidwifery@gmail.com](mailto:ilfamiliesformidwifery@gmail.com) for more information.

## HOW WILL SB 385 MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Republican Senator William R. Haine filed SB 385 on February 7, 2007. The bill has 24 Democrat and Republican co-sponsors, including three locals: Dan Rutherford, William B. Black, and Shane Cultra. This bill would allow for the licensure of DEMs in our state so they can practice

independent of a medical establishment and give women the right to give birth in their own way, in their own time, and in their own space.

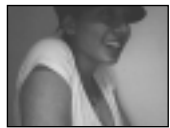
Unlike many bills, SB 385 is bringing people together. According to Sarah Stalzer, fundraiser for IFFM, "It's one of the few bills with bi-partisan support... On the lobby bus to Springfield there was an Amish woman, a lesbian couple, a mother who was Jehovah Witness, a hippy, and a liberal elite. How often do you see liberals and conservatives working together? It's bringing all these diverse groups together. When a line of Amish women walk into the State Capitol, it catches your attention."

SB 385 recently passed in the Illinois Senate with a 51-7 vote. Instead of voting and it not passing in the Illinois House, it is currently tabled in the Registration and Regulation Committee until it gets more support (bills can only come up every two years, so if it doesn't pass they will have to wait 2 more years before re-introducing the bill). Sarah Stalzer added, "The big chance is for it to pass in the fall. Funds are needed to pay lobbyist fees to keep this bill alive and help the bill get further than ever before."

Even if you personally would not consider a homebirth please consider helping to keep that option safe and available to those Illinois families who do choose to birth their babies at home.

## The Anti-War "Die-In"

by Shara Esbenschade



On Saturday, May the 26th, a group of high school students took dramatic action to address American complacency and political inaction with regards to the war in Iraq. In a visual form of protest meant to bring home the reality of the death and destruction nearly 30 youth fell to the ground in unison at the intersection of Green St. and Wright St. in front of the Alma Mater. They repeated this "die-in" every time the cars stopped for the red light from 12 to 1.30 pm. Several passersby stopped and joined them. The frustration Americans are feeling nationally with the recent passage of the war funding bill was apparent that Saturday both among the devoted student protesters and among those who cheered them on. You can view video of the Die-In on the Independent Media Center's website at

With this protest the students demanded that our congressional representative Timothy Johnson and senators Barack Obama and Richard Durbin vote anti-war. Letters were sent to Johnson, Obama, & Durbin and they were invited to attend. This war has killed too many, and it is past time our politicians do their part in ending it, not as "anti-war politicians," not as Democrats, nor as Republicans, but as responsible citizens of this world who should, out of compassion for others, work for peace.

This action was a powerful display of a fact that mainstream media has been shamelessly overlooking: that the youth have not yet succumbed to apathy.



## The Gross Receipts Tax

By Continued from page 1

3. Following the money. If transparency were total, this would be irrelevant; but in fact it is hard for tax authorities to accurately track the flow of funds to figure out who gets what and who owes what. Every real tax collection scheme has a lot to do with practicality. The Gross Receipts Tax in particular is relatively

easy to enforce and collect—and that consideration can beat down a lot of high principle. Other corporate taxes may be levied for the same reason—easy to enforce and easy to collect.

These three points also make clear why it is a real problem that many large corporations pay few or no taxes in Illinois. Leav-

ing morals aside, they are an underutilized resource for the state.

What about the opposition storm of criticism?

The howls of outrage from the business community are a good hint the tax would hit its target. Raising taxes is hard for an elected government; redistributive taxation even

harder, where those taxed know they won't get the benefits, and those to benefit remain either voiceless or cynical. In the meantime, we need to challenge hysteria, the usual voice of the right-wing. Hey, it's just a little tax.

## The Odyssey Project

The Odyssey Project is a free college-accredited course in the humanities offered to workers and low-income men and women in Champaign County. Classes meet twice a week from September to May, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Douglass Branch Library in Champaign. Tuition is free, as are books, transportation, and childcare (at the nearby Douglass Community Center).

The classes are taught by esteemed University of Illinois faculty, and students who enroll in the course will pursue an intensive study of philosophy, art history, literature, U.S. history, and critical thinking and writing.

## African Great Lakes Initiative

David Zarembka, coordinator of African Great Lakes Initiative, Cecile Nyrimana of Rwanda, and Hezron Masitsa of Kenya will speak on the topic, "Healing from Deadly Violence" on Friday, June 29 at 7 PM at the Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting-house, 1904 E. Main, Urbana. Donations for African Great Lakes Initiative will gladly be accepted.

African Great Lakes Initiative is a Quaker-based organization promoting peace activities at the grassroots level in the Great Lakes region of Africa. This area, named for several large lakes, including Lake Victoria, includes the countries of Burundi, Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.