

# **Food & Drug Council welcomes new interstate board members**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (June 22, 2009) — At its annual Northern California meeting in Sacramento, the Food & Drug Council (FDC) appointed two new Executive Board members: Jim McLaughlin, President of UFCW Local 99 in Arizona, and Steve Vairma, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 455 in Colorado.

In his first comments to the FDC affiliates as a board member, Vairma spoke about the need for organizations like the FDC in Colorado, where Bill Ritter is governor.

“You have ‘The Governor’ here in California, but our governor is ‘The Vetoer,’” Vairma said. “We supported him because he promised to help Organized Labor once he was elected to office, but he has thus far systematically vetoed almost every labor-friendly bill that reaches his desk.”

McLaughlin had nothing but praise for Arizona’s former Gov. Janet Napolitano, who is now United States Secretary of Homeland Security. “Napolitano was a great goalie,” McLaughlin said. “She couldn’t score many goals from her position, but once she was gone, we realized how many shots at us she blocked.”

FDC President and Teamsters Local 630 Secretary-Treasurer Paul Kenny welcomed the new board members. “In its 60 years, the Food & Drug Council was never a multi-state organization until these two affiliates joined us,” he said. “Now with their voices on the board, we can more effectively address the growing concerns of Labor in the United States.

“The energy and solidarity of brothers like Steve Vairma and Jim McLaughlin will make us a stronger organization,” he said.

The Food and Drug Council coordinates the efforts of its affiliates, which are the largest unions in the retail food and drug industries in California, Arizona and Colorado, to educate the public about the benefits of working and buying union.

The Council’s affiliates include the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the International Union of Operating Engineers and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. The affiliates represent approximately 300,000 union members.

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