

Prelude to a New Direction in 2006



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Virginia Lieutenant Governor Tim Kaine wants to continue the economic progress under current Democratic Governor Mark Warner by helping small businesses, saving family farms and creating good jobs.

back where we were 12 years ago,” said Howard. “Working families cannot afford to go back.”

Machinists helping the Virginia State AFL-CIO began labor walks in mid-September. More than 300 union volunteers canvassed their fellow members’ homes to support Kaine, who has shown a commitment to creating jobs and improving Virginia’s economy as the state’s Lieutenant Governor.

Kilgore, in contrast, has shown little concern for Virginia’s workers. He vehemently supports right-to-work laws and declined to speak to the Virginia State AFL-CIO political education committee.

“The election in Virginia is the first big step in turning this country around and Virginia’s working families have the chance to make a difference,” said Daniel LeBlanc, President of the

Working families played a pivotal role in this year’s gubernatorial races in Virginia and New Jersey, working phone banks and visiting homes to drum up support for worker-friendly candidates.

With Democrat Tim Kaine going up against Jerry Kilgore in Virginia and Sen. Jon Corzine (D-NJ) taking on Doug Forrester in New Jersey, this year’s races have the potential to improve the lives of lower-income and middle-class workers in Virginia and

New Jersey. This will also act as an early signal on the fate of Democratic candidates in the 36 gubernatorial races in 2006.

Moving Forward

“Getting Tim Kaine elected is critical. Since both the Virginia House and Senate are controlled by Republicans, we need a Democratic governor to work with us,” said Rick Howard, President of the Virginia State Council of Machinists.

“Mark Warner started programs that got Virginia out of debt and now this Republican challenger wants to take us

Virginia State AFL-CIO. "We need to stop Bush and his flunkies from using Kilgore as a puppet to advance their anti-worker agenda."

Tim Kaine has also been helped by Working America, an organization which recruits workers currently without a union. Working America just topped one million members and are a potent new force in the American labor movement.

Working America, which has 50,000 members in Virginia alone, is sending volunteers to visit all Working America and AFL-CIO members in the state, performing voter registration and conducting "get out the vote" events.

A New Direction

"Nationally, politicians are taking us in the wrong direction, whether it's privatizing Social Security, de-funding

"We expect to win the elections and change the direction of this country in 2006."

Karen Nussbaum
Executive Director
Working America



AP/Worldwide Photos

Current New Jersey Senator Jon Corzine plans to make good-paying jobs plentiful and attract employers with a smart, skilled workforce by investing in cutting-edge technology.

our public schools or eroding our infrastructure. Working families need to fight back at the state level," said Karen Nussbaum, executive director of Working America.

Nussbaum feels this year's efforts are just the beginning in a nationwide turnaround. "The next elections give working families an opportunity to demand that our government go in a new direction, supporting good jobs and a just economy," she said. "We expect to win the elections this year, fight hard on issues all year round, and change the direction of this country in November 2006."

A Good Friend

"Organized labor is also

making its voice heard in New Jersey.

The IAM, the first union to endorse Corzine, joined other AFL-CIO volunteers to conduct labor walks, work phone banks, distribute flyers and conduct voter registration drives.

"Jon Corzine has been a friend to working families his whole life. He came from a middle-class family. He understands what working families need to get by and work themselves up like he did himself," said IAM District Lodge 15 Directing Business Representative Jim Conigliaro.

Efforts to elect Corzine will continue right up to election day. More than 10,000 volunteer union members will participate in a GOTV operation to ensure that the voices of New Jersey's working families are heard.

"Whether we are talking about increasing accessibility to quality healthcare, creating good jobs, or reforming the property tax system, Jon Corzine is right on the issues that are important to working families," said Charlie Wowkanek, President of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO.

Working families' efforts led to victories for both Kaine and Corzine on Nov. 8 as the *IAM Journal* went to press.