

As Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights, I agree wholeheartedly with those sentiments and believe that this trade agreement, and others like it, do not adequately support labor rights. Instead, these agreements serve to insulate and protect nations — like Panama — while they do little to stop multinational corporations from participating in tax fraud and money laundering schemes.

According to the AFL-CIO, between 1993 and 2004, the United States lost one million jobs because of the North American Free Trade Agreement. We are in a dire situation when it comes to job loss and unemployment. Here in Michigan our workers are suffering with an unemployment rate of about 15 percent.

It is time to do all we can to turn the economy around. We cannot continue to support trade agreements that can do such damage to our economic stability.

Our union is doing its part to help bring jobs back to Michigan, to fight against forms of tax fraud and the companies who participate in it. We strongly believe that our workers are among the most highly-skilled in the nation.

With an ongoing emphasis on training and job safety, we support our workers and stand together to fight for a better quality of life for all in Michigan.

Trade agreements threaten our ability to protect the workforce. They make for an uneven playing field in the workforce. I am confident that when faced with level, fair competition, our workers can outperform anyone. Let us, as a nation, work toward creating jobs, not eliminating them.

Obama earned his place in the White House by running on a platform of change. This is one area we'd like to see that change begin to take shape, and quickly.

*Mike Jackson is the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights.*

## Blog Center

### Frye on the News

Stephen Frye has covered the police beat and courts for The Oakland Press and now serves as online editor for [www.theoaklandpress.com](http://www.theoaklandpress.com).



### Skoop's Blog

A political blog by Tim Skubick.



### Your Money

Dave Patterson and Erin Preston, a father-daughter team of Certified Financial Planner® licensees, provide thoughts and suggestions on a broad collection of personal finance topics.



### The Law Blogger

Informs on and discusses current matters of legal interest to readers of The Oakland Press and to consumers of legal services in the community.



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## Community Calendar

### January 2010

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

[» Total events listed this month = 103](#)