

AFL-CIO STATE AND LOCAL LABOR COUNCILS

A VOICE FOR WORKING FAMILIES

Building Political Power for Working Families

Advancing a Progressive Legislative Agenda

**Supporting Contract and Organizing Campaigns and Workers' Freedom to Form Unions
Mobilizing and Solidarity**

What are state federations and central labor councils?

AFL-CIO state federations and central labor councils bring different unions together at the state and local levels to work collectively on organizing new members, educating and mobilizing current members, and strengthening communities and creating a powerful voice for working families. State feds and CLCs are the grassroots backbone of the labor movement's efforts to ensure that economic, education, health care and other policies benefit working families.

What do they do?

State federations and central labor councils give working families a voice:

- **On the job.** Working together in state feds and CLCs, local unions support one another's organizing campaigns and contract bargaining. With "Street Heat" rapid-response teams, state feds and CLCs turn out large groups of working people to support union members and challenge anti-union, anti-worker employers. State feds and CLCs forge alliances that build community support for union members' efforts to win positive changes on the job and retain past gains.
- **In government.** State feds and CLCs provide working families with the information and opportunities they need to make their voices heard by elected leaders at all levels—from school board members to congressional representatives. State feds and CLCs engage union members in developing and promoting a working families agenda for good, secure jobs; job safety; adequate investments in such working family needs as education, health care and retirement security; and against job-killing proposals like privatization of government services.
- **In their communities.** An extensive network of community services staffers and volunteers works through the state feds and CLCs to help members in need of emergency assistance during family crises and natural disasters, plant closings and economic hardships. State feds and CLCs strengthen communities in two additional ways: by linking labor with community and religious groups to tackle shared concerns and by supporting high-road economic development that creates good-paying jobs and secures the local revenue base for essential public services such as education.
- **In the economy.** State feds and CLCs give working families greater power to shape their economic well-being by mobilizing working people for social and economic justice, for fair treatment on the job and for pro-worker government policies. They also link local unions with the education resources of the AFL-CIO, giving members the opportunity to learn more about today's economy, why it favors the wealthy over working people—and what they can do about it.

How are they structured?

More than 30,000 local unions make up the 51 state federations (including Puerto Rico) and 525 CLCs. While participation by locals in the semi-autonomous organizations chartered by the AFL-CIO is voluntary, the federation strongly encourages all unions to build stronger state and local labor movements through full affiliation and participation.

State and local labor councils are comprised of local unions and other eligible subordinate bodies of the national and international unions that are affiliated with the AFL-CIO. Certain eligible unions may affiliate by receiving a charter through the Solidarity Charter Program. Other unions may receive a certificate of affiliation as a direct local affiliate through the Unity Partnerships Program, and local associations of the National Education Association may join by receiving a certificate of affiliation through the AFL-CIO/NEA Labor Solidarity Partnership.

Representatives of state federations and local labor councils serve on a national advisory committee appointed by the AFL-CIO president. The state federation and central labor council advisory committee meets twice a year to consider and recommend initiatives and programs to the federation

State federations are governed by elected full-time executive officers and executive boards representing affiliated local unions. CLCs have a similar structure, but most of their officers serve part time or as volunteers.

Where can I get more information?

To find out more about state federations and CLCs, contact the AFL-CIO Office of State and Local Affiliates at 202-637-5280 or visit our website at www.aflcio.org.