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Change to Win Announces Its First Endorsement

New Labor Federation Supports Michigan's Governor, Jennifer Granholm

DETROIT, MI -- Change to Win today announced its first statewide endorsement of a political candidate by backing Governor Jennifer Granholm's bid for reelection as Michigan's Governor. The endorsement follows endorsements by each of Change to Win's affiliated unions. Change to Win's endorsement will translate into a significant grassroots effort of behalf of the Granholm-Cherry ticket, with Change to Win union members mobilizing thousands across the state to turn out labor voters on election day.

"This election is about wages, health care and retirement security for all of Michigan's working men and women," said International Brotherhood of Teamsters president James Hoffa. "I think its pretty clear who is on the side of Michigan workers. This state needs a leader who will stand up for Michigan workers, and that leader is Governor Granholm."

At a rally attended by hundreds of members of Change to Win's affiliated unions, Hoffa and leaders of Change to Win's Michigan affiliates rallied the crowd in support of Granholm and called her a steadfast friend to every working man and woman in Michigan.

Change to Win chair Anna Burger praised Granholm for her efforts to offer affordable health care to all Michigan residents. "In just three years, Governor Granholm has extended affordable health care services to more than 298,000 uninsured citizens," said Burger. "She is also fighting to pass a plan that would provide access to affordable health insurance to everyone in Michigan. This is the type of leadership we need in Michigan and America -- leadership that offers real solutions to real problems facing working families."

The Change to Win unions in Michigan represent 250,000 Michigan workers. Union members are active voters across the nation, and play a key role in battleground states such as Michigan. In 2004, 43 percent of all Michigan voters were members of union households.

Hoffa told the union crowd that Granholm's opponent, former Amway president Dick DeVos is a Bush-Engler clone whose policies would lead to an accelerated export of good jobs out of Michigan.

"Dick DeVos doesn't care about the thousands of jobs that have left the state," said Hoffa. "He sent a thousand jobs out of Michigan and created thousands in China when he was president of Amway. Does that sound like a guy who is looking out for you? DeVos supports unfair trade and outsourcing. Does that sound like a guy who is looking out for you? His family contributed \$600,000 to the Bush campaign in 2000. Does that sound like a guy who is looking out for you?"

Hoffa went on to describe the reasons that Change to Win and its more than 220,000 Michigan members are endorsing the reelection of Governor Granholm.

“Jennifer Granholm has always put Michigan first,” said Hoffa. She will go anywhere and do anything to create jobs in Michigan. She supports policies that help working families. Jennifer Granholm believes that a living wage is a right -- not a privilege. She believes that affordable health care is a right -- not a privilege. And Governor Jennifer Granholm believes that retirement security is a right -- not a privilege. That’s the type of leader we need in Michigan, and that’s the type of leader we get in Governor Jennifer Granholm.”

About Change to Win

Change to Win was founded in September 2005 by seven unions and six million workers to build a movement of working people with the power to make work pay for everyone. We believe that all workers should have a paycheck that can support a family, affordable health care, a secure retirement and dignity on the job.

The seven affiliated unions are: Service Employees International Union, UNITE HERE, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Laborers’ International Union of North America, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America and United Farm Workers of America.

Change to Win Michigan represents 250,000 Michigan workers belonging to six unions: Service Employees International Union, UNITE HERE, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Laborers’ International Union of North America, and United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

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