

# **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT**

**TWENTY-FIFTH  
CONSTITUTIONAL  
CONVENTION**

**2005**

**REWARDWORKRESPECTWORKERS**

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*“The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations is an expression of the hopes and aspirations of the working people of America.*

*“We resolve to fulfill the yearning of the human spirit for liberty, justice and community; to advance individual and associational freedom; to vanquish oppression, privation and cruelty in all their forms; and to join with all persons, of whatever nationality or faith, who cherish the cause of democracy and the call of solidarity, to grace the planet with these achievements.*

*“We dedicate ourselves to improving the lives of working families, bringing fairness and dignity to the workplace and securing social equity in the nation.”*

From the Preamble to the AFL-CIO Constitution

# Report of the President **TO THE CONVENTION**



**It is a crucial moment in the union movement, a time for change at every level that will strengthen us to win for working families, now and in the future.**

**I**N THE 50 YEARS since the creation of the AFL-CIO, much has changed—but the values that guide America’s union movement have not.

If anything, our commitment to improving life for working families has grown, and our experience and ability to do so have grown as well.

But the voice of working families is diminishing in our workplaces, our communities, our government and the global economy. And the problems of workers and their families are urgent: Job quality is eroding, wages are shrinking, retirement and health care security are increasingly out of reach and unbridled and unprincipled corporate power threatens to make it more difficult for working families to achieve the American dream.

It is a crucial moment in the union movement, a time for change at every

level that will strengthen us to win for working families, now and in the future.

This Convention follows months of vigorous debate about what form those changes should take. Debate and discussion are healthy and welcome—they prod us all into finding the best in ourselves and our ideas. In recent months, much of the debate has been about the state of the labor movement. Much of it has been constructive. Much of it critical. Some of it controversial. And some has divided and diverted us from discussing what’s at stake for the future of the union movement.

Our job at this Convention, as leaders of the unions that represent 13 million hard-working men and women, is to move beyond division, to make our decisions together, to move forward in solidarity and get about the business of building a better future for working families.

## Winning for Working Families

In November 2004, I asked every union, constituency group and allied organization to share their ideas and proposals about how we should strengthen the union movement for the future. In response, we received 23 extensive proposals from national unions, 40 from state federations and central labor councils, four from AFL-CIO trade departments, five from constituency groups, two from AFL-CIO Executive Council committees, two from community partner organizations, 20 from academics and other individuals—and more than 8,500 comments and recommendations from rank-and-file union members.

Core areas of common concern and commitment emerged:

**The union movement must grow** by directing increased resources to organizing workers, reaching out especially to women, people of color and others who stand to gain so much from union membership.

To advance a working families' agenda, **we must build on the success of Labor 2004 by creating long-term, year-round issues and member mobilization** through a permanent grassroots network, ensuring the capacity to boot anti-worker politicians out of office and elect a pro-worker government.

**We must strengthen state and local union movements to build the capacity for all this work.** We have made a start by bringing state and local labor movements together through the New Alliance program and through the Union Cities program.

**The federation must become leaner, eliminate areas of duplication with affiliate union work and focus more intently on top priorities.**

Anchoring this vision are two interdepend-

ent strategies: helping affiliated unions organize and engaging working people in deeper, broader, ongoing mobilization to win legislative and political gains that build a strong future for working families. Much of the recent debate about the future of the union movement has created a false dichotomy that pits organizing against political and legislative action. The choice facing us is not *either organizing or* political and legislative action. The road map to success is clear: Overcoming the odds working people face today demands that organizing and politics work hand in glove—as they always have—from the day the Wagner Act was passed more than 70 years ago. Our strategies will not surmount the odds unless we concede that there's an umbilical link between political action and winning workers' rights. Neither should be sacrificed at the expense of the other.

In March 2005, the AFL-CIO Executive Committee took an initial step toward achieving these twin goals by directing that the federation prioritize the interconnected goals of organizing and political and legislative mobilization. Since then, our discussions for bettering the lives of working families increasingly have found common ground. At this point, the divergence in the debate is basically about money—the size of federation rebates or incentives to affiliate unions that are organizing.

We need to recognize a fight about dollars and cents for what it is—details that can be overcome when debating in good faith. Details are critical, of course, but cannot be allowed to threaten the solidarity of the union movement. At this Convention we are going to put plans in place to:

- Build power through organizing.
- Build power through issues mobilization and political action.

**The union movement must grow by directing increased resources to organizing workers, reaching out especially to women, people of color and others who stand to gain much from union membership.**

- Build power at the grassroots union movement level.
- Build power through our diversity.
- Build power by strengthening our governance.

### **Build Power Through Organizing**

We will increase the resources the AFL-CIO devotes to organizing and create a Strategic Organizing Fund, allocated between creating incentives to encourage affiliate organizing and assisting national union affiliates in building capacity to take on larger-scale, more strategic growth campaigns of importance to the entire union movement. We will continue to provide top-level assistance to national unions in building strategic organizing programs as well as training for affiliate organizing staff. It is the collective effort of every union investing in strategic organizing that can grow the union movement. We will actively facilitate voluntary mergers of unions, especially those with common core jurisdictions, to increase union bargaining power and growth.

We will mobilize federation-wide support for the United Food and Commercial Workers in its drive to stop the Wal-Marting of good jobs. Through the AFL-CIO Wal-Mart Task Force, we will mount a major global campaign to expose the greed of the world's largest employer and hold it accountable. Expanding the Voice@Work and Employee Free Choice Act campaigns to restore workers' freedom to form unions is core to these endeavors.

### **Build Power Through Issues Mobilization and Political Action**

Complementing our efforts to expand organizing outreach and mobilization, we will build year-round, year-in-and-year-out capacity for informing and mobilizing union members around legislative and public policy issues and for political action at all levels. By integrating our local, state

and national legislative fights with our political mobilization, and expanding our work with community allies, we will advance the efforts of all working people at every level.

We will set our political and legislative agenda and priorities based on the interests of working families, not the interests of any political party or specific candidate. We will work on a bipartisan basis to elect candidates to public office who support a pro-working families' agenda, recognizing that neither political party is entitled to our automatic support. Democrats should not expect to be endorsed by labor without earning that support, and Republicans who want to work on behalf of working people should be given an opportunity to meet with representatives of state and central labor bodies as part of an open and transparent endorsement process.

Through political mobilization, we will assist and strengthen efforts to mobilize people of color, especially in southern states, and build stronger coalitions with the Latino community. At the same time, we will increase our efforts to recruit, train and elect union members to local, state and federal public offices.

Because so many workers say they would join a union on the job if they had a chance but are prevented from doing so because of employer hostility, weak labor laws or lack of opportunity, we launched WORKING AMERICA in 2003. As a community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, WORKING AMERICA has enabled more than 900,000 workers to take action while tapping into their potential political and legislative power. Side by side with our issues mobilization and outreach efforts, we will expand WORKING AMERICA recruitment, aiming to increase membership to 2 million by the end of 2006, and mobilize current

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and new WORKING AMERICA members for support in electoral battles and in the fight for corporate accountability.

### **Build Power at the Grassroots Union Movement Level**

To design and lead effective issues, legislative and electoral member mobilization campaigns in partnership with affiliates and state and central bodies, we will build state and local labor federations that will strengthen and grow the labor movement.

We will establish performance standards for state and local central bodies, and we will lead strategic planning and budgeting processes to build strong, unified, effective organizations at the state and local levels.

The national AFL-CIO, state federations, central labor councils, national and local unions and constituency groups must all be represented in this work, and these efforts must be supported by all levels of the labor movement.

### **Build Power Through Our Diversity**

Creating a vibrant union movement means increased training and leadership development among women and people of color—and one of the best ways to do this is to reach out to today's young people. We must attract and recruit a diverse pool of young people into the labor movement through Union Summer, as well as through public outreach.

We will act decisively to expand leadership diversity *and* to strengthen democracy. Working with national unions, state federations and central labor councils, we will create paths for the stewards and work-site mobilizers who will lead the renewal of the union movement to become the union leaders of tomorrow. And we will structure our governance to allow our affiliates increased and active involvement that

will enrich decision making, facilitate communication and lead to the mutual accountability without which a successful, growing, unified movement is not possible.

### **Build Power by Strengthening Our Governance**

Maintaining the current size of the Executive Council will ensure diversity in size of union, industry sector, race, ethnicity and gender. To streamline the decision-making process, we should reduce the size of the AFL-CIO Executive Committee and expand the General Board to include representatives of central labor councils and AFL-CIO constituency groups, in addition to the current membership of the presidents of all national unions and representatives of trade departments and state federations. The General Board will serve as the highest governing authority between conventions.

### **Moving Forward**

By building power in organizing and political and legislative action, strengthening our governance and making the most of our diversity, we can equip today's union leaders to confront and address the problems facing each worker—and the entire union movement—and ensure tomorrow's union leaders are well prepared when they take on the mantle of leadership.

The challenges we face in our nation and throughout the global economy are great. Divided, we cannot meet them. United, we can move forward in ensuring working families reap the rewards they earn with their dedication and hard work—a goal that has shaped the heart of the union movement from its inception and one of which we must never lose sight. Together, we can explore our differences with an aim to resolving them in the interests of working families.

**“Our greatest strength is our ability to be one voice when needed. Being willing and able to help each other in times of crisis, be it injury or illness, is another.”**

Among the thousands of grassroots union member responses on the AFL-CIO website regarding the future of the union movement, Larry Grant, a member of Iron Workers Local 10 in Kansas City, Mo., spoke for so many of our union members when he wrote: "Our greatest strength is our ability to be one voice when needed. Being willing and able to help each other in times of crisis, be it injury or illness, is another."

One of the most critical lessons we have learned throughout the history of our union movement is the power of solidarity. Now is the time to come together, to pull

our load in one direction, to combine our strength. Union members and all working people are counting on the leaders of today's unions to work together in good faith for a strong, united union movement that can win for working families.

We as a union movement must never lose sight of what's at stake for America's workers, their families—and the nation. In the words of the powerful labor leader John L. Lewis:

"The future of labor is the future of America."

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John J. Sweeney



# Secretary-Treasurer's Report



**Unions are working to revitalize manufacturing by building on the collective strength of industrial unions through joint strategies for creating and maintaining manufacturing jobs.**

**T**HIS PAST MAY I saw a news report that symbolized what has gone wrong in this country. Maryland Gov. Robert Ehrlich (R) was set to veto a bill that would have required any corporation that employed more than 10,000 workers to spend at least 8 percent of its payroll costs on health care benefits for their workers. The kicker was that standing at Ehrlich's shoulder were two top executives of Wal-Mart, the only company in the state with that many workers that does not provide adequate health care coverage for its employees.

Big Business is exerting undue power at the federal level and in many statehouses where lawmakers pass laws that favor profits over people.

Wal-Mart and other multinationals increasingly are enlisting the aid of the government to wield their crushing market power to threaten workers, hammer vendors and move jobs—exploiting workers and working conditions here and abroad.

We in the union movement are dedicated to improving the lives and working conditions of all workers. To counter this growing corporate power and ensure quality jobs for U.S. workers, the AFL-CIO has focused on four strategies: strengthening U.S. manufacturing, fighting for fair trade pacts that ensure the rights of workers here and around the globe, working to reform corporate management and holding corporations accountable through shareholder action.

## **Strengthening U.S. Manufacturing**

To rebuild U.S. manufacturing, the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions established the Industrial Union Council (IUC) in May 2002. Through the IUC, the 12 member unions are working to revitalize manufacturing by building on the collective strength of industrial unions through joint strategies for creating and maintaining manufacturing jobs.

The situation in manufacturing is grim. The United States has lost 2.8 million manufacturing jobs since President George W. Bush took office in 2001. These family-supporting jobs long served as the fuel that drove the economy of communities around the nation.

In Fieldale, Va., 1,000 hardworking members of UNITE HERE lost their jobs in 2003 when Pillowtex shut down its factory. These were well-paying jobs that many of these workers had held for decades—as had their parents. In Henry County, where Fieldale is located, Pillowtex not only meant good jobs—the company was the lifeline of the county. It paid roughly \$94,500 a month to the county for wastewater treatment and \$1.4 million a year in Henry County taxes, supplied the town’s water and paid for the local police, community center and street lights. All that financial support is gone now. Nationwide, Pillowtex shut down 16 factories and distribution centers after declaring bankruptcy and laying off some 6,450 workers.

It’s essential our nation’s lawmakers understand the need to maintain and expand family-supporting manufacturing jobs, and through the IUC, the union movement put manufacturing on the front burner of the 2004 presidential campaign. Further, our actions to force our government to face up to the unfair trade practices of China and our massive effort to stop the spread of such bad trade deals as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) invigorated the international and trade agenda within Congress and among the public.

I see this new vigor clearly at the IUC legislative conferences. This year, 1,300 union members spent two full days in workshops and lobbying on Capitol Hill. Four unions—the Boilermakers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Machinists and Sheet Metal Workers—took part in the conference

for the first time this year. We worked together to move our top legislative issues: trade, China’s workers’ rights and currency manipulation, the Buy American campaign, pension benefits and retirement security, health care and domestic investment in manufacturing.

## **Fighting for Fair Trade Pacts**

Our manufacturing jobs have been lost in part because of bad U.S. trade policies and treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Recently, we’ve faced the proposed Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and the FTAA. These corporate-backed deals extend the damage done by NAFTA—some 900,000 jobs lost, irreparable environmental destruction and worker exploitation—to the entire Western Hemisphere. These agreements do not contain adequate workers’ rights provisions and do nothing to change the terrible labor practices in many of the signatory nations.

In November 2003, I proudly marched with thousands of union members, students and religious leaders in Miami as we stymied the plans of trade ministers meeting there to finalize the FTAA. But while the FTAA is on hold, the Bush administration made passage of CAFTA one of its top legislative priorities. Through a strong alliance of U.S. and Central American unions, we lobbied Congress and educating the public about the dangers of unfettered free trade.

Our trade picture is a disaster. Last year we ran up a \$618 billion trade deficit overall and 2005 promises more of the same. It would take a 150 percent increase in our exports just to stay even with the 2004 deficit. Currently, the annual trade deficit is running more than \$100 billion above last year.

The trade picture with China is even more troubling. In 2004, our deficit with China soared to \$162 billion, a 30 percent increase in one year. This is the largest bilateral trade deficit between two countries in the history of the world. In the past two years, experts estimate our deficit with China alone has cost our nation 410,000 jobs.

China's trade advantage depends in large part on the exploitation of its workers. In 2004, we filed a first-of-its kind petition with the U.S. Trade Representative, which demonstrated how China's frequent violations of workers' rights give that nation an unfair trade advantage that has cost more than 727,000 U.S. jobs. In addition, the AFL-CIO also is pushing the administration to use its power to persuade China to allow its currency to float on the international market and to stop an artificial valuation that gives it an unfair advantage over its trading partners, including the United States. Six dollars of every \$10 of trade from China come from a U.S. company. Clearly, this is not about trade but rather relocating production facilities to China to increase profits at the expense of American jobs.

Wal-Mart, the same multibillion-dollar corporation that won't pay its employees a living wage or provide them with affordable health care coverage, imported \$18 billion in goods from China, more than 10 percent of the 2004 U.S. deficit with China.

Wal-Mart imported nearly 10 percent of all Chinese goods sold in this country that year. That's why the Wal-Mart campaign spearheaded by UFCW is so important. We must change the way that company does business and make sure its workers get a fair wage and good health insurance and that it buys more of its products at home.

## **Exposing the Corporate Role Behind Social Security Privatization**

One of the biggest displays of corporate greed is the scheme to privatize Social Security. This plan to privatize the nation's most successful safety net is the biggest shakedown in U.S. history. Financial firms stand to gain billions of dollars in fees from managing privatized Social Security accounts while working families would have to make due with smaller Social Security benefits and our children would be strapped with a huge national debt. Companies such as Charles Schwab, Wachovia and Citigroup are providing massive amounts of corporate cash to support privatization. University of Chicago economist Austin Goolsbee estimates companies such as Charles Schwab Corp. could reap some \$940 billion in fees over the next 75 years.

When Social Security privatization topped the agenda of the Bush administration, we needed to take action fast. To stop the Wall Street Social Security privatization juggernaut, we have had to take on some of the nation's major financial firms and expose their backroom support for privatization. In March 2005, we sponsored a National Day of Action to let Wall Street know Social Security is not for sale. Thousands of working families and community activists rallied in more than 70 cities at the offices of Wall Street firms, demanding organizations such as Charles Schwab and others stop supporting privatization of Social Security.

We urged shareholders to withhold their votes for the financial firm's board of directors because of Schwab's boardroom role in trying to take workers' retirement by supporting the privatization of Social Security. In a major success, 26 percent shareholders

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withheld their votes at the Charles Schwab annual meeting in May 2005. Withholding a vote is equivalent to a vote of no confidence in the board, including the chairman, Charles Schwab. Shareholders also expressed their dissatisfaction with the firm's leaders by passing—with 57 percent of the vote—a resolution requiring annual elections of all directors. The resolution passed even though Charles Schwab owns 19 percent of the company.

Our union-backed grassroots protests by workers and investors at dozens of financial firms this year already have prompted some companies to drop out of pro-privatization organizations, such as the misnamed Alliance for Worker Retirement Security (AWRS), which is leading the charge for privatization. In February, Edward Jones pulled out of the AWRS after a series of community actions at many of its offices. Shortly before grassroots mobilizations aimed at investment firm Waddell & Reed were set to take place in March, the company announced it was leaving AWRS.

## **Holding Corporations Accountable**

Union members work hard and we expect to be paid for doing a good job. When we mess up, we want to be treated fairly but to be held accountable. That standard does not seem to apply to corporate CEOs. Look at what happened to Douglas Ivester. In the two-and-a-half years that Ivester ran the Coca-Cola Co., the company had a product contamination scare in Europe, faced a racial discrimination lawsuit and lost its bid to buy another company. Meanwhile, Coke's profits and stock price slumped. So what did the board do when Ivester resigned? It gave him a six-year consulting agreement worth \$675,000, office space, furniture, supplies, a company car, home security service and club dues. In total, his

retirement package reportedly was worth \$119 million!

Other CEOs get rewarded for increasing the company's bottom line at the public's expense. The CEO of Wal-Mart, Lee Scott, was paid \$23 million in salary, bonuses and stock options last year. Yet, according to a congressional report, each Wal-Mart store employing 200 people costs taxpayers about \$420,750 annually in public social services used by Wal-Mart workers whose low wages and unaffordable health insurance mean most of them are among the working poor.

CEOs get away with these kinds of abuses because they dominate the selection process for company directors. Until shareholders have the strength to elect vigorous independent boards, these kinds of outrages will continue. That's why the AFL-CIO Capital Stewardship program works with affiliate unions and worker pension funds whose \$5 trillion in assets enables the union movement to push for reform of corporate management, protection of workers' pensions and creation of good jobs that build our communities.

In the past two years, union members' pension funds—such as those of Communications Workers of America and UFCW, the Amalgamated Bank's Longview Collective Investment Fund and the AFL-CIO Reserve Fund—led the fight to reform executive pay and restore genuine accountability in corporate boardrooms at hundreds of companies, including Safeway, Comcast, Wal-Mart and Tyco.

The labor movement led the successful fight to win the first-ever disclosure of mutual fund proxy votes, which allows workers to learn how the financial firms that invest our pension funds vote on key corporate issues.

Each year, through the extremely popular AFL-CIO PayWatch website ([www.paywatch.org](http://www.paywatch.org)), we publicize the enormous compensation packages paid to CEOs, many of whom send jobs overseas while the wages of U.S. workers who still have jobs stagnate or even drop in real terms. The just-issued AFL-CIO report, *Behind the Curtain: How the 10 Largest Mutual Fund Families Voted When Presented with 12 Opportunities to Curb CEO Pay Abuse in 2004*, examines proxy vote reports by the nation's mutual fund companies. Because mutual funds own 22 percent of all U.S. corporate stock, their proxy votes on such issues as CEO pay and director elections can be decisive.

The *AFL-CIO Proxy Voting Guidelines* booklet serves as a guide for union pension fund trustees for voting their funds' shareholder proxies. The guidelines assist trustees in exercising their ownership rights in ways that achieve long-term value by supporting important shareholder initiatives on corporate accountability. In 2004, union and pension fund shareholders and trustees introduced hundreds of resolutions at corporate annual meetings. These initiatives include board of directors' proposals, corporate governance and proposals concerning employee relations, executive compensation and corporate responsibility issues.

In the first five months of 2005 alone, shareholder proposals by the Sheet Metal Workers, Laborers, Teamsters and Plumbers and Pipe Fitters to give investors a greater stake in director elections received majority support at nine companies and garnered

high vote totals (more than one-third support) at several other companies, including Peabody Energy Corp., Verizon and Waste Management Inc. The Laborers and AFSCME also sponsored shareholder resolutions at companies such as Amgen and Sempra Energy.


## Renewing Our Mission

When I was growing up in the coal country of western Pennsylvania, I watched my father and other coal miners perform back-breaking work for long hours while breathing dust that eventually would kill them. They risked their lives in the mines to feed their families and provide a better life for their children. They worked at the mercy of coal company barons who sacrificed the lives and health of the workers to gain every penny of profit they could.

Workers such as these built the union movement. Our mission is to make sure that never again will corporations have the sole power to determine the fate of hard-working people. Today, the Wal-Marting of the world economy, with the consent and support of many world governments, means the union movement must grow stronger and fight harder to counter corporate power.

The world's workers and our communities are under attack. We must fight back. Our accomplishments are just the beginning. We cannot rest until every worker receives a fair wage, a secure retirement and affordable health care. The future of our children and of our way of life depends on it.

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Richard L. Trumka



# Executive Vice President's Report



**Working people really are one, whatever their language, or skin color, or union or nation. That's exactly the kind of solidarity that all of us try to build in the ways we know best.**

**A**LL OF US in the union movement believe in solidarity. And each of us has moments when we see solidarity at its very best.

One of those moments for me was in my hometown of San Antonio in May 2005. I traveled on the “CAFTA—We Don’t Hafta” tour with three union activists: Marta Sonia Díaz Palacios of El Salvador, Reynaldo Federico González of Guatemala and Albino Vargas Barrantes of Costa Rica.

The tour had a great launch in Washington, D.C. In fact, it was a huge breakthrough for the U.S. union movement to be working hand in hand with Latin American union movements to oppose a trade scheme that would hurt workers here and in Central America. But it was during the workers’ forum at the Communications Workers of America Local 6143 in San Antonio where Marta, Reynaldo and Albino really brought home the meaning of solidarity. They talked about the damage CAFTA

would bring about in the lives of working people here and in their own countries. Their message that day was “We don’t want good jobs in the United States to be sent to our countries and turned into terrible jobs without rights or benefits for our countries.”

That morning, everyone in the CWA hall knew in their hearts what they already had heard many times: Working people really are one, whatever their language, or skin color, or union or nation. That’s exactly the kind of solidarity that all of us try to build in the ways we know best. In the past few years, I have focused on five key areas: building solidarity by working with the AFL-CIO constituency groups, raising awareness for the need for justice among immigrant workers, building relationships with other union movements in the Americas, campaigning for voter protection and advancing the efforts of the nation’s working women and people of color.

**Advancing the rights of immigrant workers has become one of the highest priorities of the AFL-CIO. It makes good sense and is the right thing to do.**

## Constituency Groups Gain Strength Through Unity

In the past four years, the AFL-CIO constituency groups have become stronger, more focused and more effective—and in the past two years, they also have become more united than ever.

In 2003, the six groups met to talk about how they could be involved in the 2004 elections. The groups include the A. Philip Randolph Institute, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and Pride At Work. They formed a nonpartisan group, the Labor Coalition for Community Action (LCCA). Led by Gloria Johnson, the longtime president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, LCCA's aim is to mobilize, in a more unified fashion, grassroots activism in local communities.

A year later, LCCA turned out to be the largest coordinated effort in the history of the constituency groups. In that time, LCCA:

- Sponsored 23 town hall meetings in 14 states at which citizens talked about issues ranging from revitalizing cities to improving access to health care to creating affordable housing and more jobs with living wages.
- Conducted voter registration, education and get-out-the vote activities in 41 cities, enlisting more than 2,000 volunteers.
- Developed a southern strategy to mobilize African American and Latino voters in Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana and Mississippi.

This year, LCCA is building on the foundations laid in the 2004 election cycle. The coalition is moving forward with town hall meetings on issues for women and workers of color in Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Detroit.

## Justice for Immigrant Workers

"The AFL-CIO proudly stands on the side of immigrant workers." That was how the Executive Council began its resolution five years ago that charted a new course for the union movement on the issue of immigration.

We have been true to our word. The partnership between our movement and the nation's immigrant communities is closer now than it has been in generations. Advancing the rights of immigrant workers has become one of the highest priorities of the AFL-CIO. It makes good sense and is the right thing to do.

There was dramatic evidence of this in 2003 when the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions sponsored the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. In September, hundreds of immigrant workers and their allies representing hundreds of organizations boarded buses in 10 cities across the country and converged on Washington, D.C., New Jersey and New York.

This year, the struggle has moved to Congress, where there are several proposals for immigration reform. The basic AFL-CIO position in this debate is clear and unchanged. We're fighting for citizenship for all undocumented workers and their families who have been working hard, paying their taxes and contributing to their communities, no matter where they were born or whether they are documented or undocumented. They deserve the right to a minimum wage, a safe workplace and the freedom to form unions.

There is a moral principle here. In my opinion, no one has put it better than Kyron Parris, an immigrant from Trinidad and a proud member of Operating Engineers Local 15C. "Immigrants work longer hours, get the hardest jobs and the least pay," he said at the time of the

Freedom Ride. “We need a way to make sure that law-abiding immigrants who work hard get respect.”

Exactly.

## **Building Solidarity Throughout the Western Hemisphere**

With economic globalization growing ever deeper and wider, solidarity with our union sisters and brothers in other countries has taken on renewed urgency—and nowhere is the need for such solidarity greater than here in the Western Hemisphere. That is why one of my biggest priorities has been to build the natural alliances among unions in the Americas.

Four years ago, I had the great honor of becoming the first U.S. trade unionist and the first woman elected president of the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), the federation of union movements that represents more than 45 million workers throughout the Western Hemisphere. I was re-elected for another four-year term in April 2005. From the start, this has been an incredible experience. I’m constantly seeing firsthand what all of us already know: The interests of working people in this country are the same as those of working families in every part of the Americas.

CAFTA is a perfect example. We’ve seen what a terrible disaster the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has been for workers here and in the rest of North America. I’ve had the chance to get involved in ORIT’s effort to build an alliance of unions and legislators against CAFTA, both here in the United States and in Central America. We won a big victory on Capitol Hill when the Congressional Hispanic Caucus rejected CAFTA and have given all our support to the Costa Ricans

who are taking a stand against the pro-CAFTA forces in the Costa Rican National Assembly.

In a further demonstration of hemispheric solidarity, our sisters and brothers in ORIT now have taken a strong stand on some of the issues that mean the most to us in the United States. At their April convention, ORIT members voted for resolutions we in the AFL-CIO had brought to the table calling for support of our Employee Free Choice Act; more inter-American cooperation in protecting immigrant workers and strengthening their freedom to choose unions; resisting CAFTA and the Free Trade Area of the Americas; and including effective guarantees of labor rights in trade agreements.

It was further proof that with multinational corporations threatening us all, workers in the Americas are planning and acting and struggling effectively together.

## **Advancing the Efforts of Working Women and People of Color**

Although working women are nearly half of the workforce, they represent 55 percent of newly organized workers. What’s more, in organizing campaigns in which most workers are women, they are more likely to win their union. So there is no question that working women are absolutely critical for the union movement’s future.

That is why working women have been at the center of much of the AFL-CIO’s activity in the past several years. A few highlights:

- In 2003, we convened the first Work and Family Conference on Bargaining and Policy. It brought together more than 250 union activists to discuss how we all can advance paid family leave,

**With multinational corporations threatening us all, workers in the Americas are planning and acting and struggling effectively together.**



child care, dependent care and control over our work hours.

- In 2002 and 2004, our Working Women Vote program was a big success. For example, while working women as a whole voted for John Kerry by only 51 percent to 48 percent, union women voted for Kerry by an overwhelming 45-point margin (72 percent to 27 percent).

In summer 2002, the AFL-CIO Executive Council confronted the challenges women face in joining unions. Balancing work and family needs, women often hesitate to get involved in organizing campaigns. And even though more and more women are joining as members and becoming grassroots union leaders, they are inadequately represented at the highest levels.

To address these obstacles, the Executive Council set up the Overcoming Barriers to Women in Organizing and Leadership project. It researched barriers women face in attaining union leadership and membership, developed a comprehensive report and presentation, engaged union women nationally and produced diversity policy recommendations for ratification at the 2005 Convention.

The report notes, “There is a clear road map for reaching working women. Women respond strongly to traditional women’s economic issues—equal pay, work and family and control over work hours.” And it recommends (among other things) unions develop plans to increase women’s representation as leaders at all levels, appoint women to core positions in unions and provide work and family programs to help women fulfill both their union and home responsibilities.

In addition to this report, the Executive Council’s Civil and Human Rights Committee

prepared a report on overcoming barriers to people of color in unions and union leadership structures. Similar to the findings of the report on working women, this report shows we have much more work to do to improve the participation of people of color at all levels of the union movement. Recommendations are similar—the need to increase representation of people of color as leaders at all levels, appointing people of color to core positions in unions and combating issues of institutional racism.

You’ll be considering these recommendations at the AFL-CIO Convention. I urge you to study them closely and take them very seriously.

## Protecting Our Right to Vote

In 1965 when I was a young woman in Texas, the Voting Rights Act became law and the world changed for people who look like me. We’re celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act this summer and we are fighting hard to make sure that many of its key provisions are reauthorized. I’ll never forget when it passed. For the first time in American history, people of color could hope their constitutional right to vote finally was guaranteed and secure. Then came the 2000 election scandal. There were no lynchings as in the old days—but in Florida and other states, thousands of people of color and immigrants were cheated out of their vote because of faulty voting equipment, police checkpoints that hampered access to polling stations and misleading voter instructions.

Early last year, we in the AFL-CIO resolved that we were not going to let that kind of abuse take place in the 2004 election. In March, the Executive Council launched a massive voting rights project, My Vote, My Right.

**Working women as a whole voted for John Kerry by only 51 percent to 48 percent, union women voted for Kerry by an overwhelming 45-point margin (72 percent to 27 percent).**

International unions, locals, state federations, central labor councils, constituency groups, the Alliance for Retired Americans and the AFL-CIO Lawyers Coordinating Committee all pitched in. Together, we educated and mobilized union members, arming them with the “Protect Your Vote” information they needed to defend their right to cast a ballot and ensure it was fairly counted. We let them know their rights under the Help America Vote Act. We recruited union members and retirees to serve as poll watchers. We set up teams of My Vote, My Right advocates to investigate how well state and local authorities were obeying election laws. We utilized radio, TV and other media to spread the word in our communities about registering and voting.

Was every voice in America heard and every vote properly counted because of the union movement’s My Vote, My Right campaign? No—but there’s no question we made a huge difference in one city after another. By working together and coordinating our efforts, we learned a lot about what works and what doesn’t. Far more important was that at the end of the day, the election was fairer and more honest. In coming years,

we will build on the networks we created and expand our efforts to ensure that every vote is counted.

## Shaping Our Future

When I started out in the union movement as a secretary in a small local union in Texas more than 35 years ago, many people in our movement considered international solidarity and issues of concern to people of color and women to be secondary. The real business of the union movement was supposed to be other things.

How times have changed. Today, when we see global corporations exporting our good jobs to low-income economies in which workers are underpaid and exploited, we know we must build effective alliances with our union sisters and brothers in those countries. Here at home, strong, vibrant constituency groups and a powerful women’s agenda are critical for ensuring the concerns of women and people of color are reflected throughout the union movement.

For our movement not only to survive but to prosper, we have to make those choices. We have to—and we will.

**Here at home, strong, vibrant constituency groups and a powerful women’s agenda are critical for ensuring the concerns of women and people of color are reflected throughout the union movement.**



Linda Chavez-Thompson

# EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT

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# For Every Worker, **A VOICE**



**N**EARLY EVERY DAY in the United States, workers are choosing to join unions to secure better wages, health care benefits and respect at work. In 2002, more than 4,000 Cingular Wireless workers around the nation joined the Communications Workers of America. Four thousand manufacturing workers at Freightliner Trucks plants in North Carolina chose the UAW in 2003. In Houston, more than 500 workers at the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel became that city's first unionized hotel workers when they won a union voice at work with UNITE HERE in 2004. From 2002 through 2004, 1.3 million workers became members of AFL-CIO-affiliated unions and thousands more have won union representation in 2005.

Almost 4 million new members have joined AFL-CIO unions over the past nine years. And surveys show an increasing number—some 57 million nonunion workers—would join a union if they could. Yet union membership has continued to decline as

a percentage of the workforce. To grow, we must dramatically accelerate the pace of change. While the union movement has accomplished much by beginning the change-to-organize process, a great deal more must be done and it needs to be done more quickly: Union density has decreased to 7.9 percent in the private sector and to 12.5 percent overall.

Helping workers form and join unions in the face of employer opposition always has been a struggle. But in the past decade, it has become even harder. Recent research shows 92 percent of private-sector employers whose employees want to form a union force workers to attend anti-union meetings, and half of employers threaten to shut down partially or totally if employees join together in a union. More than three-quarters of employers require workers to sit in one-on-one meetings with supervisors who try to persuade them to oppose the union. Fully one-quarter of private-sector employers illegally fire workers, and more

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**Enabling more workers to gain the benefits of union membership is the highest priority of the union movement.**

than half threaten to call the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services during organizing drives that involve undocumented employees.

Even when workers successfully form a union by voting in a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) election, employers in 45 percent of the cases still have not agreed to a first contract two years after the election.

The employer war on workers is aided by a dead-letter National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) that fails to protect workers' rights and an NLRB dominated by Bush administration appointees who consistently side with employers against workers. Recent decisions have severely limited the freedom of university graduate workers, temporary workers and workers with disabilities to form unions; elevated employers' interests over workers' rights; eliminated important employee protections; and dramatically reduced the effectiveness of NLRB remedies.

The NLRB process is so broken that only 70,651 workers joined AFL-CIO-affiliated unions through NLRB elections in 2004—about one-third the total number of workers who joined unions that year. The majority of workers who formed unions did so by demanding and winning recognition from employers outside the NLRB system.

Against this tattered backdrop, enabling more workers to gain the benefits of union membership—in wages, benefits, fair treatment and a voice on the job and in our society—is the highest priority of the union movement. Workers who join unions improve the lives of their families and their communities and bring the union movement new strength to win for workers in the workplace and in important national policy and political debates.

As part of the union-movement-wide process to change to organize and to change the way we organize, more than 250 top union organizers from dozens of unions held the first-ever organizing summit in January 2003. Their summit concluded that the moral obligation of this generation of organizers, activists and leaders is to rebuild and reinvigorate the union movement through:

- An immediate, ramped-up effort to change the nation's public policies to restore workers' freedom to organize and bargain collectively; and
- An accelerated initiative to help many more unions increase their capacity to organize, especially outside the NLRB election process.

Since the summit, the AFL-CIO has geared up a major Voice@Work campaign to raise awareness about employers' war on workers and enlist broad support for reform of America's inadequate labor laws. Through member education and mobilization workshops, more than 30,000 union members and allies not only learned more about the importance of restoring workers' freedom to form unions and the ordeals workers face when they try to form unions, but also were encouraged to become active participants in organizing campaigns. The AFL-CIO Organizing Department helped affiliates change to organize, developed organizers through the Organizing Institute, recruited and trained strategic researchers and campaigners through the Center for Strategic Research and worked side by side with affiliates in organizing partnership agreements.

In spring 2005, the AFL-CIO began a restructuring process with a dual goal of increasing the size of membership throughout the union movement while increasing union density in multiple industries. Going

forward, the federation will assist national union affiliates in building capacity to take on larger-scale, strategic growth campaigns—providing expert technical support, campaign research and organizer training—and will focus greater efforts on building a culture of solidarity and support for organizing. AFL-CIO assistance and support includes organizer staffing; researcher and organizer recruitment and training; coalition building and community outreach; political support and lobbying efforts; grassroots mobilization and e-activism; international solidarity; and state and local legislative and policy initiatives. The AFL-CIO also is spearheading efforts to amass bipartisan support for the Employee Free Choice Act in Congress as well as state and local legislation to enable workers to choose for themselves whether to form unions and, through this legislation, educating lawmakers, the public and community leaders about the challenges facing workers who want to form unions.

## Building Capacity to Organize

Although the AFL-CIO does not directly organize workers, it plays an important role in supporting affiliate organizing efforts. While encouraging affiliate unions to shift more resources into organizing, the federation steadily has increased the share of its budget dedicated to organizing support. The AFL-CIO intends to create a Strategic Organizing Fund, with up to two-thirds of it to be used as incentives to leverage massive new investment in organizing by affiliate unions. One-third of the fund, or \$7.5 million, will assist strategic organizing campaigns of importance to the entire labor movement.

The AFL-CIO Center for Strategic Research has assisted affiliates in conducting in-depth industry and company research and in strategic planning for innovative organizing

campaigns. In addition, the center has trained hundreds of strategic researchers and campaigners over the past several years and has provided a clearinghouse for affiliate recruitment of new strategic researchers and campaigners. Some of those efforts have achieved remarkable success, including the United Union of Roofers and Waterproofers' organizing campaign in Western states, the Iron Workers' national organizing



campaign at J.D. Steel Corp., AFT's campaign among University of Illinois graduate employees at the Urbana-Champaign and Chicago campuses, the UAW's campaign in the auto parts industry and the Teamsters' nationwide organizing drive among America West Airlines customer service representatives.

Partnership agreements between affiliated unions and the AFL-CIO support national union campaigns to increase density within core industries. AFL-CIO support includes financial assistance, staff help and Voice@Work training and strategy. Recent partnerships have included AFGE's airport screener campaign; AFSCME's New Mexico public employee campaign; SEIU's home care and building service campaigns, the Laborers' asbestos abatement campaign and United Food and Commercial Workers' Wal-Mart campaign.



## AFL-CIO Support for Affiliate Organizing

In addition to providing on-the-ground organizing support, including lead organizers and other direct campaign support, the AFL-CIO has assisted affiliate organizing campaigns in the past 18 months by:

- Assigning organizers to help with the United Union of Roofers and Waterproofers' organizing effort among low-wage, mainly immigrant workers in Western states.
- Educating and soliciting support from elected officials for the Iron Workers' campaign on behalf of 10,000 immigrant construction workers at J.D. Steel Corp.
- Helping with strategic planning for AFT's campaigns among graduate employees at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Chicago campuses, Texas teachers, New Mexico public employees and University of Pennsylvania graduate students.
- Providing strategic research assistance on the Cintas Corp. campaign among laundry workers for UNITE HERE and IBT.
- Conducting corporate research and providing organizing assistance for IBT's campaigns among drivers at DHL, waste workers and customer service representatives at America West Airlines.
- Helping Comcast employees win a voice at work by providing Electrical Workers and CWA with organizing assistance and corporate research.
- Supporting AFGE's airport screener campaign by lobbying Congress to overrule President George W. Bush's order taking away union rights from airport screeners.
- Providing corporate research and assistance with local policy initiatives as part of the Mine Workers' Peabody Coal campaign.
- Providing organizing assistance in CWA's campaigns with high-tech workers, Bresnan cable employees and Mississippi state workers.
- Using the online Working Families Network to mobilize support from hundreds of thousands of union members and allies for workers fighting to form unions at Yale-New Haven Hospital in Connecticut, InterPark in Washington, D.C., Comcast and Cintas.
- Providing research and organizing assistance in UAW campaigns at Johnson Controls Inc., Dana Corp. Parts and Thomas Built Buses.
- Assisting in establishing coalitions with global unions to promote international solidarity in IBT's campaign against Quebecor, the world's largest printing company.

*(Continued on next page.)*



## AFL-CIO Support for Affiliate Organizing *(Continued)*

- Supporting CWA and IBEW efforts to organize workers at Verizon Wireless.
- Helping workers at the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel form a union with UNITE HERE by soliciting letters from members of Congress, Texas state lawmakers and the Houston City Council in support of employer neutrality. The Harris County (Texas) Central Labor Council also reached out to 50 community groups, all of which pledged to support the workers.
- Providing organizing assistance to the multi-union campaign among Puerto Rico's public-sector workers.
- Assisting in efforts to elect New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson (D) who, once in office, supported the rights of public employees to join AFSCME, CWA and AFT.
- Organizing community and elected officials' support for the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers' Consolidated Biscuit Co. campaign.
- Providing organizing assistance for SEIU's home care and building service campaigns.
- Researching the extent of asbestos-caused illnesses and lobbying Congress for adequate compensation for victims in LIUNA's asbestos abatement campaign.



- Joining with UFCW and other affiliates to mount a coordinated campaign to hold Wal-Mart accountable for its low-road business practices.
- Promoting international solidarity and introducing shareholder resolutions for PACE International Union's campaign with DuPont workers.
- Assisting in research and organizing for the Machinists' campaign among Nevada car dealership employees.
- Providing organizing assistance to the Farm Workers' multicrop campaign among immigrant workers in California and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee's Mt. Olive Pickle Co. campaign in North Carolina.



## Organizing Institute

In 2004, the Organizing Institute recruited and trained 300 organizers, emphasizing outreach to workers of color, and instituted its first-ever Spanish-language training program. Those new organizers joined some 577 organizers who were Organizing Institute graduates in 2002 and 2003—more than 6,252 have participated since 1996. By bringing new talent to the organizing effort and providing critically needed skills and training, the Organizing Institute has increased the capacity of unions to organize. More talent has been made available through the thousands of union members who have taken part in the Organizing Institute's Member Organizer Training Program, who now have the experience to serve in vital roles as volunteer organizers in their unions' campaigns.

## Union Summer

In addition to Organizing Institute participants, hundreds more activists have spent their summers fighting for social justice as part of the AFL-CIO Union Summer, Law Student Union Summer and Seminary Summer programs. More than 3,000 activists have taken part in the Union Summer program since the AFL-CIO launched the hands-on training program in 1996. Most recently, Union Summer interns helped

organize janitors in downtown St. Louis with SEIU; joined with the AFT/Nurses United's Hospital Corp. of America's organizing drive; and with campaigns by the Painters and Allied Trades and Operating Engineers in New York.

Launched in 2001, the Law Student Union Summer gives first- and second-year law students a rare opportunity for up-close organizing experience. In 2005, 10 law school students are working on organizing and contract campaigns with SEIU, United Steelworkers, AFT, UNITE HERE, IBT, UFCW and Professional and Technical Engineers.

Seminary Summer, a 10-week internship sponsored by the AFL-CIO and Interfaith Worker Justice, gives seminarians, novices and rabbinical and Islamic graduate students and other future religious leaders the opportunity to witness workers' struggles for a voice in the workplace and join with religious, community and union activists to build support for workers organizing unions. Seminary Summer, launched in 2000, has graduated more than 115 students with another 30 to 35 participants expected to take part in 2005.

## Restoring Workers' Freedom to Form Unions

### Voice@Work Campaign

The union movement in 2002 expanded the nationwide Voice@Work initiative, rededicating efforts to change the organizing climate by educating the public, community leaders, faith leaders, candidates and elected officials about the obstacles workers face when they try to organize into unions and to help affiliates win campaigns by building broad community support.



Union activists and allies from community, civil rights and religious groups, along with elected officials, celebrated Voice@Work Month in June 2002 with rallies, marches, forums, teach-ins and educational leafletting. Concurrently—for the first time in more than 10 years—the U.S. Senate held hearings to explore the obstacles workers face when seeking to form unions, with workers describing to lawmakers the harassment and intimidation they have experienced when trying to win a voice on the job and the need for U.S. labor law reform.

Fueled by the AFL-CIO Executive Committee resolution in February 2003 reaffirming and strengthening the union movement's efforts in support of the freedom of workers to choose a voice at work, the federation spearheaded face-to-face meetings between workers and key Democratic presidential candidates. Workers met with Sens. John Edwards (N.C.), John Kerry (Mass.) and Joseph Lieberman (Conn.); Rep. Richard Gephardt (Mo.); and former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean. On Dec. 10, 2003—the anniversary of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a key part of which is the right of people in every nation to come together in unions and bargain contracts—the union movement mobilized to demand the basic human right to form unions and bargain collectively. More than 37,000 workers participated in 97 events that took place in 72 cities and 37 states from coast to coast. More than 200 elected officials participated, from U.S. senators to small town mayors, as did leaders of 137 allied organizations. More International Human Rights Day mobilizations are planned for this year and beyond.

### **Employee Free Choice Act**

In 2003, the AFL-CIO's efforts to champion a Voice@Work resulted in the Employee Free Choice Act, far-reaching bipartisan

legislation introduced in Congress that would enable a majority of employees to form a union without the debilitating obstacles employers now use to block workers' choice. The Employee Free Choice Act would allow employees to freely choose union representation through simple majority sign-up on cards or petitions, provide mediation and arbitration of first-contract disputes and establish meaningful remedies for violation of employee rights when workers seek to form unions and during first-contract negotiations.

In 2004, the AFL-CIO mobilized activists through e-mail alerts, urging them to take action in support of the Employee Free Choice Act. As a result, more than 182,000 letters were sent to decision makers urging their support. The Employee Free Choice Act has become an educational and mobilization vehicle with members, elected officials, community leaders and the general public. States have passed resolutions in support of this federal-level legislation, and congressional briefings continue in home districts with workers involved in local organizing campaigns. The Employee Free Choice Act has been used to drive organizing issues into the national policy debate.

By the end of the 108th Congress in fall 2004, the Employee Free Choice Act had the bipartisan backing of 210 House and 38 Senate sponsors. On April 19, 2005, the Employee Free Choice Act was reintroduced as bipartisan legislation by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) and Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.).

This legislation continues to gain congressional backing, with 182 House and 37 Senate co-sponsors as of June 2005, as workers and their unions ramp up efforts to mobilize support.

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**Union members also are building and expanding their coalition partnerships with community, civil rights and religious leaders to help pass legislation to ensure workers can win a Voice@Work.**

## **Strengthening Our Forces with Allies**

The AFL-CIO and grassroots union activists are using the Employee Free Choice Act to reach out systematically to a wide range of allied leaders who have begun to speak out publicly in support of the Employee Free Choice Act and to educate and involve their own members in highlighting how suppressing the freedom to form unions costs all members of the community. To bolster the power of union activists, many organizations in 2003 and 2004 got involved or stepped up their leadership on this issue, including Human Rights Watch, the NAACP and the United Church of Christ. In addition, a new organization, American Rights at Work, was launched to restore workers' freedom to organize and bargain collectively through coalition

building, research, public relations, policy analysis and advocacy. American Rights at Work has investigated and exposed workers' rights abuses and the inadequacy of U.S. labor law; stimulated debate about workers' rights among journalists, policymakers, advocacy groups and the public; promoted public policy that protects workers; and publicized success stories of profitable companies that respect workers' rights and build innovative partnerships with unions.

Union members also are building and expanding their coalition partnerships with community, civil rights and religious leaders to help pass legislation to ensure workers can win a Voice@Work and encourage employers to respect workers' rights—and hold them accountable when they don't. For a closer look, see Strong Families, Strong Communities (page 55).

# Reward **WORK**, Respect **WORKERS**



**T**HE NATION'S ECONOMY is being strangled by the Bush administration's tax cuts for millionaires, economic policies that create low-wage, low-benefit jobs and poorly crafted trade policies that encourage U.S. firms to move plants and jobs out of the country. Working families face an increasingly difficult time making ends meet—and even keeping their jobs.

The AFL-CIO has fought to strengthen good jobs and make the public aware of the challenges working families face at home and throughout the world with the vast economic shifts in the global economy. Through issues mobilization at the national, state and local legislative stages, education campaigns among union members and the public and global-level workers' rights campaigns, the federation has launched comprehensive campaigns to combat the increasing influence of Big Business on government and lawmakers, the decline of good manufacturing jobs and the

nation's loss of family-supporting jobs, quality health care benefits and retirement security. One of the most important planks in the platform to make the economy work for working families is the restoration of workers' right to organize.

To address the crisis in manufacturing, the AFL-CIO in 2002 established the Industrial Union Council—now made up of 12 unions in the manufacturing sector. IUC member unions are pursuing national policies that will create and sustain good jobs, healthy communities and a voice for working families.

Joining with global allies, the union movement has fought to bring workers' rights and higher standards to less developed nations around the world and challenged corporate exploitation of workers and is preparing to launch a union-movement-wide campaign to halt the Wal-Marting of America.

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## Manufacturing and Trade

To combat the erosion of the nation's manufacturing jobs, the 12-member Industrial Union Council (IUC) pursues strategies to address the causes underlying the jobs crisis: flawed U.S. trade and currency policies, rising health care costs, attacks on workers' overtime pay protections and employers' war against workers' right to join a union. The IUC also is formulating international initiatives to combat job exports.

Led by the presidents of manufacturing unions and chaired by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka, the IUC held its third legislative conference in May 2005 in Washington, D.C., where more than 1,300 workers from industrial unions lobbied members of Congress and developed strategies to revitalize manufacturing, focusing on trade, health care and workers' freedom to form unions. A Capitol Hill rally against the flawed Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) capped the conference.

Since its inception, the IUC has lobbied government officials to use U.S. trade laws to address unfair trade practices such as violations of workers' rights and revisions to tax laws that encourage companies to leave the country. IUC-member unions

also are demanding immediate action to press China and other nations to stop artificially propping up their currencies by tying their exchange rate to the U.S. dollar. Together with the AFL-CIO, the IUC filed two groundbreaking trade cases against the Chinese government to address China's inflated currency, garnering worldwide press coverage and raising the awareness of Congress and the public.

China, the largest trading partner of the United States, manipulates its currency, keeping it undervalued by as much as 40 percent compared with the U.S. dollar. This means Chinese exports to the United States are underpriced by 40 percent and U.S. exports to China are overpriced by 40 percent. As a result, one-fourth of the record-breaking U.S. trade deficit—\$651 billion in 2004—is with China.

The IUC unions, in coordination with the AFL-CIO, helped organize the opposition to the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) in 2003, and IUC members were among the tens of thousands of union members who worked to stop the agreement. Through rallies, town hall meetings and bus tours, the AFL-CIO and its allies mobilized working families to stop the pact—which would extend the North American Free Trade Agreement's (NAFTA's) damage to the entire Western Hemisphere except Cuba. In 2002, the FTAA seemed poised for approval. The Bush administration, backed by its corporate allies, was set to move more manufacturing jobs to more low-wage nations, exploit more workers and ship the goods to sell at huge profits. The FTAA contained extensive new rights for multinational corporations—but provided no comparable guarantees for workers' rights or environmental protections.





But by November 2003, union members culminated their Stop FTAA efforts in a three-day event in Miami, where trade ministers from the Western Hemisphere were meeting at the eighth FTAA Ministerial Meeting to discuss the next steps in creating the FTAA. Backed by a coalition that included dozens of unions and their allies, 20,000 workers traveled to Miami and delivered hundreds of thousands of unofficial ballots cast by working families across the nation opposing the FTAA. They were joined by workers from throughout the Americas waging similar campaigns in their own countries. Participants in Miami faced stiff opposition: They were beaten, gassed, shot at with rubber bullets and arrested in a state-sanctioned effort federally funded by \$8 million in Iraq war funds. The attacks on FTAA protesters led to an investigation by broadcast journalist Bill Moyers. The AFL-CIO has filed suit over the brutality, and investigations still are under way.

Ultimately, the mobilization against FTAA stymied its progress, and the Bush administration, fearing defeat in Congress, changed its strategy and began seeking smaller trade deals to push more easily through Congress.

In May 2004, Bush signed CAFTA, extending NAFTA to the Dominican Republic and five Central American countries. Building on the success of the FTAA fight, working families kept up pressure through e-mail and fax campaigns and other actions.

In May 2005, the AFL-CIO launched a new “CAFTA—We Don’t Hafta” tour in which workers from Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and the United States traveled from Washington, D.C., to New York City and San Antonio to describe how CAFTA would harm workplace standards and destroy economic development while lining the pockets of

multinational corporations. Joining together, workers from these diverse countries united in their message to lawmakers: CAFTA won’t work for workers in any nation.



## Building Good Jobs

### Retirement Security

Working families’ retirement is under attack: Whether through corporate bankruptcies, job exporting or cost cutting, corporations are gutting workers’ pensions and putting workers’ retirement security in jeopardy. At the same time, the Bush administration’s efforts to privatize Social Security threaten to shred the nation’s most successful and reliable safety net.

Fewer and fewer U.S. workers can count on guaranteed pensions—since 1978, the percentage of private-sector workers covered by guaranteed (defined-benefit) pension plans has plummeted from 41 percent to less than 21 percent today. Rocky conditions in the nation’s financial markets have put tremendous pressure on pension funds and greatly increased the contributions some employers must make to their plans. Faced with increased competition

from cheap imports and a sluggish economy, employers are looking for easy ways to reduce costs. Some, such as United Airlines and Bethlehem Steel Corp., are using the nation's bankruptcy laws to cut expenses by breaking contracts with workers and eliminating their pension obligations or reducing the pension payouts.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions are developing key principles for pension policy reform to ensure workers retain solid pension plans and to make certain more workers receive pension coverage on which they can count.

To strengthen Social Security and defeat Bush administration plans to privatize this bedrock family economic security program, unions and their partners, including the Alliance for Retired Americans and Americans United to Protect Social Security, have launched massive member mobilization and public education campaigns, coupled with a drive to expose corporations' and financial firms' support for privatization.



Beginning in spring 2005, working families staged rallies to expose the risks of privatization at each stop of a Bush cross-country tour, in which he tried to sell his scheme in so-called town hall meetings before screened, handpicked audiences of GOP loyalists. The union movement's education and information campaign has provided activists and the public with facts highlighting the dangers of privatizing Social Security and illustrating how retirees rely on Social Security's guaranteed retirement benefits. Activist tools include fact sheets, charts, talking points and more on the AFL-CIO website and through the Working Families Toolkit.

Through the Office of Investment, the AFL-CIO launched a campaign to counter the massive funding of and support for Social Security privatization by some of the nation's largest financial firms—including Charles Schwab Corp., Waddell & Reed Inc. and Edward Jones. Working family activists have marched and rallied at the firms' offices in dozens of cities, and the AFL-CIO has compiled information documenting the companies' involvement in such front groups for Social Security privatization as the Securities Industry Association, a Wall Street lobby group. The AFL-CIO mobilized activists through the Working Families Network to take online action urging Schwab and other firms to end their support of Social Security privatization. By April 2005, one of the nation's largest brokerage firms, Edward Jones, and the investment firm Waddell & Reed dropped out of pro-privatization lobbying groups after facing public pressure.

When Bush and the White House tried to line up congressional support for the scheme, working families mobilized to win the pledges of House and Senate members to protect Social Security. By early summer

2005, public support for Bush's handling of Social Security had dropped to 34 percent, and even congressional Republicans were backing away from the risky scheme.

### Health Care for Working Families

The United States spends more on health care than any other country in the world, yet nearly 47 million Americans lack medical coverage. While most Americans with health insurance rely on their employers for access to quality care, employers increasingly are shifting their rising costs to workers who struggle to pay higher premiums, deductibles and co-payments.

In 2003, the AFL-CIO convened three regional conferences on health care bargaining to discuss the challenges unions face in bargaining and to strategize solutions. More and more, as health care issues frequently top the list of concerns in union bargaining discussions, the AFL-CIO's bargaining assistance to affiliated unions on major contract negotiations focuses on winning strategies for health care benefits. The AFL-CIO has assisted in the following contract talks in which health care was a key issue:

- CWA negotiations with SBC Communications Inc. in 2004;
- CWA negotiations with Verizon in 2003;
- IUE-CWA-led coalition of 14 unions and General Electric, mid-term strike and campaign to fight cost shifting in 2003;
- UFCW and Southern California grocery employers in 2002–2003;
- International Longshore and Warehouse Union and Pacific Maritime Association in 2002;
- BCTGM and Hershey Foods Corp. in 2002; and
- IBT and Basic Vegetable Products (ConAgra Foods Inc.) in 2001.



### Wages

When the Bush administration attempted to steamroll a massive cut in U.S. workers' overtime pay, working families and their unions countered with an unprecedented fight. Through marches, postcard campaigns, e-mail and fax communications, America's working families generated massive public and congressional opposition to the Bush take-away, the biggest rollback of overtime pay rights since passage of the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act.

Congress voted four times in 2003 to kill the scheme—and only White House arm-twisting and backroom maneuvering by Republican lawmakers kept it alive. By the end of 2004, Congress had voted six times to block Bush's overtime pay take-away, highlighting working families' success in getting Congress's attention on a key issue the Bush administration otherwise would have quietly rammed through the regulatory process.

Beginning in March 2003 when Bush first proposed the scheme, workers sent more than 1.6 million e-mails, faxes and letters to lawmakers, the U.S. Department of Labor



**Because of working families' outpouring of opposition, the Department of Labor made significant improvements in the final rule, with 2 million fewer workers likely to lose their overtime pay than in the original proposal.**

and the Bush administration to protest the action. After the 2004 elections, Bush threatened to veto a huge spending bill needed to keep many sections of the government running if Congress amended the bill to include a ban on the new overtime rules—and as a result, Republican leaders removed the amendment. But because of working families' outpouring of opposition, the Department of Labor made significant improvements in the final rule, with 2 million fewer workers likely to lose their overtime pay than in the original proposal. The resistance campaign was key to building union members' awareness of the Bush agenda to roll back workers' rights.

Along with the attack on overtime pay, the Bush administration has backed legislation to allow employers to replace paid overtime with compensatory time off and replace the 40-hour workweek with an 80-hour, two-week pay period. Both proposals would force employees to work longer hours for less pay. Working family opposition has kept both proposals from advancing. The Bush administration and Republican congressional leaders also repeatedly have blocked attempts to pass legislation to raise the minimum wage, which at \$5.15 an hour, hasn't been increased since 1997.

## **Safety and Health—The Fight for Safe Jobs Continues**

The Bush administration has turned its back on workers and workplace safety and health, overturning or blocking dozens of important workplace protections. The administration has pushed voluntary compliance rather than issuing new protective standards and enforcing current law. Each Bush administration budget has reduced the federal government's commitment to protecting workers' safety and health.

As the nation's most prominent advocate for workers' safety and health, the union

movement has countered the challenges, winning key battles despite the ferocity of the opposition.

The AFL-CIO and some 30 affiliated unions developed and lobbied for legislation to ensure fair compensation for more than 1.5 million victims of asbestos exposure and to prevent legislation to bail out asbestos defendants.

The Bush administration's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has not addressed the dramatic increases in both the number and rate of fatalities among Hispanic workers. The AFL-CIO and its affiliates highlighted these alarming increases, which occurred as the overall number and rate of workplace fatalities were dropping. Unions have publicized these issues in an attempt to force OSHA to take stronger actions to protect Latino and immigrant workers. At the same time, unions are exploring ways to reach and educate Hispanic and immigrant workers about their safety and health rights and protections.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliates were instrumental in developing and lobbying for the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program that established a compensation system for workers made ill through their employment at the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons facilities. Unions also led the charge in December 2002 when health care workers nationwide voiced their concerns about the Bush administration's plan to vaccinate millions of people against smallpox. Congress overwhelmingly passed the Smallpox Emergency Personnel Act to compensate caregivers, their families and patients who became disabled or died as a result of the vaccine. In addition, state federations, with help from the AFL-CIO Safety and Health Department, fought against insurers, employers and extremist

Republicans in state legislatures to protect already scant workers' compensation benefits for millions of injured workers.

Through train-the-trainer programs at the National Labor College, scores of union activists and staff have taken part in comprehensive training in workplace health and safety. With input from affiliated unions, the AFL-CIO and the National Labor College developed a new course for organizers, Using Safety and Health in Organizing Campaigns. Affiliates plan to use the course, piloted in January 2005, nationwide to train their organizers.

The AFL-CIO has continued its annual April 28 Workers Memorial Day observance to call attention to job safety problems and to renew the fight for safe jobs. Each year,

the federation publishes a comprehensive report on the state of workplace safety and health in the United States and supports the organizing of hundreds of local events and activities. Workers Memorial Day has become a global event, with trade unions in more than 100 countries now organizing similar April 28 activities.

In the AFL-CIO's ongoing work with affiliated unions, the federation will lead the union movement's efforts to defend existing workplace protections and push for action on major problems such as ergonomics, job stress, work hours, behavioral safety, chemical exposures and infectious diseases. These efforts must be built on education and organizing at the grassroots level and tied to other legislative and political activities that increase workers' political strength.

## Working Families Network Expands to Reach Millions

In 2002, the AFL-CIO developed and launched the online AFL-CIO Working Families Network for unions, state federations and central bodies. One of the federation's most far-reaching efforts, the Working Families Network provides a streamlined method to recruit and manage lists of activists online by locations, interests and levels of activism. The Working Families Network gives union leaders a tool to mobilize union members—75 percent of whom have online access—and enables activists to relay their key concerns to elected leaders, CEOs and others. With a simple e-mail alert, union members can be mobilized to take part in rallies and events and keep abreast of the latest key working-family issues and provide support to workers seeking to form unions.

Hundreds of thousands of union members received issues education messages on Bush's overtime pay take-away, the Medicare prescription drug battle, extremist judicial nominees, Social Security and unfair trade agreements. These e-mail action alerts generated nearly 2 million e-mails,

faxes, letters and phone calls to lawmakers in 2004 and reinforced the importance of political action in the 2004 elections. Union activists sent out 15.6 million voter education e-mails during Labor 2004 through the Working Families Network, which now has grown to include nearly 4 million activists. Through the Working Families Network, members have supported workers' organizing efforts in various campaigns, including at Verizon Wireless, Cintas, Gallo and Safeway, by demanding these employers honor their workers' choice.



The AFL-CIO also will address the safety and health concerns of workers through union organizing. For most workers, the right to a safe job can be realized only through collective action and a union contract. At the same time, organizing around safety and health can help build stronger active local unions.

The AFL-CIO will work with affiliates to develop effective strategies to incorporate safety and health into organizing campaigns and to support the training of organizers to identify and address workers' safety and health concerns as part of union organizing efforts.

### **Immigrant Workers' Rights**

As corporations seeking the lowest wages and least regulation move jobs out of the United States, standards sink for workers here and abroad. With globalization destroying the infrastructure of developing nations, more and more workers become

victims of corporate greed. Coming to America seems the only way to create a better life for many people in developing countries slaving for pennies an hour.

Unfortunately, immigrant workers in the United States continue to be victims of corporate greed largely because of the failure of our immigration system and our labor laws. In fact, industries that cannot outsource jobs to developing nations—such as the construction industry, meatpacking, food processing and service jobs—are finding ways to import the labor standards of the developing nations to this country. Nowhere is that more evident than in the courts' interpretation of the Supreme Court's decision in *Hoffman Plastic Compounds v. NLRB*, which denies undocumented workers who are fired for union activity the traditional remedy of back pay.

The application of that decision in other areas of law has perverse incentive for employers to abuse immigrant workers. For example, the Supreme Court of New York, Appellate Division, recently held that a construction worker who was injured on the job because of the employer's negligence was entitled to recover back pay for the time he was injured, and so unable to work, but not at the rate he was earning in New York. Rather, the worker was able only to recover at the rate he would have been earning in Mexico, where the court said he should have been working.

In this framework, immigrant workers in the United States continue to face the harshest forms of workplace injustices: employer interference with their rights to improve wages and working conditions through unionization; discrimination and abuse at the hands of unscrupulous employers; and the enduring struggle for dignity and respect, both as workers and human beings. Further, the ability of



employers to exploit vulnerable immigrant workers with impunity imperils workplace rights and protections for all workers, regardless of their immigration status.

The AFL-CIO has taken the lead in fighting for justice for immigrant workers in the workplace, in communities and in the public policy arena. We know communities become stronger and the balance between income and public services is restored when employers provide better-paying jobs, health care and safe working environments for all workers. As part of the union movement's effort to ensure good jobs and strong communities for working families, today's unions are standing strong to demand protection for the rights of immigrant workers and to thwart employers' attempts to exploit immigrants and pit workers against each other.

In fall 2003, the union movement organized the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, in which hundreds of immigrant workers boarded buses in 10 different cities for a cross-country tour highlighting immigrant workers' struggle for justice.

Modeled after the Freedom Rides of the 1960s, which challenged racial segregation in the Deep South, the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride energized workers at every stop. Moving the issue of immigrant rights to the national agenda, the workers, who represented dozens of nationalities, traveled more than 20,000 miles and stopped in more than 100 cities across the country as part of a national coalition of unions and community groups. At many stops, participants took part in supporting campaigns by workers seeking to form unions, with workers speaking to the group about the opposition they faced from their employers. The new Freedom Riders traveled to Washington, D.C., where they held more than 120 meetings with lawmakers

on Capitol Hill to push for citizenship for all immigrant workers. Immigrant workers and their allies also discussed with lawmakers the need to change the laws to allow immigrant workers to reunite their families and to protect immigrants' civil rights, liberties and workplace rights.



Making the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride such a huge success took months of strategic planning, involving hundreds of union members reaching out to immigrant workers, community allies and activists—and ultimately, building lasting coalitions for long-term mutual support.

The federation also has provided ongoing legal and technical assistance to affiliates during organizing campaigns and contract negotiations. For example, in 2003, when a group of courageous mine workers of Mexican ancestry attempted to organize a mine in Utah, the employer, one of the biggest mine owners in the country, fired them under the guise of having “discovered” problems with the immigration papers. The UMWA, with the assistance of the AFL-CIO Office of General Counsel, used various creative legal strategies to bring justice to these workers' struggle. The AFL-CIO also developed training materials and toolkits



to assist organizers and union leaders in reaching out to emerging immigrant communities.

Finally, the AFL-CIO also has taken the lead in campaigning for comprehensive immigration reform and has developed a set of principles that must be included in any new federal legislation, including a real process toward legalization of undocumented workers and their families.

These principles are:

- Undocumented workers and their families make enormous contributions to their communities and workplaces and should be provided permanent legal status through a new legalization program.
- The *Hoffman Plastic Compounds* decision must be reversed. Otherwise, the current perverse incentives for employers to hire and exploit undocumented workers will continue.
- Employer sanctions and the I-9 system should be replaced with a system that targets and criminalizes employers who recruit undocumented workers from abroad for economic gain.
- Immigrant workers should have full workplace rights, including the freedom to form unions and protections for whistle-blowers.
- Government safety net benefits are important for all workers, and those unfairly taken away by Congress should be restored.

- Labor and business together should design mechanisms to meet legitimate needs for new workers without compromising the rights and opportunities of workers already here.
- Temporary worker programs must guarantee all workers have enforceable labor protections and must not allow employers to use workers' immigration status to drive down wages and workplace standards.

## Holding Corporations Accountable

### Capital Stewardship

Holding corporations accountable and preventing the types of corporate behavior that brought down companies such as Enron Corp., WorldCom and Tyco International Ltd. are critical parts of the AFL-CIO's efforts to ensure family-supporting jobs and secure benefits for working families. The union movement is effectively using the power of workers' savings—worth some \$5 trillion—to reform corporate behavior and protect the retirement security of millions of working families.

Working with the AFL-CIO Office of Investment, worker benefit funds are leading the shareholder fight to challenge CEO excess and restore genuine accountability to the corporate boardroom. Worker funds sponsored shareholder challenges to enhance corporate governance and rein in runaway CEO pay in 2004. Worker funds also are demanding greater accountability by running "Vote No" initiatives on corporate directors. In response, there have been more majority votes on shareholder proposals—46 worker fund proposals received majority votes in 2004—and more companies are engaging in meaningful dialogues with worker fund shareholders.



Most importantly, more companies than ever are responding to majority shareholder votes, reforming executive pay and even stripping conflicted directors of their board seats and committee assignments.

Many of these reforms are occurring in response to votes included in the annual *AFL-CIO Key Votes Survey*. The *Key Votes Survey* rates the voting practices of investment managers by surveying how they voted on proposals representing a worker-owner view of value. In 2004, for the first time, the *Key Votes Survey* also included the giant mutual fund companies, which now are required to disclose their proxy votes following a successful AFL-CIO rule-making petition and investor campaign that led to new Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) disclosure rules. In another regulatory reform long sought by the AFL-CIO, the nonprofit Financial Accounting Standards Board moved to require the expensing of stock options.

In a clear sign that worker funds are closing in on the very conflicts that give rise to the imperial CEO, the business community now is leading an all-out effort to roll back recent regulatory reforms and silence the shareholder advocacy of the worker funds that have been at the forefront of the corporate reform movement. The backlash began in fall 2003 when the SEC, in response to an AFL-CIO rule-making petition and calls from worker funds, proposed rules that would make it easier for shareholders to nominate directors. The backlash intensified after worker funds successfully broke up cozy boards at companies such as Cintas Corp. and Safeway Inc. Building on these victories, worker funds redoubled their efforts in 2005, submitting another 340 shareholder proposals by mid-2005 and, most recently, challenging the Wal-Mart board to address its legal compliance failures.

The AFL-CIO capital stewardship program also has ramped up retirement security initiatives to defend defined-benefit retirement plans, particularly the many public pension funds now under attack, and undermine Wall Street support for the Bush plan to privatize Social Security (see Retirement Security, page 31).

With Bush's recent nomination of Rep. Christopher Cox (R-Calif.)—author of legislation that would have made it virtually impossible for shareholders to bring suit against companies that misled or deceived them—to head the SEC, union activists have geared up to challenge the retrenchment of bipartisan corporate reform. The AFL-CIO is coordinating this ongoing effort and will continue to ramp up its corporate accountability and retirement security initiatives.

#### **Wal-Mart**

With a record-breaking \$10 billion in profits last year and more than \$288 billion in annual sales, Wal-Mart made more than twice the profits of its leading retail competitors *combined*, according to the company's most recent annual report. Wal-Mart, the nation's largest private-sector employer, is one of the most visible and well-known U.S. corporations. But while it built its early reputation on low prices, several years of focused campaigns by the union movement and its allies have spotlighted the real Wal-Mart: a multibillion-dollar corporation that pays its employees low wages and provides inadequate health care benefits while running small businesses out of communities and lowering job and benefit standards. It has directed its vast resources to stamping out its workers' freedom to form unions, changing its processes to eliminate the work of meat cutters when they chose union representation in Texas and shutting down an entire store in Canada

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because workers there formed a union. Wal-Mart also squeezes suppliers so hard they are forced to move jobs overseas, primarily to countries with egregious labor conditions. Through websites, town hall meetings, ballot initiatives and in local town council meetings, the union movement has highlighted Wal-Mart's reputation as one of the most virulent anti-union, anti-worker employers in the nation and one of the biggest beneficiaries of corporate welfare.

Working families and health care activists have developed a model Health Care Disclosure Act for which they are seeking support in state legislatures to hold Wal-Mart and other big-box corporations accountable when their employees are forced to use taxpayer-funded public services because they can't afford employer-offered health care benefits (see page 50). At the same time, they are seeking to pass living-wage laws to ensure all workers have family-supporting incomes.

Each Wal-Mart store employing 200 people costs taxpayers approximately \$420,750 annually in public social services used by Wal-Mart workers whose low wages and unaffordable health insurance mean many

earn poverty-wages, according to a report by a congressional staff committee.

In Arkansas, where Wal-Mart is headquartered, Wal-Mart has more workers and their children on the state's Medicaid and other public assistance programs for low-income workers and families than any other employer in the state. In fact, virtually every state that has looked into the question of which employers' workers are relying on public health programs for themselves or their children reports Wal-Mart tops the list.

In 2003, unions spearheaded a community coalition in Inglewood, Calif., that rallied voters who ultimately rejected a Wal-Mart-sponsored ballot initiative that would have allowed a Wal-Mart supercenter the size of 17 football fields to be developed in their community—unhindered by local and state planning review. The defeat was the first of its kind for Wal-Mart, which had sought to bypass local lawmakers who opposed the plan.

Working with the UFCW, the AFL-CIO is providing key support in the campaign to hold Wal-Mart accountable. Launched in August 2004, the AFL-CIO's website, *Paying the Price at Wal-Mart* ([www.walmartcostsyou.com](http://www.walmartcostsyou.com)), has provided tens of thousands of visitors the real story behind Wal-Mart's corporate practices and gives union and nonunion workers advice and suggestions on mobilizing their communities for justice at Wal-Mart. To further educate union members about the high costs of shopping at Wal-Mart, the AFL-CIO in 2005 sent notices through Union Privilege credit card mailings, reaching literally millions of union members. In a series of five messages on Wal-Mart this year, the AFL-CIO



Working Families Network e-mailed nearly 1.5 million activists with background information on Wal-Mart's low wages and unaffordable benefits and, along with WORKING AMERICA's e-mail outreach, mobilized e-activists to protest the closing of the Wal-Mart store in Canada after workers voted to form a union.

## **International Solidarity**

The AFL-CIO organized international support from unions around the world for workers struggling for the freedom to organize and bargain for fair standards at multinational corporations. A major recent fight for justice took place at Quebecor World Inc., the world's largest commercial printer. In May 2005, the Graphic Communications Conference of IBT, the AFL-CIO and Quebecor World reached a historic agreement on union organizing at the company's nonunion U.S. facilities. This agreement guarantees Quebecor World workers across the nation the right to form and join a union free from harassment or intimidation (see Voice@Work, page 26).

The AFL-CIO also is pursuing justice for garment workers around the world in the Behind the Label Campaign; helping workers win rights in China and Burma; and joining with activists to stop the murder of

Colombian trade unionists by paramilitary troops. Working with unions, nongovernmental organizations and other community partners, the AFL-CIO American Center for International Labor Solidarity (Solidarity Center) supports programs and projects to advance workers' rights and promote broad-based, sustainable economic development around the world.

The Solidarity Center assists independent unions through programs in more than 40 countries on issues such as ending child labor, advancing workers' rights, building union capacity and holding corporations responsible. The center worked with the International Labor Organization (ILO) to persuade governments to implement and enforce the ILO's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work to provide union activists with the knowledge and skills they need to develop and manage democratic trade unions.

In 2003, the Solidarity Center launched a corporate accountability campaign geared toward companies operating in the Americas, Africa and Asia. It developed and implemented workers' rights promotion programs in countries that have signed trade agreements or are engaged in trade negotiations with the United States and the European Union.

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## Show Us the Jobs!

In March 2004, 51 workers—one from each state and the District of Columbia—boarded buses in St. Louis for an eight-day trip through eight states and 18 cities to shine a spotlight on the effects of joblessness on their families and communities.

The Show Us the Jobs tour kicked off at a time when some 1.1 million workers were jobless for so long they had run out of emergency unemployment insurance—while the Bush administration and Republican congressional leaders continued to block efforts to provide new unemployment insurance. By early 2004, an average of 85,444 people lost their jobs every day, and under President Bush’s leadership the nation had lost more than 3 million private-sector jobs, including almost 2.8 million manufacturing jobs.

Sponsored by the AFL-CIO and WORKING AMERICA, the tour showcased the people and towns hit hard by the jobs crisis and sent a message that a change was needed in national economic policy to create family-supporting jobs.

The tour received wide media coverage at all the stops and in the national news. Many of the riders wrote daily blogs (Web logs) launched on a special AFL-CIO Show Us the Jobs website, which provided an activist toolkit with facts on the nation’s jobs crisis, biographies of the 51 participants, up-to-date bus tour highlights and action options for signing a petition and sending e-mails urging Bush and Congress to create good jobs.

In community gatherings and rallies throughout the bus tour, Show Us the Jobs participants described how they had lost their jobs because of bad trade policies that make it profitable for employers to ship jobs overseas.

Josephine, 50, a bus rider from Highland Park, N.J., was laid off from her job as an industrial engineer

and technical writer from the telecommunications industry in November 2001. Her apprehensions reflected those of millions of Americans.

“I’m concerned for myself and for the future of the nation,” Josephine said on the bus tour. “We’ve lost a lot of our manufacturing base, and now we’re losing technical and service jobs overseas. There should be some constraints on free trade so it doesn’t tear apart our families and communities. People need to work to earn a living and keep their homes. We need to strengthen America’s local economic base. So-called free trade will not result in the trickling down of new jobs for people like me.”

On March 31, the Show Us the Jobs buses arrived in Washington, D.C., where participants were greeted by hundreds of supporters who joined them at a Capitol Hill rally and in lobbying visits to support legislation to stop employers from shipping jobs overseas and encourage job growth in the United States. Show Us the Jobs participants have represented the interests of working people in the media, at the Democratic Platform Drafting Committee and elsewhere.



# SOLIDARITY in Action



**By Labor 2004, more than 225,000 union activist volunteers contacted more than 90 percent of America's union members, knocked on 6 million doors and made 10 million phone calls.**

**F**UELED BY THE EXTREMIST RIGHT, Congress and the Bush administration have escalated their war on working families and their unions since 2001, pushing Bush tax breaks for the wealthy, widening the wage-and-wealth gap, destroying the federal budget surplus and decimating programs for working families and the poor. With millions of dollars in backing from Big Business—in a campaign war chest that expands exponentially each major election year—Bush, Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas) and other extremist politicians have used their financial momentum to make gains at the expense of working families.

Despite the hostile political environment, America's working families are making their voices heard today more than ever as the AFL-CIO's year-around political mobilization—based on a 10 point plan for member-to-member issues education—continues to set record voter turnouts. In Labor 2004, union household members made up 24 percent of all voters, up from

19 percent in 1992. The AFL-CIO's strategic mobilization also boosted grassroots member political action far beyond the ballot box: By Labor 2004, more than 225,000 union activist volunteers contacted more than 90 percent of America's union members, knocked on 6 million doors and made 10 million phone calls. In addition, they distributed 32 million leaflets at worksites and in neighborhoods—most of which were produced through the online AFL-CIO Working Families Toolkit. The AFL-CIO also mailed 30 million issues pamphlets to union members, and AFL-CIO affiliated unions sent millions more.

The mobilization's ability to increase the number of union household voters has been so effective it is being imitated by our political foes. Notorious anti-worker Rep. DeLay touted the union movement's political blueprint as a best practice model.

“Labor unions have done a better job of putting more volunteers on the ground

where they're needed the most—in competitive races,” DeLay said in 2002.

Affiliated unions of the AFL-CIO recognized the importance of the new and expanded political mobilization initiatives and agreed in 2002 to increase their assessment to fund union member education, voter registration and mobilization—funding that goes toward issues campaigns, not political candidates, whose endorsements the AFL-CIO conducts on a bipartisan basis.

Union voters made the difference in several key battleground states in which union density was deep. But with Big Business outspending working families by 23-to-1 in the 2004 election cycle and divisive social issues mobilizing the extreme conservative voter base, anti-worker candidates prevailed in many races.

As part of a multipronged strategy that includes massive increases in mobilizing workers and developing and strengthening bonds with community allies, affiliated unions and state and local bodies, the

AFL-CIO Member Mobilization Fund will provide resources for a new long-term political strategy to build toward a progressive majority over the next several election cycles. The fund will cover ground campaigns, member education/get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts, issues mobilization, initiatives and referenda, targeting and planning, special elections, Target 5000 for electing union members and training and support for WORKING AMERICA.

In creating a year-round voter mobilization network, building on the many political successes and strategies developed over the past decade and refined in the past four years, the union movement is laying the foundation to take on local, state and national political battles to mobilize union members and the nearly 50 million voters in union households.

## Labor 2004

### 10 Point Political Action Plan

Shortly after the 2001 AFL-CIO Convention, union political leaders and activists began developing new strategies and creating cutting-edge Web-based tools to put in place the union movement's 10 Point Political Action Plan. Starting with the 2002 elections, the AFL-CIO spearheaded political training for union activists and candidates, developed a campaign to ensure every vote was counted and explored and launched new technologies and strategies for nuts-and-bolts member education, voter registration and GOTV efforts.

### Laying the Groundwork for Labor 2004

Nearly two years before the 2004 elections, the AFL-CIO launched efforts to educate union voters about the high stakes for working families. The federation's national education initiative centered on the impact

### The AFL-CIO 10 Point Political Action Plan

1. Recruit key contacts at locals and worksites.
2. Distribute leaflets at all union worksites.
3. Maximize contact through union publications.
4. Mail frequent communications from local union presidents and other leaders.
5. Maximize the impact of union phone calls.
6. Update local member lists.
7. Increase voter registration by 10 percent.
8. Conduct a massive get-out-the-vote effort.
9. Build rapid-response networks in workplaces.
10. Link politics to organizing.

of Bush's political and legislative agendas on working families. More than 10,000 local union leaders took part in the federation's education workshops, and numerous unions and constituency groups built on and adapted them for their members.

Although 2002 was not a presidential election year, record numbers of union members mobilized to get out the vote: More than 4,000 local union coordinators reached out to tens of thousands of union member volunteers who helped propel pro-working family lawmakers to victory. In Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, union-backed candidates wrested governors' offices from the opposition.

To further mobilize working-family voters, the AFL-CIO launched a swing-voter identification and communication program. Through an intricate statistical analysis of survey, targeting, demographic and publicly available consumer data, the virtual targeting initiative identified swing voters, enabling the federation to tailor messages and education material adapted to their specific interests—overtime pay, health care and other issues expected to be key in the presidential election.

By intensifying workplace contacts, refining electronic mobilization, electing union members and reaching out to community allies in 2003, union activists crafted successful mobilization test runs for 2004. In New Jersey, 35 of the 53 union members running for state and local offices won their races, in large part due to local union mobilizations that resulted in high union-family turnout. In Philadelphia, unions joined with community members, civil rights and religious activists and others to re-elect their pro-worker mayor, John Street. Cleveland-area unions focused their efforts on four mayoral races, five school board contests and a city council election—and won all 10 races with the strong implementation of

the union movement's 10 Point Political Action Plan.

With a large field of Democratic presidential challengers lining up for the 2004 elections, the AFL-CIO sought candidates' views about working-family issues and submitted detailed questionnaires to the White House hopefuls, including Bush. All Democratic candidates responded. Bush did not. The responses were posted on [www.aflcio.org](http://www.aflcio.org).



To provide further information to union voters, the federation conducted a Working Families Presidential Forum in July 2003 in which all nine Democratic presidential candidates answered questions from workers about vital working-family issues. The nationally televised forum was the only campaign event that focused exclusively on working-family issues.

With an eye toward building stronger coalitions to battle Bush's corporate-bankrolled 2004 campaign, the union movement expanded its outreach to partner groups—especially to communities of color. In addition, unions joined with new organizations such as Voices for Working Families, the



Partnership for America's Families, America Coming Together, America Votes and Moving America Forward, while continuing long-term campaigns such as Working Women Vote, which since 1996 has mobilized women voters by connecting their everyday challenges with the need for political action.

### **Unprecedented Member Mobilization**

By Jan. 1, 2004, Labor 2004 staff, organizations and volunteers were in place in key battleground states in which the presidential election was expected to be decided. The union movement concentrated resources in the 16 battleground states with narrow 2000 election results, where working-family voters could make a difference. Along with an unprecedented 290 AFL-CIO staff members, national unions committed more than 5,900 staff and local union officers to Labor 2004.

By Labor Day, the traditional start to the election campaign, local union coordinators—union member volunteers—already

had contacted millions of union members about the important issues in national, state and local races. As Election Day neared and the working families' mobilization for Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and for passage of key working-family measures continued to grow, more than 225,000 union activist volunteers had taken part in voter outreach, education and mobilization. They contacted more than 90 percent of union members affiliated with the AFL-CIO, knocked on 6 million doors, made 10 million phone calls and distributed 32 million leaflets at worksites and in neighborhoods. In addition, the AFL-CIO mailed out 30 million issues pamphlets and affiliated unions sent millions more. As part of Working Women Vote activities, the federation coordinated a woman-to-woman letter-writing campaign in support of Kerry that sent nearly 5,000 handwritten letters to undecided union women voters in battleground states and generated 20,000 messages to Sen. Kerry and President Bush on issues of concern to working women.

Although Bush won a narrow victory by running a fear-based campaign that emphasized terrorism and ongoing military action, union members overwhelmingly supported Kerry for president. Union households accounted for one of four voters, totaling 27 million union household voters in 2004, according to an independent election night survey and exit polls. Union households provided a 5.8 million vote advantage for the Democratic candidate for president, according to an Election Day exit poll.

Sixty-five percent of AFL-CIO-affiliated union members voted for Kerry, with an even bigger margin—68 percent—voting for Kerry in battleground states. In sharply divided Ohio, 67 percent of union members voted for Kerry, according to the election night survey conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the AFL-CIO.

## **Working Families Toolkit**

As the union movement built its grassroots outreach in 2004, the AFL-CIO greatly expanded its online Working Families Toolkit. The toolkit—which plays an increasingly important role in mobilizing and educating members—enables union leaders and activists to create, customize, download or print worksite fliers and other issues education materials. The fliers can be tailored for national union affiliates, local unions, state federations and central labor councils, and activists can select issues that resonate with their members. In addition to customized worksite fliers, the site offers options to create posters, cartoons, newsletter articles, sample letters from union leaders, phone scripts, talking points, precinct walk instructions, T-shirts, buttons and other campaign paraphernalia.





After the elections, more than 90 percent of union members said they received information from their unions on issues in the presidential campaign crucial to working families.

## Ensuring Candidates Support Workers' Freedom to Form Unions

The AFL-CIO worked with state federations, central labor councils and affiliated unions to ensure that throughout the elections, candidate questionnaires solicited the views of local and national candidates on the Employee Free Choice Act and their commitment to workers forming unions. Through the candidate questionnaire, during the union-backed presidential debate and at events across the country, the Democratic presidential candidates all took strong positions on restoring the freedom to form unions and the need for legislation like the Employee Free Choice Act. In addition, candidates were asked to take concrete action in support of active organizing campaigns. When union leaders pressed to negotiate a first contract after workers voted to form a union with IBEW in January 2004, management resisted negotiating a contract—until the state AFL-CIO and all the Democratic presidential candidates got involved. Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry took action in support of workers actively trying to form a union with CWA at Comcast, with AFSCME at Walker Methodist Health Care Center in south Minneapolis and with GCIU-IBT at Quebecor World.

## Every Vote Counts

To ensure the integrity of the voting process in the 2002 elections, the AFL-CIO and the civil rights community launched the Every Vote Counts campaign to prevent a repeat of the election debacle in 2000, when

millions of U.S. citizens were denied the right to have their votes counted. In 2004, the AFL-CIO expanded voter rights efforts through the My Vote, My Right campaign.

Every Vote Counts focused on election reform legislation to mandate states to ensure every vote was counted, educate voters about their voting rights and arm them with the information to stand up to election officials seeking to deny them their right to vote.

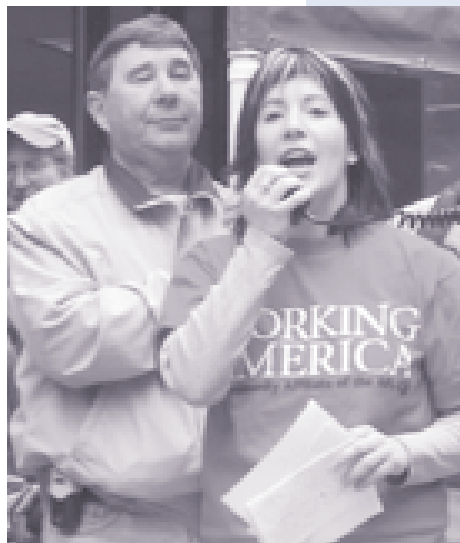
Through the My Vote, My Right voter protection program in 2004, AFL-CIO state voting rights coordinators formed or joined state and local voting rights coalitions in key states that engaged in extensive state and local advocacy to protect the right to vote. Voter education campaigns were conducted among union members, people of color, people with disabilities and others. In coalition with allied organizations, unions and union lawyers met with state and local election officials to head off potential problems. They also set up trainings for 1,500 union members and others to serve as poll watchers in eight states and helped voter rights advocacy coalitions address such issues as voter registration procedures and polling-place hours. More than 200 members of the AFL-CIO Lawyers Coordinating Committee (LCC), a national organization of attorneys from unions and union-friendly law firms, monitored imple-



mentation of election rules in precincts across the nation and staffed a hot line on Election Day for voters who encountered problems when they tried to vote.

## Electing Union Members to Public Offices

Electing union members to public offices is one of the best ways to ensure politicians understand and address the concerns of working families. After the initial **2000 in 2000** effort helped put more than 2,000 union members in office by 2002, the AFL-CIO expanded the strategy to **Target 5000** and offered potential union member candidates assistance through the AFL-CIO National Political Leadership Institute. With the focus on the 2002 elections and beyond, the AFL-CIO teamed up with the National Labor College to create the institute, which enables union members and staff, through weeklong training sessions, to hone their political skills to run for public office and win elections. The nuts-and-bolts training includes campaign management skills, polling techniques, message development, GOTV strategies and volunteer recruitment. Today, more than 3,000 union members hold public office, including the 35 New Jersey union members who won state seats for the first time and another 118 who were re-elected nationwide in 2004.



## WORKING AMERICA

Some 57 million people say they would join a union if they had a chance. But workers who try to organize face employer hostility and weak labor laws that can make their fight for a union seem impossible.

To reach out to such workers and enable them to take action while tapping into their potential political and legislative power, the AFL-CIO Executive Council created WORKING AMERICA as an AFL-CIO community affiliate. Launched in August 2003, WORKING AMERICA grew to more than 800,000 members in just over a year, with offices in 12 cities. Many of these new community members are swing voters, with 70 percent describing themselves as moderate to conservative. Yet these WORKING AMERICA members strongly identify with the working-family issues championed by America's union movement—good jobs, strong communities, affordable health care, good education for their children and secure retirements.

Through WORKING AMERICA's door-to-door canvassing, its website ([www.workingamerica.org](http://www.workingamerica.org)) and regular outreach e-mails, members of WORKING AMERICA:

- Vote in online ballots to determine the priorities of WORKING AMERICA.
- Receive news updates about jobs, affordable health care, education, retirement and real homeland security.
- Get action alerts to help shape local, state and national laws and policies that work for working people.

**WORKING  
AMERICA**  
Building a Better Future for Working Families  
A COMMUNITY AFFILIATE OF THE AFL-CIO

## **WORKING AMERICA** *(Continued)*

WORKING AMERICA members can provide the margin of victory in important state legislative and electoral fights. They also can help build a new source of workers' power in local organizing and bargaining campaigns and provide a nationwide network when America's union movement takes on corporations such as Wal-Mart.

As part of WORKING AMERICA's member-education process, WORKING AMERICA and the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Council (IUC) in 2004 launched Job Tracker ([www.workingamerica.org/jobtracker](http://www.workingamerica.org/jobtracker)), an online interactive database with information on more than 200,000 U.S. corporations and their subsidiaries reported to have moved jobs overseas, including jobs lost due to flawed U.S. trade policies. Visitors to the Job Tracker site can search the database by company name or ZIP code, or by ZIP code and industry. Within seconds, detailed results are culled from a database that draws from more than a dozen sources. Job Tracker also enables visitors to report companies exporting jobs from their communities and send a fax to Bush and anti-worker members of Congress urging them to stop rewarding companies with tax incentives to export American jobs.

As the Bush administration pushed for congressional passage of its overtime pay take-away in 2004, WORKING AMERICA launched an Ask-a-Lawyer feature on its website ([www.workingamerica.org](http://www.workingamerica.org)), enabling visitors to ask a WORKING AMERICA lawyer whether their overtime pay was at risk. More than 1,500 people submitted questions, and tens of thousands of others logged on to see the lawyer's responses. Thousands of WORKING AMERICA members and others used the site's interactive features to send personalized faxes and e-mails to their elected representatives demanding they protect overtime pay.

The 2004 election patterns of WORKING AMERICA members demonstrate when politically moderate or conservative nonpartisan voters are educated and informed, they cast their votes on working-family issues—not on divisive “wedge issues.” As part of WORKING AMERICA's issues outreach during the 2004 electoral campaign, WORKING AMERICA members, especially those in swing areas, received a combination of mail, house visits, phone calls and e-mails describing candidates' positions on working-family issues.

The results were significant: WORKING AMERICA members (70 percent of whom described themselves as moderate or conservative) voted for Sen. John Kerry over President Bush, 68 percent to 30 percent. In all categories, including gun owners, a majority of WORKING AMERICA voters backed Kerry. Those results show the tremendous potential WORKING AMERICA has to effect political change and impact workers' struggles.

In the fight to save Social Security from privatization, WORKING AMERICA will continue to focus on key congressional districts. WORKING AMERICA members already this year have sent nearly 70,000 handwritten letters to key senators. At the state level, WORKING AMERICA works on priorities set by the local union movement, such as health care, anti-job-export bills or minimum-wage initiatives. At the county and city levels, WORKING AMERICA joins with local unions to identify issues critical in local campaigns.

WORKING AMERICA members are part of the Wal-Mart campaign and will take part in organizing campaigns and contract fights and other initiatives to hold corporations accountable.

## Moving a Working Families' Agenda at the State and Local Levels

With Congress moving further away from mainstream working-family concerns, the AFL-CIO is devoting more resources and strategic efforts in state legislatures and executive offices, town councils and county commissions. Big breakthroughs are happening in state after state, including affordable prescription drug legislation in Illinois and Ohio; affordable health care legislation in California, Maine and Nevada; bargaining rights for home care workers in Illinois, Oregon and California; bargaining rights for public-sector workers in New Mexico and university workers in Maryland; majority sign-up rights (card-check) for Illinois public employees; and an anti-sweatshop statute in Maine.

In states and communities across the nation, union activists are holding their lawmakers accountable on economic development issues to ensure development subsidies and incentive programs for companies are transparent, with regular public disclosure of the amounts and kinds of subsidies and incentives received; jobs created with public money are quality jobs that meet acceptable labor standards; and companies are required to pay back the money when promised commitments are not met.

In communities large and small, unions are spearheading and supporting broad coalitions of community-based organizations to negotiate comprehensive community benefits agreements, which require development projects to address community needs regarding workers' rights, living-wage and other job standards, parks and recreation facilities, affordable housing and responsible contracting and leasing decisions.

While the Republican-controlled U.S. Congress continually has blocked any meaningful

effort to raise the federal minimum wage, union activists, joined by other advocates for low-wage working families, have won minimum-wage increases in nine states since January 2002, including New Jersey, Minnesota and Connecticut in 2005, and community after community is passing a living-wage ordinance, some with additional protections such as worker retention and local hiring requirements. Working families are working with state legislatures to win state overtime pay protections taken from millions of workers by the Bush administration in 2004. New overtime protections have been signed into law in Illinois and Maine, and the Massachusetts legislature is considering an overtime pay protection measure.

In nearly 30 states, low-wage employers such as Wal-Mart soon may face new laws spotlighting their drain on taxpayers and state treasuries because so many of their workers qualify for state health care assistance and other state aid. Union members and health care activists are working for passage of Health Care Disclosure Acts that will enable states to determine which corporate freeloaders are shifting their responsibilities to provide health care coverage for their employees onto state taxpayers. The bills require states to collect and disclose the names of employers of applicants for publicly funded health care programs or uncompensated care in hospitals, as well as the cost to state taxpayers. The Health Care Accountability Act is a recently introduced federal bill modeled after the state Health Care Disclosure Act.

States and communities also are working toward legislation to ensure public contracts are not awarded to companies that violate state and federal laws and to ensure companies that provide goods and services to states and communities meet minimum labor standards so responsible contractors can compete successfully. In New Jersey,

With Congress moving further away from mainstream working-family concerns, the AFL-CIO is devoting more resources and strategic efforts in state legislatures and executive offices, town councils and county commissions.



acting Gov. Richard Codey (D) signed into law May 5, 2005, union-backed legislation that ensures the state uses taxpayers' dollars to create jobs by requiring contractors that win state service contracts to do that work in the United States. In a half-dozen other states, coalitions of unions and community and religious groups worked to win legislation addressing outsourcing. Overall in 2005, more than 31 state legislatures around the nation introduced laws that would bar states from using taxpayer money to ship jobs overseas, with most seeking to ban vendors from doing state work abroad.

To bolster these efforts, the federation has brought online activism to state legislative issues with the Working Families Network and a password-protected Legislative Issues website that provides resources, materials, information and collaborative tools for union leaders, staff and activists. The interactive website offers the most up-to-date tools and resources, including model and sample legislation, talking points and detailed analyses of legislation critical to local activists.

The AFL-CIO's annual Workers' Voice conferences, launched in 2000, bring together state labor federation activists and state lawmakers to discuss important working family issues and craft strategies for state legislative battles. The federation has helped increase membership in the National Labor Caucus of State Legislators (NLCSL), a bipartisan network of union member and union-friendly state lawmakers committed to advancing issues working families care about in state legislatures throughout the country. Some 550 lawmakers from all 50 states lobby for working families through the NLCSL.

In 2005, the AFL-CIO's Workers' Voice State Issues Project developed a 12-point Working Families State Agenda—including model legislation—to help state federations, unions

and grassroots activists set their legislative priorities. The agenda centers on creating and strengthening good jobs, stopping the export of state jobs, ensuring accessible health care, the freedom to join a union and holding corporations—including Wal-Mart—accountable.

In 2002 and again in 2004, federation-sponsored meetings of activists from central labor councils, affiliates, partner organizations, academia and research organizations all across the country focused on legislative and policy changes at the local level. Through an examination and discussion of successful campaigns, the 2002 meeting was directed at improving labor standards through living-wage-plus provisions, anti-sweatshop ordinances and economic development requirements. The primary focus of the 2004 meeting included developing community benefit agreements and influencing economic development.

State-level legislative efforts also have been directed at stopping anti-worker forces as they shift from introducing ballot initiatives to working through state legislatures to push "paycheck deception" legislation that would limit political spending by unions and union members. But working with the AFL-CIO's State Issues Initiative that provides information, resources and other assistance, union activists and progressive allies have beaten back most "paycheck deception" and right-to-work-for-less measures in the past four years, including 14 of 15 in 2003 and more than a dozen such measures last year.

Working families in California are fighting back to defeat "paycheck deception" legislation again, after rejecting it in 1998, when the AFL-CIO led a successful state-wide grassroots campaign against the measure. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) called for a special election in fall 2005 on a ballot measure aimed at public employees

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**By broadening, deepening and increasing the activism and involvement of its members—and staying mobilized not just for elections but between elections, the union movement can defeat Social Security privatization, win quality health care for all, change the rules of the global marketplace and restore workers' freedom to form unions.**

and on other anti-worker measures, including one that gives the governor the ability to cut the budget without the legislature's approval. Media reports revealed Schwarzenegger's political team and top contributors plan to demonize public-employee unions and convince the public that unions are behind the state's fiscal problems.

### **Building on Labor 2004**

Labor 2004's record-setting grassroots mobilization is the foundation on which union working families will build their political efforts this year and in coming years.

In 2005, working-family voters are working to elect governors in New Jersey and Virginia and local public officials in several major cities. Union member lawmakers, their union activist colleagues and community allies also are working to strengthen the voices of working families in the decision-making process—whether in city councils, county boards or state legislatures—and continue to build a network to win pro-worker legislation and elect pro-worker candidates. Major mayoral and municipal elections are on tap this year, including races in Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Miami and Detroit. In addition, the labor movement will mobilize working-family voters in California to fight the anti-worker initiatives Schwarzenegger and his allies are seeking to place on the special election ballot.

Through Labor 2004, working families further refined and expanded the union movement's effective member-to-member outreach, building strong networks for ongoing grassroots action. With the support of state and local labor movements, the AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions can expand those assets to build lasting mobilization structures rooted in communities

and relying on state and local labor movements. By broadening, deepening and increasing the activism and involvement of its members—and staying mobilized not just for elections but *between* elections, creating a permanent culture of activism—the union movement can defeat Social Security privatization, win quality health care for all, change the rules of the global marketplace and restore workers' freedom to form unions.

The AFL-CIO plans to integrate local, state and national legislative fights with political mobilization and expand our work with community allies to join the fights of union members with those of other working people at all levels. We will work together with every national union as well as state and local labor movements to identify tens of thousands of local union coordinators to lead worksite issue education and mobilization efforts. Further, we plan to develop and support full-time campaign directors in key areas and create mobilization capacity in every state through joint planning and training, working with and through state federations, area labor federations and central labor councils.

America's unions must adopt a longer-term, member-driven strategy focused on creating a pro-worker government that acts in the interests of working families—at the federal level and in city halls and statehouses across the nation. It's time to expand what has worked and retool where improvements can be made. Going forward, the union movement's detailed strategy looks ahead not just to next year's elections or even the important presidential elections in three years, but also to 2010 and beyond, when working families can influence the congressional redistricting that will create a new political landscape in 2012.

## Putting the Brakes on Right-to-Work-for-Less in New Hampshire

In early 2003, the National Right to Work Committee (NRTWC) launched a vitriolic, anti-union hate-mail campaign aimed at New Hampshire voters. With its well-financed campaign, support from corporations and groups such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), which brings together Big Business interests and anti-worker lawmakers, and a 2-to-1 Republican majority in the state House and Senate, the NRTWC seemed poised to win its fight for a state “right to work” law.

But the New Hampshire AFL-CIO, the state’s unions and the national AFL-CIO mounted a grassroots mobilization built on workplace and member-to-member contact, special lobbying days and town and neighborhood walks in which activists distributed some 50,000 fliers. The state federation also mounted a mail

lobbying campaign, distributing postcards protesting the legislation. Voters ultimately signed more than 48,000 postcards and letters, many filled out at worksites.

The grassroots lobbying campaign took several unique turns, especially in the state’s smaller towns and communities. Many union members telephoned their representatives—some of whom were their neighbors—while others dropped by their homes.

On the day of the vote, union members hauled 20,000 signed postcards to the state capitol and presented them to lawmakers before packing the gallery to watch the vote. The effort paid off when the almost completely Republican New Hampshire House voted 262–103 to kill the “right to work” legislation.



# STRONG Families, STRONG Communities



**S**TATE AND LOCAL union movements are the frontline fighters in our efforts to win key legislative, political and organizing battles on behalf of working families. Evolving to meet the changing political and economic challenges, state federations and central labor councils are transforming their structures and functions to become stronger and more effective organizations through the New Alliance program and Union Cities.

At the same time, state and local union movements are building even closer working relationships with community and faith groups, AFL-CIO constituency groups, local lawmakers and new allies and with national partners such as WORKING AMERICA and the Alliance for Retired Americans to ensure family-supporting jobs and strong communities. And increasingly, state and local labor movements are reaching out to immigrant workers, helping to protect the rights and stop exploitation of this vulnerable group of workers.

## Strengthening State and Local Union Movements

### Building a Unified Labor Movement: Creating Effective State and Local Labor Councils

The Executive Council of the AFL-CIO adopted a policy resolution at its March 2005 meeting that reaffirms the commitment of the AFL-CIO to improve the performance of our state and local organizations. The Committee on State and Local Strategies, charged with overseeing these responsibilities, has determined that as a movement we need to build upon the work undertaken through the New Alliance and Union Cities initiatives and hold all of our organizations accountable for their participation and performances.

### New Alliance

The goal of the union movement's New Alliance initiative is to build strength for working families by growing and strengthening state and local union organizations.

Evolving to meet the changing political and economic challenges, state federations and central labor councils are transforming their structures and functions to become stronger and more effective organizations through the New Alliance program and Union Cities.

The New Alliance aims to bring all parts of the labor movement in a state together around a unified vision and program in support of working families. In some states, the New Alliance initiative includes strengthening local union movements by bringing together central labor councils to create larger and better-resourced Area Labor Federations. So far, seven states have forged New Alliances—Arizona, Colorado, Maryland/District of Columbia, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina and Oregon.

New Alliance has resulted in new solidarity and strength. After its restructuring through the New Alliance program, the Oregon AFL-CIO experienced the largest increase in affiliation—more than 40 percent—among New Alliance state federations. Before the Oregon AFL-CIO retooled its structure, unions representing 100,000 workers were members. After the state federation adopted the New Alliance, affiliation jumped by 40,000 members from newly affiliated unions. The Maryland State and D.C. AFL-CIO affiliation rose 35 percent, the North Carolina State AFL-CIO affiliation rate increased 26 percent and the New York State AFL-CIO saw a 23.5 percent increase in affiliation.

This solidarity and strength translates into concrete results. As one example, in 2003,

the Colorado AFL-CIO and the Denver Area Labor Federation mobilized for municipal elections that included 10 city council seats, the mayor's office, a city auditor and two new election commissioners. Denver Area Labor Federation unions released 19 staff members to the mobilization, and 300 local union volunteers hit the streets and work-sites to talk to union members. When the votes were counted, 66.7 percent of union members had turned out, compared with just 44.8 percent of the general public—and the strengthened union movement elected all 10 union-endorsed council candidates and an auditor.

In Oregon, New Alliance cooperation enabled the IUOE and IBEW to join forces to help workers at the Washington Defense Group's Hermiston weapons plant win a voice at work with IUOE. The two unions formed a joint council to fight the employers' virulent anti-union actions and organizers from several other unions volunteered their time to conduct house calls.

States with New Alliance structures represent more than 20 percent of national union density. In response to the March 2005 call by the Executive Council to step up these efforts in key states, more than 80 union leaders from Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania met with members of the Executive Council and AFL-CIO field staff in May 2005 to develop a strategy to establish New Alliance plans for their states.

### **Union Cities**

The AFL-CIO Union Cities program has helped central labor councils build political and community alliances in states across the nation. The Union Cities program formed in 1997 when the unions of the AFL-CIO joined with central labor councils to strengthen local unions and the union



movement community by community. In recent years, some of the nearly 200 local labor councils that are part of Union Cities have won significant electoral and organizing victories for working families. The South Florida AFL-CIO recently helped pass a general obligation bond in Miami-Dade County and is working to ensure construction bonding will result in union jobs. The Milwaukee County Labor Council mobilized to support a county Labor Peace ordinance that prevents disruptions in services provided to people with disabilities

and elderly individuals by requiring county contractors to enter into labor peace agreements with unions seeking to represent their workers. Thirteen hundred workers have union contracts as a result. A federal district judge upheld the ordinance in March 2005. The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor in 2004 helped lead a fight with Inglewood, Calif., residents to keep Wal-Mart from steamrolling construction of a supercenter development the size of 17 football fields. In communities including Cleveland, Chicago, St. Paul, Minn.,

## The New York Area Labor Federations

For years, 25 central labor councils operated across dozens of counties in upstate New York, home to more than a half-million union workers. Nearly all of those small councils were administered by one or two unpaid officers. But those dedicated union officials also worked full time at their day jobs and could devote just a few hours a month to labor council activities.

The councils also were seriously underfunded, lacking resources to carry out large-scale political, legislative and organizing campaigns. Four years ago, Empire State union leaders and members came together in a New Alliance (see page 55), an AFL-CIO program that involves devoting more resources to politics, legislation and organizing.

As a result, New York union leaders founded five upstate Area Labor Federations. The effort is part of a nationwide move by central labor councils and state federations to meet the changing political and economic challenges by transforming their structures and functions to become stronger and more effective organizations through the AFL-CIO's New Alliance initiative. The new Area Labor Federations increased union affiliation and the member unions agreed to channel available resources to the Area Labor Federations, hire

full-time staff and engage in more extensive actions. The results have been impressive.

In 2003, when Gov. George Pataki (R) vetoed a working-family-backed state budget, the new Area Labor Federations mobilized members to contact their mostly Republican upstate legislators—many of whom said later they seldom had heard from their union-member constituents. Many of those Republican lawmakers joined in the successful veto override.

The Hudson Valley Area Labor Federation helped negotiate a majority sign-up agreement for a planned Native American casino in 2004. Last year, the Western New York Area Labor Federation played a major role in electing union-backed Rep. Brian Higgins (D), who replaced a long-time House member whom working families had tried to unseat in past elections.

All the New York Area Labor Federations—including the Capitol District, Central New York and Rochester—have mobilized to elect pro-worker county executives, mayors and council representatives. They also are major participants in the campaign to hold Wal-Mart accountable and bring justice to Wal-Mart workers across upstate New York.



**The AFL-CIO's constituency groups are unions' bridge to diverse communities, creating and strengthening partnerships to enhance the standard of living for all workers and their families.**

Denver, San Diego and elsewhere, labor councils have led successful efforts to stop the Wal-Marting of their communities. In 2003, the Labor Council of South Bay AFL-CIO joined with community allies in Sunnyvale, Calif.—the region's second-largest city after San José—and won a working-family-friendly majority on the city council.

The AFL-CIO's Committee on State and Local Strategies continues to work with state and local central bodies to build upon their successes and learn from their setbacks to develop strategies for strengthening the union movement at the state and local levels.

## **Working with Key Partners**

### **Constituency Groups**

The AFL-CIO's constituency groups are unions' bridge to diverse communities, creating and strengthening partnerships to enhance the standard of living for all workers and their families. From their unique vantage point, these groups play an important role in developing the capacity of unions to organize by promoting the full participation of women and minorities in the union movement and ensuring unions hear and respond to the concerns of the communities they represent.

Formed in 2003, the Labor Coalition for Community Action (LCCA) is the umbrella organization of AFL-CIO constituency groups created to coordinate constituency group activities in the 2004 elections. LCCA conducted voter registration, education and GOTV operations in 41 cities in the 2004 cycle. More than 2,000 community and union volunteers assisted with phone banking, driving senior citizens to vote at their correct polling locations, registering new voters and door-to-door canvassing in African American, Latino, and Asian American and Pacific Islander neighborhoods.

LCCA played a prominent role in distributing leaflets and brochures on voting rights in locations where conservative groups tried to intimidate or suppress voter turnout in black and Latino communities. LCCA organizations held gatherings in advance of Election Day to familiarize voters with new voting equipment before they went to the polls.

LCCA was the only labor organization to explicitly develop a "southern strategy" to mobilize black and Latino voters in five so-called "red states" (Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana and Mississippi). In Jackson, Miss., for example, 4,000 people packed an auditorium for a panel discussion organized by LCCA to discuss issues ranging from revitalizing blighted urban areas to creating affordable housing and more jobs that pay living wages.

Today, LCCA working with the AFL-CIO and with Voices for Working Families in the Social Security debate. LCCA co-sponsors the National Summit on Diversity scheduled for July 23, 2005, prior to the AFL-CIO Convention.

The constituency groups have members in approximately 300 chapters across the country. Their work is implemented in these chapters and by these chapters, working with community-based organizations and often partnering with state federations and central labor councils.

The hope is that LCCA will be even more involved in outreach to nonunion members, in reaching potential voters and in other community-based activities promoting legislation and the labor movement itself. As a bridge to diverse communities, LCCA strengthens the labor movement's ability to advance a working families' agenda.

Pride At Work (PAW), the newest constituency group of the AFL-CIO, mobilizes

mutual support between the union movement and the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. Formed in 1997, PAW promotes social and economic justice through education and mobilization, serving as the only bridge between labor and the LGBT community.

In 2003, PAW supported an LGBT Organizing Institute, and in fall 2005, PAW will host a labor institute at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Creating Change conference. Since 2002, PAW has campaigned against anti-union business practices such as those of Wal-Mart, while providing resources on receiving equal benefits in union contracts. PAW mobilizes its members to support legislation promoting collective bargaining and organizing rights. Similarly, PAW promotes equal access to benefits and nondiscriminatory legislation for the LGBT community.

The Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) is the first and only national organization of Asian and Pacific Islander American union members. It organizes and works with Asian and Pacific Islander American workers, many of them immigrants, to build the union movement and address exploitative conditions in the garment, electronics, hotel and restaurant, food processing and health care industries.

In the 2004 elections, APALA reached deep into Asian and Pacific Islander communities and households to turn out the vote. In Nevada, where Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, especially Filipino Americans and Hawaiians, are among the fastest-growing populations, APALA contacted more than 82,000 voters. In the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, APALA's Labor 2004 effort boosted voter participation among the 50,000-strong Hmong community, while in Portland, Ore., APALA members reached out to young Asian and Pacific Islander voters.



The Labor Council for Latin America Advancement (LCLAA) serves as a voice for change in the Latino community and recognizes the importance of mobilizing workers and their families.

As part of the Latino community, one of LCLAA's core principles is to aggressively seek partnerships with other Latino organizations at the national and regional levels. The success of LCLAA's advocacy support is enhanced by this new Latino awareness of LCLAA's presence.

Along with playing a big role in the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride and conducting voter registration and mobilization in Latino communities, LCLAA helped form the Latinos for a Secure Retirement coalition to mobilize the Latino community against Social Security privatization. LCLAA also is mobilizing its members and community allies to fight against unfair trade deals such as CAFTA.

The Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), America's only national organization for union women, empowers working women to become leaders in their unions and encourages them to create positive change on the job and in their communities. CLUW focuses on concerns of working women, including equal pay, job security,

safe workplaces, affordable health care, child and elder care benefits, reproductive rights and protection from sexual harassment and violence at work. Recently, CLUW chapters educated their members and communities about the devastating effects of Social Security privatization. They are engaged in organizing a nationwide lobby day in August 2005 to urge the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act and are fighting for the expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). CLUW is engaged in the Wake-Up Wal-Mart campaign designed to bring public attention to the anti-worker, anti-union practices of the nation's largest private-sector employer.

CLUW's Contraceptive Equity Project, launched in 2001, works with unions to ensure health plans cover contraception if the plans also cover preventive drugs and devices. In 2005, West Virginia and Arkansas adopted mandates, thus raising to 23 the number of states that have mandated health plans to cover contraceptives. In 2001, CLUW also launched its HIV/AIDS project, an initiative funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that involves collaboration with CLUW, the AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions and constituency groups to raise awareness and educate their members about HIV/AIDS. CLUW's Cervical Cancer Prevention Works project focuses on empowering union women to be aware of how to prevent this deadly disease.



With more than 60 chapters across the country, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) worked to energize and mobilize the African American community during the 2004 elections. CBTU, along with LCCA, held more than 30 town hall meetings and issue forums to address key working-family issues and to educate community members about their voting rights. CBTU and APRI's voter protection efforts and get-out-the-vote campaign was particularly effective in several Southern states in which African American voters continue to face voter intimidation and harassment.

Along with the election efforts, CBTU has worked with community groups and the faith community to establish after-school mentoring and apprenticeship programs, provide clothing to local homeless shelters and back initiatives to improve living and working conditions in African American communities. CBTU also continued international labor solidarity outreach, providing leadership development for trade unionists in South Africa and Brazil.

The A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI), which also serves as a bridge between the union movement and the country's African American communities, supports and promotes workers' ongoing struggles for economic justice, racial equality and equal opportunity, black voter participation and political, economic and social democracy at home and abroad.

During the 2003 and 2004 Dec. 10 International Human Rights Day actions, APRI mobilized its affiliates nationwide around workers' freedom to join unions, and throughout the 2004 election year continued voter registration drives in cities with sizeable African American populations.

In 2005, APRI activists took part in demonstrations across the country during the AFL-CIO National Day of Action, protesting support for Social Security privatization by investment firms Charles Schwab Corp. and Wachovia Corp.

APRI conducted regional and national conferences educating and training activists to be an effective voice for racial equality and economic justice in their communities and unions. In conjunction with APRI's national conference, the organization held a youth leadership conference, providing young people across the country with an understanding of the approach to economic and social change initiated by A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, the nature of unions and the role of African Americans in them. The conference also inspired youths to become activists on their campuses and in their communities with local APRI activists.

## Alliance for Retired Americans

Since its launch in 2001, the Alliance for Retired Americans has grown to a grassroots organization of more than 3 million for activist union retirees and seniors across the nation. The Alliance plays a major public education and political mobilization role in such critical working family issues as Social Security and Medicare.

Most recently, the Alliance has been at the forefront of the battle to strengthen Social Security. Actress Olympia Dukakis narrates the Alliance's educational video "Saving Social Security," released in May 2005 and translated into Spanish, with 10,000 copies distributed through the Alliance's state organizations, state federations, affiliated unions, senior clubs, lawmakers and allied organizations across the country. More than 3,000 copies of the video have been

downloaded from the Alliance website, [www.retiredamericans.org](http://www.retiredamericans.org).

As part of the union-movement-wide effort to strengthen Social Security, the Alliance launched four regional Truth Truck tours that carried more than 1 million petitions opposing Social Security privatization to 20 states and more than 60 congressional districts. The 10,000 Miles, 1 Million Voices tours garnered considerable press attention and activated Alliance leaders and members across the country. Over the 2005 Memorial Day recess, the Alliance partnered with Americans United to Protect Social Security



as part of the Take a Stand campaign. Alliance members called on more than 80 members of Congress and urged them to attend town hall meetings and publicly state their stance on Social Security privatization. Since its inception, the Alliance has mailed more than 14 million leaflets and letters describing the dangers of Social Security privatization and on Medicare



**The Alliance includes 200,000 dues-paying donors from outside the union movement and more than 300,000 community-based activists.**

prescription drug issues, and Alliance members have sent more than 1.8 million petitions to the president and members of Congress.

In the 2004 election, Alliance members voted 73 to 24 percent for presidential candidate John Kerry nationwide—a more than 10 percent increase over the union retiree vote for Al Gore in 2000. Union retirees cited Social Security and health care/prescription drugs as the two most important issues that influenced their 2004 presidential votes, signaling the success of the Alliance’s 2003 Medicare campaign, its voter contact in 2004 and grassroots field mobilization efforts throughout the election cycle.

In one of its first actions in May 2002, the Alliance mobilized retired union members on Capitol Hill, for a speak-out to promote a Medicare prescription drug plan that offered real benefits to seniors. As the fight for a Medicare prescription drug plan became a battle between a pharmaceutical and insurance industry giveaway bill and a drive to win a real prescription drug benefit for the nation’s seniors, the Alliance turned up the heat. In 2002, the Alliance sponsored a series of RxExpress bus trips to enable U.S. seniors to travel to Canada—where prescription drugs are substantially cheaper than in the United States—to publicly highlight the exploding costs of the prescription drugs seniors need to stay healthy. Hundreds of seniors took part in more than 30 bus trips, garnering more than \$1 million in prescription drug savings and highlighting America’s need for an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit.

By working with union members and community groups to explain the organization’s goals and train activists in building strong local chapters, the Alliance has chartered 21 state chapters and expects to charter nearly

30 additional chapters by the end of 2005. The Alliance includes 200,000 dues-paying donors from outside the union movement and more than 300,000 community-based activists.

The Alliance uses its website and e-mail activist list to educate seniors, sending weekly e-mail Friday Alerts to some 40,000 members and activists (who in turn forward it to hundreds of thousands of potential online activists) on issues critical to seniors. Members can access legislative and other key information updated daily on the website. The power of senior e-mail activism was displayed in June 2003, when House committees began marking up a version of the Medicare prescription drug bill. The Alliance sent more than 26,000 e-mail calls to action urging activists to contact their members of Congress to defeat the bill—and more than 7,000 messages went to Capitol Hill opposing the bill in a single day. Throughout 2003, on the Medicare drug issue alone, the AFL-CIO and the Alliance for Retired Americans generated more than 100,000 faxes, 31,000 phone calls and 90 in-state visits to members of Congress; produced customizable worksite fliers that more than 89 union locals downloaded; and ran television spots on CNN nationally. Alliance leaders also keep in touch with grassroots activists through regular conference calls. Approximately every two weeks, as many as 100 Alliance grassroots leaders join a conference call with national Alliance officials to discuss the status of bills and exchange ideas about strategy and potential actions.

The Alliance now is building on this groundwork to create a national organization of senior activists as the nation moves toward the critical elections of 2006, 2008 and beyond.



## Developing Union Leaders

The National Labor College (NLC) is the major source of leadership training for union leaders and activists and recently attained college status as well. In March 2004, the Middle States Higher Education Commission awarded the college full accreditation, which makes the college eligible for Maryland state operating and capital funds and may allow its students to become eligible for federal Pell grants.

The NLC, with AFL-CIO President John Sweeney as chairman of the board of trustees, which includes AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, serves thousands of union leaders and activists each year through its education programs and conference center operations.

The NLC also has taken on the former AFL-CIO Education Department functions and consequently has expanded its curriculum support work with unions. In 2002 and 2003, the center worked with 15 unions and the AFL-CIO on various curricula for unions to use with their leaders and members.

Beginning in 2005, the NLC will offer a cutting-edge, fully online bachelor's degree in technical and professional studies. This new distance-learning capacity will be shared with all the unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO for use in their own leadership education and training programs.

A technologically advanced classroom facility, conference center and distance learning facility are slated for completion this year. The new Kirkland Center—a tribute to the late AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland—will boast an 8,000-square-foot multipurpose room divisible into four classrooms; breakout rooms; casual gathering space for student interaction, art exhibits and receptions; a state-of-the-art computer lab and video conferencing center; and campus dining room and bookstore.

Campus renovation will include 165 newly renovated dormitory rooms, increasing the maximum sleeping occupancy of the campus to 255. Of the project's total \$40 million cost, \$15 million will be financed, \$10 million has been committed by the AFL-CIO, \$5 million has been raised in state and federal grants and \$3 million has been committed by a combination of union and private donors. Fundraising activities are under way to raise the remaining \$7 million.



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# Building and Construction Trades Department



**A**S IT APPROACHES its 100th anniversary in 2008, the Building and Construction Trades Department (BCTD) has continued its diverse and essential functions in legislation, grassroots political programs, organizing and strategic research, health and safety, adjustment of jurisdictional disputes, labor-management relations and other activities to promote and protect building and construction trades unions and their members.

In addition, the department has undertaken several new initiatives since 2001. They include but are not limited to:

- Restructuring the department's staff into six operating divisions;
- Initiating the Helmets to Hardhats program jointly with management to recruit veterans of the U.S. military into unions and their apprenticeship programs;
- Developing a new and ongoing dialogue with the Construction Users Roundtable (CURT), whose corporate members represent more than \$100 billion annually in construction spending. This initiative soon will result in new, uniform national drug-testing protocols and several "demonstration" productivity jobsites, at which a unique "tripartite" model of labor-management relations will be implemented;
- Expanding the department's political grassroots program during the 2002 and 2004 election cycles;
- Updating and modernizing longstanding jurisdictional agreements among BCTD-affiliated unions;
- Sustaining virtually all of the federal laws that protect construction workers, despite a largely hostile Congress and White House; and
- Adding a strategic research staff and initiating a national project to uncover the flawed and failing apprenticeship programs of the so-called open shops.

**The BCTD sustained virtually all of the federal laws that protect construction workers, despite a largely hostile Congress and White House.**

The BCTD's activities are directed by the president and secretary-treasurer, and the department is governed by its Governing Board of Presidents representing each of 15 BCTD-affiliated national and international unions.

### **Organizing: Helping Workers Gain a Voice@Work**

The department's National Temp Campaign, launched because of the increasing number of temporary workers at construction sites and their need for fair treatment and safe working conditions, came to a close in 2002. The largest temp agency and major focus of the campaign, Labor Ready Inc., suffered losses due to violations in filing paperwork with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on standards for workers and the Department of Labor.

Currently, the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is the largest anti-union construction trade association in the United States, with some 23,000 members and 80 local chapters. The department has been actively investigating the group's poorly performing apprenticeship programs and financial irregularities in the training trusts that fund these programs.

In September 2004, the department released a report on the annual financial reports filed by 19 local ABC chapters and their corresponding apprenticeship programs, highlighting a failure to fully disclose financial transactions between ABC apprenticeship trusts and local ABC chapters as well as payment from apprenticeship trusts to chapters in excess of the actual services provided.

In March 2005, the department's second report revealed six of the ABC's 80 local

chapters sponsored an apprenticeship program that graduated more than half of its apprentices. In fact, 25 chapters had graduation rates below 25 percent and another 20 ABC chapters either failed to sponsor a program or failed to enroll apprentices in the programs they sponsored.

The BCTD is continuing to investigate the national ABC, its chapters, training trusts and benefit plans and other ABC-related organizations.

### **Organizing for the Future**

Plans for the next four years for the Organizing Department include launching a National Organizing Campaign, revamping construction organizing classes at the National Labor College (NLC) and increasing the number of organizers attending these classes.

The National Organizing Campaign still is in the early planning stages. With 57 percent of total U.S. construction in residential development, the campaign will center on the continued growth of nonunion work in the residential sector.

The current construction organizing classes at the NLC have been struggling with outdated teaching techniques and materials. The *Construction Organizing Guide* recently was rewritten along with the entire curricula for the construction organizing and labor law classes. BCTD-affiliated union organizing directors have assisted the department by volunteering to share their experiences and teach classes. They also are encouraging their councils and locals to participate, and as a result attendance has doubled. By teaching and providing new materials to building and construction trade organizers, they can go out to the field with better tools to organize new members.

**The national organizing campaign will center on the continued growth of nonunion work in the residential sector.**

## Meeting the Challenges of the Global Economy

The BCTD does not engage in bargaining campaigns. Rather, this activity is reserved to BCTD-affiliated national and international unions.

### Global Economy

Like most other segments of the economy, the construction industry is indeed global. The department entered into extensive discussions with the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) to explore possible affiliation. Additionally, the department maintains a corresponding relationship with the Swedish Building Workers Union (BYGGNADS).

The department long has operated the Office of Canadian Affairs and plans to explore additional international relationships.

## Political and Legislative Action

In 2000, the significantly more pro-worker political climate, which included a Democratic White House and smaller GOP majorities on Capitol Hill, facilitated the department's efforts to pursue progressive legislative initiatives. Those initiatives included federal financial support of local school construction and higher pension payouts for multiemployer plan participants under Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code. The department ultimately was successful in achieving the 415 relief, but school construction legislation no longer is on lawmakers' agenda. The department is fighting attacks on Davis-Bacon prevailing-wage protections and attacks on BCTD-affiliated unions' apprenticeship programs and battling anti-salting legislation and bad trade proposals.

In addition to the Section 415 relief, which was passed in a package of tax changes, the

department in 2001 succeeded in its efforts to ensure lawmakers included Davis-Bacon protections in Brownfields legislation. The Davis-Bacon improvements came about after a deal was struck with House Republican leaders that involved funding projects in the bill under section 104 of CERCLA (the Superfund statute), the only section of the statute containing such coverage. Also in 2001, the BCTD focused its efforts on school construction legislation, additional Davis-Bacon battles and legislative proposals covering OSHA, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), the Patients' Bill of Rights and apprenticeship standards. BCTD also worked on bipartisan legislation introduced by Reps. George Miller (D-Calif.) and Peter King (R-N.Y.) to overturn Bush's prohibition on project labor agreements (PLAs) in federally assisted projects.

In 2002, a legislative pattern strengthened and continued in which federal infrastructure bills were prevented from coming to a vote because of Davis-Bacon. Congressional leaders, especially in the House, refused to schedule bills for votes knowing a majority of House members favored Davis-Bacon application and any challenges to it would be unsuccessful. This logjam affected approximately \$80 billion in projects, centered primarily in federal water and rail construction activities. In September, building and construction trades unions convinced several friendly Republicans to support school construction legislation, H.R. 1076, as an alternative to tuition tax credit legislation, H.R. 5913. As the scheduled vote on H.R. 5913 got closer, it became clear that enough GOP moderates would vote for school construction over tax credits, which resulted in H.R. 5913 being pulled from the floor—the only time a tax bill has been pulled from the floor since the Republicans took control of the House in 1995. Throughout the remainder of 2002,

**BCTD also worked on bipartisan legislation to overturn Bush's prohibition on project labor agreements (PLAs) in federally assisted projects.**



**In each federal election cycle, the department has put together grassroots political programs involving all 15 BCTD-affiliated unions.**

the department focused on homeland security legislation (in which the Homeland Security Department was created without specific Davis-Bacon protections), unemployment insurance (UI), energy, pipeline safety, nuclear waste repository, asbestos liability, apprenticeship standards and compensation for nuclear workers. The department succeeded in winning the initial round of federal funding, \$3.4 million, for the BCTD's Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) program.

Building and construction trades unions faced ongoing legislative stalemates throughout 2003. Continuing the logjam over federal infrastructure spending, Congress again failed to pass rail, water and highway construction legislation (the TEA-21 highway authorization expired Sept. 30, 2004, and by mid-2005 had yet to be reauthorized). The department spent considerable time securing the necessary labor protections on these bills as well as on issues involving Medicare prescription drug legislation and Taft-Hartley health and welfare funds. An inadequate, politically motivated bill affecting Taft-Hartley health and welfare funds ultimately was passed by both houses and was reported out of the conference committee and signed into law by President Bush. The BCTD also focused on asbestos liability legislation, S. 1125, as well as proposed legislation concerning comp time, energy, UI and overtime regulations. The BCTD won \$5.5 million for fiscal year 2004 for the Helmets to Hardhats program.

In 2004, continued gridlock on infrastructure spending included several temporary extensions of TEA-21 because Congress would not complete action on a surface transportation authorization bill. The BCTD focused on winning funding relief for multiemployer pension plans reeling from investment losses incurred during

2000, 2001 and 2002. Ultimately, only single-employer plans were granted meaningful relief because of political opposition to multiemployer relief from the White House. Achieving multiemployer pension relief also was fueled by the inability of United Parcel Service to get pension concessions at the bargaining table and the company's pursuit of a legislative solution to collective bargaining. The rest of 2004 was spent on issues such as asbestos liability, nuclear workers' compensation, the Military Base Security Act aimed at preventing undocumented workers from gaining access to sensitive military installations, energy legislation (including success with \$18 billion in federal loan guarantees for the construction of an Alaskan natural gas pipeline), immigration proposals and winning another round of funding for H2H—\$6 million for fiscal year 2005.

By mid-2005, the BCTD has worked on advancing a multiemployer pension reform plan proposed by the National Coordinating Committee for Multiemployer Plans, addressing Specter-Leahy asbestos liability legislation (S. 852), advancing surface transportation legislation (H.R. 3), improving McCain-Kennedy immigration legislation (S. 1033), passing ANWR exploration and production authorizations in the House and Senate, addressing comprehensive energy legislation, working against CAFTA and fighting battles involving Davis-Bacon application. The department plans to secure another round of funding for H2H and to carry out additional labor law battles.

In each federal election cycle, the department has put together grassroots political programs involving all 15 BCTD-affiliated unions to assist them in educating their members on the issues at stake for working families.

## **A Voice in Our Communities**

Success in the current political and economic climate depends on using new strategies, building new coalitions and offering new initiatives. The department has been moving forward in these areas with positive results.

The department convenes regional meetings to advise, involve and engage tradesmen and tradeswomen at the state and local levels in its programs and initiatives. These meetings are an effective catalyst for increasing awareness and collective action on major issues confronting BCTD affiliates and their members.

The department has initiated and participated in programs that promote the positive attributes of a unionized workforce. Within the construction community, the tripartite initiative has built bridges of understanding between unions, contractors and owners that have resulted in a mutually beneficial dialogue to solve problems.

In 2005, the Committee of Women in the Trades, two years in development, became only the sixth standing committee of the department. Representatives from all building trades unions serve on the committee, which is committed to increasing the number of women in skilled trades careers by promoting strategies for recruitment,

retention and leadership advancement. The committee will provide increased visibility for these issues within the department and throughout BCTD affiliates and industry partners.

In its third year, the Helmets to Hardhats program spearheaded by the BCTD links returning veterans with training and job opportunities in the unionized construction industry. H2H has exceeded expectations and received national recognition and the department is proud of the extraordinary effort of affiliate leaders who incorporated this program into their trades. It has paid dividends to thousands of veterans and their families.

The department also is supporting the new Crayons to CAD program to encourage interest in the construction trades from early grades. Teaching a math and science curriculum incorporating unionized construction awareness in middle schools around the country serves to enhance our organizations' visibility and credibility with America's youth.

The BCTD continues to build partnerships and alliances with numerous national and community organizations to increase awareness of and support for critical issues including health care reform, pension protection and workers' rights.

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# Food and Allied Service Trades Department



**T**HE AFFILIATES OF THE Food and Allied Service Trades Department (FAST) represent millions of workers in an increasingly large and diverse set of occupations, including nurses, retail clerks, industrial workers, housekeepers, building engineers, flight attendants and meatpackers. FAST affiliates' members are as varied as their occupations, representing all ages, races and ethnicities. No matter the industry or need, FAST is dedicated to assisting affiliates in fights against employers that trample the rights of workers. The department's contribution is to provide comprehensive research to allow a detailed understanding of companies, the industry and key players and power structures, so affiliates can develop innovative and effective tactics and strategies to fight and win on behalf of their members.

## Information for Organizing and Bargaining

FAST truly thinks—when used correctly—information is power. The more knowledge workers and their unions have, the more effective they will be. Providing real information in a timely fashion to decision makers at all operational levels of affiliated unions always has been and will continue to be a primary function of FAST staff. To this end, FAST provides a number of resources:

**The *FAST Manual of Corporate Investigation*** is one of the foremost sources on corporate investigations for union organizers and researchers. The manual has been online ([www.fastaflcio.org](http://www.fastaflcio.org)) for several years now, and it is constantly updated with new hyperlinks and sources. It is organized in a step-by-step fashion, walking users through the basics of researching both

The “**FAST Manual of Corporate Investigation**” is one of the foremost sources on corporate investigations for union organizers and researchers.

public and private companies. The manual includes state-specific information and guides to regulatory agencies and now has an extensive list of hard-to-find links for Internet users who want to expand their sources. All members of FAST affiliates can receive passwords for access to this manual that will help them find information about targeting, organizing, bargaining and rank-and-file communications.

**The FAST Healthcare Industry Manual** is a supplement to the *Manual of Corporate Investigation*. The *Healthcare Manual*, also found on the FAST website ([www.fastaflcio.org](http://www.fastaflcio.org)), is structured in a similar fashion to the full manual and provides much greater depth of information on researching the health care industry. Users can familiarize themselves quickly with hospital and nursing home ownership-type sources; they can learn how to uncover quality-of-care issues; and they easily can access all 50 states' health departments through user-friendly links pages. In addition, the "Finding Workers" section is an excellent guide to creative ways to identify health care workers employed in different parts of the industry.

### **FAST Office Resources**

In addition to the online research guides found on the FAST website, FAST has amassed an extensive collection of CD-ROMs and books that provide even more specialized information useful to affiliates. FAST's library holdings encompass such wide-ranging topics as people finders, corporate affiliations, institutional investors and import-export data. Many of FAST's books and CDs are updated on a monthly or quarterly basis. To supplement the department's library collection, FAST maintains active subscriptions to many trade journals and publications useful in gathering information for affiliates' fights. To supplement these information sources,

FAST's research staff includes some of the most motivated and best-trained investigators in the union movement. FAST researchers assist affiliates and their local unions in all sorts of projects and campaigns, ranging from matching names and addresses of workers in a potential bargaining unit to spending weeks on the ground actively helping during strikes and organizing campaigns.

### **Labor Database CD**

FAST developed its first version of the now-ubiquitous FAST Labor Database on CD-ROM in early 1999. Recognized as an indispensable tool for organizers and researchers across the country, this single-volume CD includes 20 databases containing more than 1.6 million records compiled from U.S., Canadian and Mexican government sources. It includes detailed indices of NLRB petitions, elections and unfair labor practice charges; Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service contract notifications; and wage-and-hour compliance activity, to name a few. The database can be sorted and searched in multiple ways, which allows an organizer to quickly create a history of labor relations at a given company or in a certain region or industry. The FAST Labor Database is updated annually, and new databases are added as they become available.

### **Information for Community Coalition Building and Legislative Change**

Over the years, FAST has honed its expertise in assisting affiliates in community coalition building. Whether identifying local groups and community leaders available to help during an organizing campaign or participating in a broad-based coalition to actively support a strike, FAST has worked successfully with its affiliates to help build power for workers and local unions across the country. Additionally, the department collects and updates information on

In addition to the online research guides found on the FAST website, FAST has amassed an extensive collection of CD-ROMs and books that provide even more specialized information useful to affiliates.

regulatory and local development issues of interest to affiliates and their members, including corporate subsidies, urban sprawl and environmental compliance. In the broader national arena, FAST has continued to work on legislative and regulatory matters ranging from worker health and safety to food stamps.

### **Information for International Labor Solidarity**

FAST's affiliates form part of an increasingly unified international labor movement. Union members around the world are joining to fight the expansion of corporate control at the expense of working people and to defend the rights of workers everywhere. Understanding corporate power is truly global and exposing these international links and relationships is critical to building power in the labor movement. Labor rights, human rights, fair trade and decent jobs and wages are issues that transcend national borders.

To meet the needs of affiliates in these areas, FAST has developed a special understanding of many areas pertaining to international labor solidarity. During the past several years, FAST has dedicated itself to expanding its information sources on international trade, international investment and labor solidarity and to making this information available to affiliates. The FAST corporate library includes numerous volumes and CDs to help researchers and organizers identify international production locations, subsidiaries and trade data. In addition, the FAST Labor Database CD-ROM contains information on Canadian and Mexican unions, which facilitates direct cross-border contact between unions.

FAST actively participates in international campaigns for labor rights in regions and industries that impact affiliate unions. FAST has taken a leading role in the fight for human and worker rights in China and will continue to illuminate abuses in that country as well as the corporate-dominated U.S. foreign policy that supports the denial of those basic rights. FAST has assisted affiliates in NAFTA labor-related cases at the National Administrative Office and at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Moreover, FAST is working to elaborate a strategic analysis of immigration issues of significant importance to its affiliates. Immigrants are filling an increasing number of low-wage and dangerous jobs, and FAST's affiliates are rising to the challenge of helping these workers organize. To do that, it is important to develop a comprehensive understanding of the forces propelling immigration—not only questions of why certain jobs are being filled by immigrants in the United States, but also the reasons why people are leaving their home countries. This ongoing investigation is providing affiliates with important insight to facilitate the increasing number of organizing campaigns in which immigrant workers are participating.

### **Staff Development**

FAST continues to offer bright and committed young men and women the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of comprehensive campaigns and gain varied experience fighting corporate power. FAST trains these folks and places them in positions in the labor movement. Many of these talented young people now are working throughout the labor movement and are making significant contributions.

**During the past several years, FAST has dedicated itself to expanding its information sources on international trade, international investment and labor solidarity and to making this information available to affiliates.**



# Maritime Trades Department



**T**HE MARITIME TRADES DEPARTMENT (MTD), which begins its 60th year of service to working families in 2006, is a constitutionally mandated department of the AFL-CIO. It was chartered in August 1946 to fight for workers in all aspects of the U.S. and Canadian maritime industry. The 29 international unions within the MTD represent merchant mariners, shipbuilders, dock workers, vessel suppliers, office workers and others.

The department provides information and support for federal programs and practices affecting the U.S.-flag and Canadian-flag maritime fleets. It also promotes new issues and ideas that could benefit the working people within its affiliated unions.

The MTD utilizes a network of 24 port maritime councils across both nations to provide grassroots support for these maritime-related concerns and other issues that affect the entire union movement.

## **A Voice@Work for Working Families**

Although not constitutionally permitted to directly run organizing campaigns, the MTD continues to assist affiliated unions in ensuring workers have a voice on the job. The Port Maritime Councils remain the department's vital eyes and ears at the grassroots level. Across the United States, Port Maritime Councils have been working with the affiliates and central labor councils to urge their elected federal officials to endorse the Employee Free Choice Act. From marching in solidarity with United Food and Commercial Workers members on strike in Southern California to supporting locked-out dock workers and hotel employees along the Pacific Coast and in Hawaii, they have answered the call.

Councils from New Orleans to St. Louis to New York were proud of their efforts to ensure the success of the 2003 Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. In South Florida,

**Port Maritime Councils have been working with the affiliates and central labor councils to urge their elected federal officials to endorse the Employee Free Choice Act.**

council members marched with thousands of union members in 2003 to highlight the need for improved U.S. trade policies.

In Philadelphia, port council members assisted in IBT picket lines. Norfolk, Va., and Baltimore councils affiliates stood with Steelworkers and Flight Attendants-CWA to call attention to their causes. The coffee wagon from the Toledo, Ohio, council provided assistance to brothers and sisters on strike in that Great Lakes town.

### **U.S. Flag Returns to Cruise Ships**

In the past few years, the U.S. flag has returned to the high seas on two passenger vessels. These ships, which circle the Hawaiian Islands, are entirely crewed by union members. The renewal of the U.S.-flag passenger fleet has created thousands of new jobs locally as well as nationally—for those at sea as well as along the docks and inland. A third vessel is expected to join this fleet early next year.

From the local level at which Port Maritime Councils participate, to the international level, at which the MTD national office provides assistance, the department understands the necessity of helping all workers gain a better life for themselves and their families.

During the past four years, port councils from coast to coast assisted in the fight to organize at Wal-Mart, Verizon Wireless and in countless other drives at the national and local levels. The commitment of this department and its port councils to organizing will continue.

### **Addressing the Challenges of the Global Economy**

The MTD has been dealing with the realities of the global economy since the department's inception. In fact, the MTD was launched in the wake of World War II, when the U.S. government was breaking up the world's largest merchant fleet at cut-rate prices to help other countries return to the sea.

Since then, U.S. and Canadian merchant mariners—the best-trained workers on the safest ships in the world—have struggled to compete with runaway flag fleets. The vessels that fly these flags of convenience fail to live up to minimum international safety and labor standards. In the most extreme instances, some crew members may go for weeks on diets of rice and water or months without pay. MTD affiliates in Canada and the United States work with the International Transport Workers' Federation to assist stricken mariners from around the world and bring their plight to the attention of the public.

The MTD also monitors the impact of trade negotiations on the maritime industry. The department has worked continuously with industry and government representatives to keep maritime issues off the table. Opening U.S. maritime laws to such negotiations would have a disastrous affect on American jobs and the industry.

The domestic shipbuilding industry has faced its own challenges from overseas. Shipyards in China and South Korea are aided by government subsidies, so they are able to offer merchant vessels at rates far below those possible by North American facilities. Because of this, numerous shipyards have shut down along the Great Lakes, Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts.

**During the past four years, port councils from coast to coast assisted in the fight to organize Wal-Mart, Verizon Wireless and countless other drives at the national and local levels.**

Despite these challenges, U.S. shipyards are delivering world-class vessels with new ones on the drawing boards as American mariners aboard container vessels deliver U.S. and Canadian-made goods to ports around the world while bringing back products for the domestic market. Through the efforts of the MTD, the U.S. and Canadian maritime industries will remain a force in future world trade.

## **Port Security a Priority**

After the tragic attack on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, port security has become a major concern, not just in the maritime industry but also across the North American continent. The unions of the MTD have been working with local and federal governments to improve conditions at harbors, ports and inlets. The department is reviewing various proposals for a universal transportation workers' identification card. One example from Florida shows the necessity of moving toward this type of identification.

Today, a person in the Sunshine State seeking to work on a ship or on the dock must carry identification cards issued by each individual port authority rather than one document recognized by all. Acquiring the required cards costs workers time and money. The unions representing these workers think there is a more efficient way to address this discrepancy and ensure security.

## **Maritime Security Program**

As during the Persian Gulf War in the 1990s, the United States, beginning in 2002, once again called upon its U.S.-flag merchant fleet to transport supplies and materiel to the armed forces at the fronts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Since the 1990s, the U.S.-flag fleet had significantly improved its functions and was better prepared to meet the challenge.

In the wake of the Persian Gulf War, maritime unions worked with the industry, military and elected officials to create the Maritime Security Program (MSP). This bipartisan legislation, passed in 1996, created a 10-year program to provide funds to assist in the cost of maintaining U.S.-flag vessels and their infrastructure that could be made available to the armed forces in the event of a war or national emergency. The MSP proved to be a boon because of the operational and construction savings realized each year. Because of the program's success, the U.S. Congress last year reauthorized it for 10 more years. In addition, Congress expanded the number of vessels covered from 47 to 60.

The MTD worked hard to ensure passage of the Maritime Security Program's reauthorization and expansion. Funding for the program must be acquired each year, and the MTD continues to work with lawmakers to ensure they recognize its value.

## **The Jones Act**

The Jones Act—the nation's freight cabotage law—continues to be a priority. Although efforts to weaken the law during the past decade have not resurfaced, the MTD remains vigilant for any attack at the local or federal level. The MTD, along with several of its affiliates, is a charter member of the Maritime Cabotage Task Force, a coalition of labor and industry dedicated to preserving the Jones Act. (The act states that any cargo transported between two domestic ports must be carried aboard a U.S.-flag, U.S.-built and U.S.-citizen-crewed vessel.)

Meanwhile, the MTD is working with the industry and the U.S. Department of Transportation to create a dedicated coastwise shipping fleet. As America's highways and railways become more congested, coastwise shipping would reduce the number of containers transported along land

**The Maritime Security Program has proven so successful, Congress reauthorized it for another 10 years.**

**The MTD will continue its fight to improve the living and working conditions of its affiliates and its members—the department’s mission since its inception and its goal into the 21st century.**

routes. Domestic transportation planners have estimated the amount of goods coming through America’s ports within the next 15 years probably will double. A coastwise shipping program would create more jobs for American mariners while providing much-needed new construction within American shipyards.

### **Cargo Preference Laws**

The MTD long has fought to maintain America’s cargo preference laws. The MTD opposes efforts now debated in Washington, D.C., to simply send funding to nations seeking to acquire grain or other food aid rather than sending American provisions overseas aboard U.S.-flag vessels. Such a move would tragically hurt America’s farmers and mariners. If such provisions had been in effect last year, victims of the tsunami in Southern Asia would never have experienced firsthand the goodwill and true concern of Americans.

Energy concerns also affect the unions of the MTD. We have stood for nearly a decade with our brothers and sisters in the fight against electric deregulation policies at the national and local levels. MTD affiliates also have worked with unions from the Building and Construction Trades Department to allow the safe exploration of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

While the diverse range of issues involving the MTD varies, all have one common theme: more and better jobs for our members.

### **Summary**

For nearly 60 years, the Maritime Trades Department has been a vital link between the labor movement and the maritime industry. The MTD will continue its fight to improve the living and working conditions of its affiliates and its members—the department’s mission since its inception and its goal into the 21st century.

# Metal Trades Department



**A**S A CONSTITUTIONAL DEPARTMENT of the AFL-CIO, the Metal Trades Department (Metal Trades) has fundamental representation and collective bargaining responsibilities to our 25 Metal Trades Councils and eight Federal Employee Metal Trades Councils. These councils are established under the Metal Trades constitution and bylaws that provide democratic representation and jurisdictional protections to constituent unions within the councils.

The department's mix of federal and private-sector bargaining units presents complex challenges further complicated by the wide diversity of industries in which the member unions represent workers: nuclear research and development, nuclear remediation and cleanup and other Department of Energy operations; military reservations and weapons plants; shipbuilding and repair in the private and federal sectors; petrochemical and refinery operations; mining; and other industrial operations.

Metal Trades has undergone a series of transitions over the past four years. John Meese retired in January 2002 after nine years as the department president. On Jan. 10, 2002, the Department's Executive Council named Ronald Ault to succeed President Meese.

President Ault works with the department's two general representatives—Jim Seidl and Tom Schaffer—to share the basic collective bargaining, case handling, training and travel.

Because of growing demands on the department's limited resources, the department relies on the expertise of staff from 17 affiliated unions who are assigned by their respective international unions to represent Metal Trades units. In the past four years, as in previous years, Metal Trades-affiliated unions have been very generous in assisting the functioning of the department.

**The department relies on the expertise of staff from 17 affiliated unions who are assigned by their respective international unions to represent Metal Trades units.**



**Metal Trades uses its website and a growing e-mail list of activists to alert councils to new developments affecting their constituent unions and, ultimately, their union members.**

## **Building E-Activism**

In consultation with the Metal Trades' Executive Council and delegates to the department's annual conferences, President Ault adopted several initiatives to better utilize technology to streamline communications between constituent councils and the department as well as among department affiliates. Metal Trades uses its website ([www.metaltrades.org](http://www.metaltrades.org)) and a growing e-mail list of activists to alert councils to new developments affecting their constituent unions and, ultimately, their union members. The website is updated as frequently as needed. The department also publishes a quarterly newsletter, the *Metaletter*, as a key communications tool.

Metal Trades held a training session in fall 2003 at the Machinists' Winpisinger Training Center to launch its new technology initiative. Some 60 local leaders took part in this training, which included discussion and information on the department's efforts to energize communications outreach among affiliated unions.

## **Political and Legislative Mobilization**

Metal Trades' annual conferences include representational training and practical skills and information to improve the effectiveness of our councils in the areas of grievance handling, safety, contract negotiations and representation before third parties. During election years, conference emphasis is on legislative developments and voter education programs.

In a first-ever voter education training outreach, Metal Trades' September 2004 conference capped a series of regional meetings called to educate councils and the members they represent about the issues of the 2004 presidential election. Undertaken with full consideration to the constraints imposed on many Metal Trades members by the

Hatch Act, these regional meetings enabled Metal Trades to assess local concerns and create an awareness of those concerns by the presidential candidates.

## **A Winning Coalition Against Dow Chemical**

Metal Trades continues to confront unique representation challenges by large global corporations such as Dow Chemical Co. and federal agencies that, since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, have attempted to sharply curtail employees' collective bargaining rights. By adopting aggressive, multifaceted campaign tactics, including mobilizing and building solidarity, inviting community involvement and working closely with other AFL-CIO components, affiliated unions and, in some cases, like-minded industry organizations, the Metal Trades has stood strong against enterprises that deploy massive resources.

In the case of Dow Chemical, the Metal Trades confronted an extremely volatile situation in Texas City, Texas, involving a 1,500-member bargaining unit that faced unacceptable employer demands at the bargaining table. The department received substantial support from the Steelworkers, PACE International and several Metal Trades-affiliated building trades unions that hold contracts with Dow and its subsidiaries. Metal Trades affiliates provided expertise and assistance in developing a shareholder initiative to confront Dow's annual meeting. The department created a website and produced e-mails and fliers that members widely distributed throughout Dow's U.S. locations to publicize the company's unfair tactics.

The Texas AFL-CIO discussed the situation with local lawmakers and congressional representatives, and the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions Employees (ICEM) spearheaded a global campaign.

The elements of this multipronged campaign eventually forced Dow to back down and negotiate an acceptable agreement. That victory also spawned similar contracts for two other Texas-based Dow units.

### **Legislative Action**

Metal Trades cultivates congressional relations and monitors appropriations and policies affecting workers in Metal Trades–represented units engaged in shipbuilding and related defense activities. The department has focused on the loss of the U.S. industrial base, especially the effect on America’s national security. Metal Trades has worked with legislative representatives from affiliated unions in coordination with the AFL-CIO Legislative and Public Policy departments, along with a network of U.S. employers that share Metal Trades members’ concerns. The department’s priorities include protection and expansion of Buy American statutes. Metal Trades seeks to maintain an effective mechanism for holding lawmakers accountable and publicizing the unhealthy reliance on foreign suppliers for defense and related goods and services.

Metal Trades works closely with affiliates and other AFL-CIO departments to monitor and respond to congressional or administrative threats to circumvent, undermine or threaten to repeal the Service Contract Act, the Davis-Bacon Act and budgetary issues related to support for domestic shipbuilding.

Among the most significant challenges to U.S. shipbuilding in recent years are efforts by the Bush administration and the U.S. Defense Department to radically cut appropriations for maintaining a healthy Navy fleet. Metal Trades is analyzing and developing a response to the threatened base closures as advanced by U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld this spring under the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) recommendations.

### **NSPS: Ideology, Not Security**

The greatest threat the Metal Trades Department faces today is the development of the so-called National Security Personnel System (NSPS). In November 2003, Congress authorized the secretary of defense to develop a new personnel system to cover 750,000 civilian employees of the Defense Department. Congress acted in response to Secretary Rumsfeld’s request for personnel policies that are “more flexible” and “nimble.” The legislation creating the NSPS was tucked into the annual appropriation bill for the Defense Department and passed with little or no discussion of its implications.

The NSPS outline is derived from policy papers developed within the ultrareactionary Heritage Foundation and presented to the new Bush administration within weeks of Bush’s first inauguration. The tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, provided the administration with an opportunity to advance a policy of dismantling the nation’s civil service system—first within the Department of Homeland Security and now at the Department of Defense. The Heritage Foundation essentially argues union representation, collective bargaining and a voice on the job “compromise” national security. Evidence, facts and experience of the positive value of union representation for government workers proves conclusively the opposite: Union members have higher morale because they have family-supporting wages, job security and a voice at the workplace. The rights of freedom of association and due process are key principles of American democracy. They must not be subordinated to vague and subjective national security considerations.

The NSPS is an ideologically driven program unrelated to ensuring the nation’s security. It is a blatant effort to create a

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template for a union-free environment in the federal sector that can be transplanted easily to bargaining environments for any other federal agency or public-sector employer—and ultimately, to any major private-sector employer.

President George W. Bush already has indicated his intention to model all federal civilian agencies on NSPS. Elements of NSPS have surfaced in the personnel policies of several new Republican governors—highlighting how this is a threat that extends beyond Department of Defense civilian workers to the entire structure of U.S. labor relations.

Historically, personnel policies of the federal government have served as models for the entire economy. At times, such policies have had a positive impact—in the area of civil rights, for example. Integration of the nation's armed services after World War II is recognized widely as a major stimulus for the civil rights movement that culminated in such milestones as the Voting Rights Act. When federal policies have a malicious intent, as does the NSPS, the ripple effect could be devastating.

Metal Trades has taken a leading role in the development and operation of the United Department of Defense Workers Coalition, a coalition of 36 affiliated and independent unions formed to combat NSPS, and has filed a legal challenge to NSPS. With the support of AFL-CIO staff, this coalition has presented the Department of Defense with a solid front to preserve and protect the rights of Department of Defense workers.

## **Summary**

The Maritime Trades Department, the Transportation Trades Department, the Building and Construction Trades Department, the Union Label and Service Trades Department and the Food and Allied Service Trades Department have provided ongoing assistance in the day-to-day operations of the Metal Trades Department and have worked cooperatively in developing Metal Trades member programs. Together with these AFL-CIO departments, Metal Trades remains strong and committed to combating attacks on working families and advancing the interests of our members. The policies adopted and action taken in the past four years will serve to strengthen Metal Trades' capacity to assist affiliates—and most important, union members—for years to come.

# Department for Professional Employees



## Professional Workers in the 21st Century

In 2002, the Department for Professional Employees (DPE) celebrated its 25th anniversary. In the years since its inception, post-industrial America has experienced seismic changes in the nation's workforce—a transformation marked by an explosion in the white-collar world of work.

In 1977, when the AFL-CIO chartered the DPE, 13.9 million professional and highly skilled technicians were on the job in the American economy. By 2004, that number had more than doubled. Analysts project in the 10-year cycle through 2012, the number of these professional workers will increase by 6.5 million—or 23.3 percent—and remain the fastest-growing occupational group in the nation. At the same time, while overall U.S. employment is projected to increase by less than 15 percent, professional and technical occupations will account for an astounding 30.3 percent of all employment growth.

Numerous DPE-affiliated unions already represent millions of workers in white-collar occupations, providing a significant base from which the union movement can and should grow. But many in the public are unaware of the extent to which this white-collar base constitutes the union movement's membership—a paradox that needs to change.

By mid-2005, more than 51 percent of all union members are white-collar workers, while professional and related occupations represent the largest contingent of union members of any occupational classification.

## A Voice for Professional Workers' Issues

DPE's most aggressive initiatives over the past four years involved improved internal and external communications. DPE achieved a presence within national, regional, state and local media on the issues of offshore outsourcing, guest worker visas, media

**“If the labor movement is to grow and if workers are to get the kind of representation they deserve, unions have to retool, restructure and redirect their energies. Key targets in this endeavor are the new professional workers who don't fit the mold of traditional nine-to-fivers.”**

—Edward McElroy,  
AFT president and DPE chair,  
Speech to DPE Organizing  
Conference 2005

**DPE achieved a presence within national, regional, state and local media on the issues of offshore outsourcing, guest worker visas, media reform and overtime pay for white-collar workers.**

reform and overtime pay for white-collar workers. The DPE hosted six major press events; appeared on more than a dozen television and radio interviews, including ABC Nightly News, CNN, Voice of America radio and Fox News; and was quoted in nearly 30 national daily newspapers. DPE leadership debated offshore advocates in nearly 20 public forums around the country. DPE also established its first website as well as an electronic newsletter—*Newsline*—that details DPE’s work and is sent to several thousand union leaders, key staff and allied activists.

### **Dedicating Resources to Ensure Workers Gain a Voice@Work**

DPE focuses its resources on activities to assist its affiliates in connecting to and organizing the professional, technical and administrative support workforce. DPE’s major initiative related to organizing was Organizing Professionals in the 21st Century, a March 2005 three-day conference on organizing professionals in the new millennium. It brought together some 200 participants—organizers, decision makers, researchers and staff—from 19 national unions affiliated with DPE, along with representatives from nearly 25 other unions, allied organizations and universities. Discussions centered on new organizing strategies, innovative organizational models, successful campaigns and the presentation of ground-breaking attitudinal research by key professionals in nursing, higher education and information technology. Presentations focused on professional associations and their success in attracting new professional members as well as a case study of the Kaiser Permanente Coalition of Unions, in which interunion cooperation and aggressive union action have fostered successful organizing and collective bargaining outcomes. The conference laid the foundation for a broad-based network of professional organizers and set priorities for new research.

## **A Voice for Workers in the Changing Global Economy**

In recognition of the profound changes that globalization, technological innovation and other factors bring to the professional and technical workforce and workplace, the DPE in 2004 created a Committee on the Evolution of Professional Careers with representatives from nearly 20 national unions. The committee’s goals are to:

- Review and analyze the trends affecting the future of white-collar work;
- Ascertain the careers and professions likely to emerge over the next decade;
- Determine appropriate strategies necessary to organize these workers;
- Explore organizational models of unionism that offer the potential to enhance membership among professional workers;
- Better prepare unions to align themselves with the workforce of the future; and
- Develop a consensus about appropriate public policy, bargaining strategies, organizing goals and tactics as well as other courses of action essential to expanding union density in the professions.

### **Leadership Development and Strategic Planning**

In the past three years, the DPE augmented its work by adding new capacity in leadership development and strategic planning. DPE’s activities included facilitating:

- Numerous high-level leadership discussions between the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and the Screen Actors in 2002 and 2003 regarding the consolidation of the two organizations; despite an overwhelming recommendation from the leadership to merge, a 60 percent supermajority constitutional voting requirement was



easily surpassed in the AFTRA vote but narrowly failed in SAG.

- Staff training for AFGE in 2003, development of AFTRA's national staff conference in 2002 and organizing a one-day retreat for the Executive Board of AFTRA's Nashville, Tenn., local union that developed a consensus about priorities for action (2004).
- Workshops on "Professionalism and Unionism: Are They Compatible?" and "Making a Difference Through Leadership and Power" for national and state leaders at the United American Nurses Labor Leader Institute (2004).
- A three-day retreat for the UAN Executive Council, state collective bargaining leaders and Organizational Structure Committee (2005) and providing the UAN with an overview of effective union structures.

## A Voice for Workers in Legislation and Public Policy

From late 2001 through midyear 2005, the DPE was involved in nearly 40 different congressional and state legislative issues as well as several federal regulatory and other matters. In four key areas—preservation of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules against media monopolies, the offshore outsourcing of white-collar jobs, professional guest worker visas and overtime pay for professionals—the DPE helped lead the union movement's legislative and regulatory efforts.

### FCC Media Rules

What began as an agency effort to eradicate the ban against newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership became a crusade by the FCC's GOP majority to eliminate all of the FCC's anti-monopoly rules. Under the leadership of the DPE's Standing Policy Committee on the Arts, Entertainment and Media Industry, the department set in motion a multifaceted strategy. The strategy focused

on engaging the entire union movement in the fight; bringing pressure to bear on the FCC; joining with allies to stop the commission's monopolistic efforts; lobbying Congress to derail media deregulation; and building public awareness through media outreach.

The DPE sponsored major press events with coalition and labor allies on the proposed cross-ownership rule, attacking the FCC's analysis supporting deregulation, unveiling an exposé on Clear Channel Communications and releasing a poll of media workers and the impact of industry consolidation on their profession and work life. The AFL-CIO Executive Council also weighed in on a DPE-drafted policy resolution, "Media Monopolies: A Threat to American Democracy," which the council adopted February 2003.

In Congress, the DPE and its allies attacked the FCC on multiple legislative fronts after the commission issued the new deregulation rules. In the most significant victory of DPE's campaign, a bipartisan Senate majority voted by nearly 60 votes to approve a rarely used Congressional Review Act veto of the rules. But intransigent Republican leadership in the House refused to take action. DPE, media unions, state and local labor councils and public interest allies mobilized massive public protests by hundreds of activists at forums in San Antonio and Monterey, Calif., at which FCC commissioners got an earful about deregulation. In a major victory for public interest, consumers and labor, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit scuttled the rules and sent them back to the agency for further work.

The collective efforts of DPE unions and allied organizations to stop deregulation spawned a nationwide protest movement as well as a congressional media reform caucus to continue the fight in the

**From late 2001 through midyear 2005, the DPE was involved in nearly 40 different congressional and state legislative issues as well as several federal regulatory and other matters.**

The union movement and its media reform allies rallied around a new statement of principles, the *Bill of Media Rights*, which speaks to the rights American citizens have with respect to media and the news, information and entertainment that flows through its various pipelines. DPE authored a comprehensive AFL-CIO Executive Council policy resolution, “The Media Reform Campaign,” adopted in March 2005.

Big Business-friendly 109th Congress (2005–2006).

In anticipation of an oncoming assault on telecommunications laws and regulations, the union movement and its media reform allies rallied around a new statement of principles, the *Bill of Media Rights*, which speaks to the rights American citizens have with respect to media and the news, information and entertainment that flows through its various pipelines. DPE authored a comprehensive AFL-CIO Executive Council policy resolution, “The Media Reform Campaign,” adopted in March 2005.

Most importantly, the campaign served as the foundation for solidifying organizational alliances at the national level while uniting individual grassroots unions and allies into a massive nationwide movement to combat big media in the years ahead.

### **Offshore Outsourcing of White-Collar Jobs**

This issue exploded onto the American political landscape late in 2003 in part because of the work of the DPE. Early that year, reports began to surface about the extent to which white-collar jobs had begun to be sent overseas—professional and technical jobs that free-trade advocates had assured the nation would remain in this country, even as millions of manufacturing job opportunities were lost. New reports forecast the loss of millions of these jobs as U.S. companies scoured the world for cheap labor.

Working with the DPE, the AFL-CIO set up a task force of key departments and affiliates to devise policies and strategies to deal with this new crisis. The DPE testified on the issue before Congress and in state legislatures and worked with the AFL-CIO to develop federal and state legislative responses. At the state level, the issue took

legislatures by storm as efforts focused on banning the offshore outsourcing of state contracts and procurement. In addition, activists worked with state governments to withdraw their commitments to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to open up their procurement under national free trade agreements to export. DPE worked with AFL-CIO Executive Council to craft a policy resolution, “Outsourcing America,” adopted in March 2004.

In 2005 the DPE is continuing its work with the AFL-CIO in Congress and state legislatures as well as with the national media.

### **Guest Worker Visas**

DPE continues to lead efforts to defeat industry efforts to expand the H-1B visa program after the statutory cap had receded to 65,000 visas annually. However, in late 2004 the Congress added a new visa cap exemption for up to 20,000 foreign graduates of U.S. colleges with advanced degrees. DPE wrote a comprehensive AFL-CIO Executive Council policy resolution “Reform the H-1B and L1 Guest Worker Visa Programs,” adopted in August 2003. DPE also led efforts to delay for two years efforts by the Bush administration to defund the H-1B technical skills training program that uses visa fees to retrain U.S. workers for jobs impacted by this guest worker visa program.

### **Overtime Pay Regulations**

In March 2003, the Bush Department of Labor proposed regulations to cut overtime pay protections. Over the next year-and-a-half, the DPE played a leading role in working with the AFL-CIO, affiliated unions and numerous union allies to block the rules by highlighting the deleterious impact the proposed rules would impose on white-collar workers. A public outcry and repeated legislative victories by unions and their members led the Labor Department to

revise its proposals, but the final rule still adversely affects millions of U.S. workers.

The DPE also focused on major legislative and regulatory issues involving media and telecommunications; labor law; pay, benefits, and job security; and taxes, trade and intellectual property.

## **A Voice for Workers in Our Communities**

### **Outreach and Building Coalitions**

DPE has initiated efforts to expand the union movement's coalition-building strategies.

### **Lunch and Learn Programs**

Since February 2004, the DPE has sponsored five sessions examining the state of the nation's health care system and proposals for change. Featuring outside experts, these programs have attracted more than 400 participants from labor, government, academia, community, consumer and women's organizations, public health groups, student organizations, think tanks and foreign embassies. These programs help enhance the image of unions by bringing together many different organizations and their representatives with workers to focus on the single largest problem in the U.S. economy—runaway health care costs.

### **Women Professionals**

Women professional employees currently make up 47 percent of the labor force and more than 56 percent of professional and related employees—a percentage that is expected to increase. DPE has developed a range of materials and fact sheets on

salaried and professional women and has been building bridges to the women's community. DPE contributed to a book, *50 Ways to Improve Women's Lives: The Essential Guide for Achieving Health, Equality and Success for All*, published in March 2005. DPE's essay, "Support Labor Unions," outlines the benefits of union membership for professional and other women.

### **Professional Associations**

DPE continues to assist in building relationships with nonunion professional associations and their members—paving the way for organizing—by establishing a presence at their major meetings and conferences.

### **Outreach to Preprofessionals**

Recognizing the importance of young professionals to the future of the labor movement, DPE is continuing to expand its college-based outreach program. This initiative is intended to change the culture, paving the way for future organizing by informing students of unions' crucial role in the United States and highlighting the ways in which unions can improve the status of professions and help individuals achieve their career goals.

### **Research**

In the past four years, the DPE has issued six reports, six detail-rich statistical compendiums, five analyses of the benefits of union membership for employees in various professional societies and organizations and 17 fact sheets that address public policy issues of critical concern to professional employees and provide comprehensive portraits of the white-collar work force.

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# Transportation Trades Department



**A strong, safe and secure transportation network is a key component of the nation's economy, and transportation workers are in the forefront of that network.**

**W** E ARE PLEASED TO SUBMIT to the 2005 AFL-CIO Convention a report on the activities and initiatives of the Transportation Trades Department (TTD). Since the AFL-CIO 2001 Convention, transportation workers have faced unprecedented challenges and attacks within all sectors. While the specific issues confronting the department's 35 affiliated unions vary, common themes have emerged:

- Globalization is threatening transportation workers as never before.
  - Outsourcing of transportation jobs has exploded in the past decade—a problem exacerbated by the growth of nonunion competitors.
  - Basic workers' rights, including collective bargaining rights, continue to be eroded and attacked through hostile policy proposals and government actions.
  - Transportation security challenges since Sept. 11, 2001, have been neglected.
- The Bush administration and Congress are failing to invest adequately in transportation.
  - Privatization of the nation's transportation system is a growing threat to workers and the public.
  - Rollbacks in job security, health care and guaranteed pensions are becoming all too common in the transportation sector.

Despite these challenges, TTD and its member unions have fought back—and even scored victories—in a tough political environment.

## **Taking a Strong Stand**

TTD has made the case that a strong, safe and secure transportation network is a key component of the nation's economy, and transportation workers are in the forefront of that network and deserve support from elected officials and corporate leaders.

**TTD's grassroots and political programs are expanding, and the department has unified transportation unions behind a common agenda.**

The department has better used the power of the Internet, expanding the TTD website and using an online activist network to ensure policymakers hear directly from rank-and-file transportation workers. The department has increased the size of its political action committee, worked with affiliates in support of grassroots efforts on pending legislation and ensured candidates for elected office took a stand on issues directly relevant to transportation workers. In 2002 and 2004, TTD staff members were released to work with state and regional labor bodies in support of working family issues.

Since 2001, TTD has seen two of its outstanding officers step down from their positions after leading transportation workers through the dark years of Newt Gingrich in the 1990s and overseeing a successful restructuring of the department.

Sonny Hall, the retired president of the Transport Workers and Pat Friend, president of Flight Attendants-CWA, resigned as president and secretary-treasurer of TTD, respectively, in fall 2003. With the strong support of Hall and Friend, the TTD Executive Committee elected Edward Wytkind as president and Michael Ingrao as secretary-treasurer. TTD's 2005 Convention re-elected Wytkind and Ingrao to five-year terms and named Sonny Hall TTD president emeritus in recognition of his years of service to the department, TWU and the entire union movement.

Looking ahead, TTD is well positioned to fight and win on behalf of transportation workers. Policymakers in Washington, D.C., have come to respect and depend on the substantive input TTD and its affiliated unions offer on transportation policy debates. TTD has built a bloc of supporters on both sides of the aisle who will vote with transportation workers in tough battles—and openly lead the charge. Such

support stems from TTD's efforts over the past decade to cultivate a bipartisan bloc of supporters who mobilize when transportation workers face legislative attacks.

TTD's grassroots and political programs are expanding, and the department has unified transportation unions behind a common agenda. Whether testifying on Capitol Hill, mobilizing activists or responding to federal regulatory initiatives, TTD always has fought for policies that enhance the lives and economic securities of transportation workers. Despite the challenges ahead, TTD plans to continue that fight.

## **Effects of Sept. 11, 2001, Attacks Shape Agenda**

TTD's most recent report, filed just weeks after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, predicted the events of that awful day would be long felt across the transportation industry and drive the agenda in Washington, D.C., for years to come. That prediction—both in positive and negative terms—could not have been more accurate, as transportation workers have seen their jobs and professions change forever.

### **Aviation Industry in Crisis**

The aviation industry has borne the brunt of the economic impact of the Sept. 11 attacks that grounded the airlines and left them in financial ruins. These problems have been worsened by rising fuel prices and the flawed policy decisions of the Bush administration. In the days after Sept. 11, TTD worked to save the airline industry by advocating for federal assistance. While President George W. Bush signed the aid package into law, his administration insisted on deep wage concessions and imposed other conditions that were neither realistic nor envisioned by Congress. The result is less than 15 percent of congressional authorized loan guarantees were distributed to airline carriers. Four years later, the



airline industry still is in peril, workers' pensions have been eliminated, 150,000 jobs have been cut and wages reduced.

In the face of such economic dislocation, TTD and its affiliates insisted airline workers—not only airline corporations—receive financial relief. After winning a key vote in the U.S. House of Representatives by 265 to 150 (with 67 Republicans voting to provide financial relief to transportation workers) and securing an amendment in the Senate, Congress approved 26 weeks of extended jobless benefits for workers at airlines, aerospace manufacturers (including Boeing) and airports in the fiscal year 2003 budget. The TTD and its affiliates achieved this victory despite strong opposition by Republican leaders on Capitol Hill and the White House, which referred to such aid as “excessive.”

### **Fighting for Improved Transportation Security**

After Sept. 11, 2001, transportation unions immediately led the fight for greater transportation security, and TTD has achieved improvements in the airline industry. Airports are better protected, airplanes' cockpits more secure, the federal air marshal program expanded and resources invested to close security vulnerabilities.

Loopholes still remain, and TTD has demanded the government's rhetoric on security match reality. Flight attendant security training has been mandated by Congress but delayed by the Bush administration, and funding for key programs has been cut back or held up at critical times. The department also has fought cargo carriers' attempts to exempt themselves from security requirements. Further, the Bush administration used the security debate to deny—under a phony veil of “national security”—collective bargaining rights to 50,000 federalized airport screeners.

In April 2003, TTD and the AFL-CIO jointly petitioned the Bush administration to close facilities abroad that maintain U.S. aircraft until security audits could be completed. In yet another flawed policy decision, the administration summarily rejected the call. TTD and the AFL-CIO then turned to Congress—and achieved the most significant legislative victory on this issue since the 1988 regulations made it easier for foreign stations to work on U.S. aircraft: Passage of a bill authorizing security audits followed a 52 to 42 vote in the Senate and leadership from Rep. James Oberstar (D-Minn.) in the House. But the Bush administration once again has slow-walked implementation of the security audits required by Congress, and TTD is returning to Congress to force government action.

### **Working for Fairness in Maritime and Rail Security**

While aviation has been in the spotlight and has received more than 90 percent of the billions of federal dollars allocated by the government, other modes of transportation have been shortchanged. Congress passed the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) in 2002, making improvements to port and maritime operations, but too many of the requirements mandated by the new law are not being adequately enforced. For example, worker training and evacuation procedures are lacking and cargo containers flowing through the nation's ports are not being checked adequately.

On the rail and transit side, TTD has won support in Congress for many priorities, but a hostile administration and a reluctant Republican leadership have stymied comprehensive bills. The TTD is seeking:

- Mandatory security training;
- Whistle-blower protection for workers;
- Financial grants for over-the-road operators so companies and workers no longer will have to fend for themselves; and

- Federal oversight for the unique security needs of hazardous material transportation.

In response to the host of extensive background checks imposed on transportation workers in the aftermath of Sept. 11 and reports of worker discrimination and unfair dismissals, TTD took a leadership role to develop and implement a unified labor position. TTD argued background checks must provide workers with basic due process rights, focus on rooting out true security risks, protect workers' privacy and not be used to unfairly prevent someone from working in his or her chosen profession. During consideration of the maritime security bill, TTD won many of these protections. The department then used this experience to fight for fairness for hazmat truck drivers and aviation workers and to improve maritime security checks. There is little question these checks will spread to workers in other areas of the transportation industry, and TTD will continue to lead the fight for fairness as the debate moves forward.

### **Improving Transportation Safety**

As the rail industry has stood in the way of advances in security, it also has also managed to stonewall meaningful safety legislation. Worker fatigue is a growing problem, track maintenance and staffing have not been maintained, remote control technologies are misused and the "dark territory" problem—racks without signal systems—must be addressed. Too often, the Bush-controlled Federal Railroad Administration simply has been too cozy with the industry it is supposed to regulate.

TTD has worked with the Teamsters and the Amalgamated Transit Union to ensure hours of service regulations enhance safety and do not undermine jobs. This effort will continue to be an issue in the regulatory

setting and in the pending TEA-21 reauthorization bill. TTD also is working with affiliates to make sure commercial van operators and so-called curbside operators do not cut corners on safety and school bus safety is taken seriously.

TTD, together with IBT, scored a major victory for safety by defeating a Wal-Mart-sponsored initiative that would have allowed the company to force longer hours for its drivers. Under mounting public criticism, the company and its special-interest legislation were defeated.

For more than a decade, lawmakers, facing fierce industry opposition, have been unable to reauthorize the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. With an estimated 1 million hazmat shipments moving by truck, rail, pipeline, air and water each day, protecting the public and workers involved in the shipment of these dangerous goods has never been more important. Yet the industry has stonewalled meaningful reforms, sought to weaken the role of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in protecting workers and blocked worker training requirements. In addition, the department is working to expand training grants for firefighters and transportation workers and defeat special-interest exemptions. TTD also has been working with flight attendant unions to ensure flight attendants receive the same OSHA protections afforded to other workers.

### **Addressing Globalization and Outsourcing**

It is impossible to talk about transportation safety and security without recognizing the threats globalization and outsourcing pose, not only to the jobs of transportation workers, but to the safety and security standards critical to the country.

**TTD has worked with the Teamsters and the Amalgamated Transit Union to ensure hours of service regulations enhance safety and do not undermine jobs.**

Nowhere is this more evident than in the fight over allowing Mexican-domiciled trucks and buses entry into the United States as called for under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). For more than a decade, transportation labor has successfully made the case that Mexican-domiciled operators do not meet U.S. safety and security standards. Despite efforts of the White House to allow such unsafe vehicles into this nation, a bipartisan Congress has rejected the president's views and embraced the efforts of TTD and affiliated unions. Inspection and enforcement capabilities are not ready for the influx of traffic generated by full implementation of NAFTA. While the border has yet to be fully open, industry and foreign interests are pushing hard, and TTD and its affiliates will continue to push back.

The Union Pacific railroad also has attempted to outsource train inspections to Mexico. TTD defeated this dangerous proposal, but it is only a matter of time before major rail companies try to take advantage of global operations at the expense of safety and U.S. jobs. TTD stands ready to fight these efforts.

The department has actively defended airline foreign ownership and cabotage restrictions. TTD has defeated attempts by "liberalization" advocates such as Richard Branson to subject airlines and airline workers to the type of unfair competition that has devastated American aerospace, steel, auto and textile workers. These and other workers' issues are on the table as the United States negotiates a new aviation agreement with the European Union. Through official submissions to the U.S. State Department and the Department of Transportation and advocacy on Capitol Hill, TTD and its aviation affiliates have secured congressional support in opposition to sweeping reforms of laws designed to protect national interest.

In the aftermath of the lockout of International Longshore and Warehouse Union members at West Coast ports, TTD defeated attempts by Wal-Mart and its major shipper lobby to allow the use of foreign-flag vessels in defiance of Jones Act requirements. This was an obvious attempt by the industry to interfere in an ongoing labor dispute and do an end-run around the important maritime protections included in the Jones Act.

## Defending Workers' Rights

In a post-Sept. 11 climate marked by severe economic and security challenges, some political and business leaders have shamefully sought to exploit these difficult times by waging war against workers and their unions.

Under the Bush presidency, the National Mediation Board (NMB), the federal agency that oversees collective bargaining and organizing in the air and rail industries, has carried out the same politically charged, anti-worker agenda that has marred the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). In fact, the NMB has allowed collective bargaining to drag on far past the point of constructive negotiations, forcing workers to wait years for new contracts. It has endorsed a rail industry effort to tax workers' rights by creating steep filing fees for grievances with the intent of reducing the number of workers who protest unfair corporate behavior. TTD has mobilized against this proposal, enlisting the support of lawmakers and transportation activists.

Since 2001, TTD has stopped the airline industry's campaign to replace collective bargaining with winner-take-all, "baseball-style" arbitration. In addition to intensive lobbying on Capitol Hill, TTD, working with the AFL-CIO, successfully urged Democratic lobbyists—hired by the industry to peddle this misguided scheme—to

**The department has actively defended airline foreign ownership and cabotage restrictions.**

oppose it. When it became clear key Republicans weren't backing this effort, the airlines publicly withdrew their campaign. But it's possible the industry may resurrect this effort to weaken workers' bargaining rights.

TTD also has been busy ensuring basic worker protections, including Section 13(c) bargaining rights and Davis-Bacon, remain in place and are applied to all federal infrastructure programs. In the pending TEA-21 reauthorization bill, the Senate bill includes a provision that weakens Section 13(c) protections. In response, TTD has secured 24 House Republicans on record against the change, helped affected unions mobilize a grassroots effort against the provision and raised the profile of this issue with senior members of the House and Senate. TTD will do what's necessary to ensure these workers' protections are not eroded.

During consideration of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill in 2003, TTD worked closely with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association and the Professional Airways Systems Specialists to fight privatization schemes that would have allowed the FAA to contract out air traffic control services. TTD secured a partial prohibition and significantly raised the profile of this issue, making the case that putting profits ahead of safety is not acceptable. TTD also has joined with FAA unions to fight attempts by the FAA to unilaterally impose contract terms without fully negotiating with its unions. This end-run around the collective bargaining process demonstrates the anti-worker, anti-union bias at the FAA—one that has not served the long-term interests of the agency or the nation's air transportation system.

TTD worked with AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka and the ILWU

when management locked out ILWU members and the Bush administration issued a Taft-Hartley injunction. The TTD publicly condemned the White House actions, enlisted congressional opposition and joined the AFL-CIO in pushing for a groundbreaking agreement that protected the long-term interests of ILWU members under assault from major shippers such as Wal-Mart.

## Investing in Transportation Jobs

TTD has long led the fight on Capitol Hill and within the Bush administration for greater federal investment in the U.S. transportation system and infrastructure. TTD has argued successfully that such investments create and support millions of jobs and ensure the nation's transportation system can serve as an economic engine for other industries dependent on the efficient movement of goods and people.

As Congress debates the pending TEA-21 reauthorization bill, TTD so far has been successful in ensuring the funding guarantees and so-called budget firewalls adopted in the original 1998 TEA-21 bill are preserved. While the funding levels currently under discussion fall short, the bill would still represent a major increase in spending over the objections of a White House that for two years has used veto threats to block robust highway and transit investment. TTD also has secured major elements of the department's safety and security agenda. As this legislation is concluded, TTD will oppose any effort to weaken protections for workers, impose privatization mandates or create special-interest exemptions from safety rules.

In the four years since President Bush took office, TTD and its rail unions have kept Amtrak funded despite White House

**TTD also has been busy ensuring basic worker protections remain in place and are applied to all federal infrastructure programs.**

opposition. The department also has blocked senseless privatization initiatives pushed by the administration, which seeks to eliminate all funding for Amtrak, force a bankruptcy and break up the carrier. Amtrak's own board has turned on its passengers and employees by pushing a plan that would weaken Amtrak workers' collective bargaining rights and undermine the railroad retirement system. TTD has mobilized against these proposals and gained support on the Hill, on both sides of the aisle, for a plan that would make real and lasting investments in Amtrak and the nation's entire rail system.

And at a time when more Americans are flying than ever before, the administration has attempted to scale back programs to modernize the nation's airports and air traffic control system. Its FAA administrator has mismanaged air traffic control modernization and virtually declared war on FAA workers and their unions by pressing for contracting-out schemes and engaging in heavy-handed collective bargaining strategies. As a result, the agency has a staffing crisis and labor-management relations have eroded at a crucial time for U.S. air

transportation. TTD has enlisted all transportation unions to stand with the FAA unions in the face of this blatant attempt by the FAA to break the spirit of the employees and weaken the power of the unions.

## Conclusion

While TTD has achieved significant success despite strong opposition, the multifaceted challenges of the post-Sept. 11 era remain as daunting as ever. Going forward, the Transportation Trades Department will continue to be a bold voice for transportation workers, restoring the power of transportation workers on the job, identifying opportunities to increase the size and influence of the transportation sector of the labor movement and ensuring a strong and well-funded transportation system. Carrying on its mandate to represent the interests of transportation workers, TTD will work to strengthen transportation safety and security and demand transportation workers' rights on the job are protected—and that these men and women are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

**The Transportation Trades Department will continue to be a bold voice for transportation workers.**



# Union Label and Service Trades Department



**T**HE UNION LABEL & SERVICE TRADES DEPARTMENT (UL&STD) is the only branch of the union movement charged with marketing union-made goods and services to union members and the general public. In addition, the department is responsible for publicizing AFL-CIO–endorsed boycotts and explaining the goals and benefits of trade unionism.

By increasing consumers' awareness of their purchasing power, billions of consumer dollars can be steered toward or away from specific employers, augmenting union organizing, bargaining and other efforts to promote more just and responsible corporate behavior. Active marketing can open a whole new front in the struggle for good jobs and workers' rights.

The UL&STD marketing mandate also creates unique challenges because of the need to maintain up-to-date information on union-made products and services. Modern companies often offer a mix of identical

or near-identical products and services, some union made, some not. They shift production between union and nonunion facilities, move overseas, go out of business or open new lines of business.

Keeping data accurate and up to date in the midst of these changes is the main challenge facing the UL&STD. Accurate information is essential to effective marketing outreach and in assisting consumers in identifying and purchasing union-made goods and services.

A further goal of the UL&STD's marketing campaign is reaching consumers effectively with the "Union Label message." In addition to holding numerous press interviews and presentations at union conferences, conventions and other gatherings, UL&STD publishes the *Label Letter* newsletter. Mailed six times a year to some 30,000 union leaders, members, supporters, reporters and allied organizations, the award-winning publication features original news articles,

**By increasing consumers' awareness of their purchasing power, billions of consumer dollars can promote more just and responsible corporate behavior.**

the boycott list and a “Do Buy” page of union-made products and services.

Central to UL&STD communications outreach are the AFL-CIO Union-Industries Show and the revamped Union Label website, [www.UnionLabel.org](http://www.UnionLabel.org).

## The AFL-CIO Union-Industries Show

The AFL-CIO Union-Industries Show is the nation’s only trade and skills exposition featuring exclusively union-made goods and services. UL&STD has held the show every year since 1938, except for a brief period during World War II.

Since 2001, the Union-Industries Show has opened in such working family cities as Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and most recently, Portland, Ore. Open to the public, the show draws between 150,000 and 250,000 visitors each year, giving them a firsthand look at the wide variety of union members’ skills and crafts and the many vital services our unions provide and support.

Each year during the Union-Industries Show, one or two companies receive the prestigious Labor–Management Award in recognition of their outstanding commitment to collective bargaining and genuine workplace cooperation. Since 2001, the award has been issued to Amtrak West (nominated by the Brotherhood of Railway Signalmen), Fenton Art Glass Co. (USW), Cutco Cutlery (USW), George Lucas (IATSE), Greyhound Lines Inc. (ATU), Cingular Wireless (CWA), Rockwell Collins (IBEW), South Side Roofing Co. Inc. (United Union of Roofers and Waterproofers), General Motors Powertrain, Flint Engine South (UAW) and Georgia-Pacific Corp. (PACE).

The Union-Industries Show generates positive media and opens the way for important organizing opportunities for unions while fulfilling the mission of the department. The Union-Industries Show:

- Introduces the public directly to union-made goods and services and to union representatives. People can touch the products and sample the services, which augments their knowledge of and interest in products they have heard or read about in the media. They can meet union members face-to-face in a positive setting instead of learning about unions through media reports that too often focus on conflict and strife.
- Allows union companies to meet and network. Unionized producers, suppliers and distributors join forces at the Union-Industries Show and forge business relationships that can create more union jobs.
- Energizes the regional labor movement. Unions throughout the region become involved in organizing this celebration of the quality products and services union workers proudly produce, while thousands of union members attend the show and find renewed pride in the union movement.
- Generates positive publicity for unions and their members. For four days, the press focuses on unions’ contributions to the community. The Union-Industries Show is filled with compelling stories and irresistible photo opportunities, from union-trained guide dogs for the blind to the latest model Harley-Davidson motorcycle and exquisite hand-etched crystal.

**The Union-Industries Show generates positive media and opens the way for important organizing opportunities for unions while fulfilling the mission of the department.**

## Marketing the Union Label on the Web

With Internet retail sales currently valued at \$56 billion a year—and doubling every 36 months—the potential for selling union-made goods and services is tremendous. Union-made products are available in many of the hottest-selling categories, such as computers, clothing, auto parts, lawn and garden supplies, furniture, appliances and sporting goods. Recent research also shows fully one-third of the buying public will spend up to 40 percent more to buy goods they think are produced under fair and decent working conditions.

The UL&STD is deeply engaged in developing new programs to carry the Union Label message far beyond the range of the *Label Letter*, the Union-Industries Show and traditional websites. Creative use of the Internet removes two of the biggest barriers blocking shoppers from finding and buying union-made goods and services:

- The inability of many union companies to sell through the large retail chain stores. Large retailers demand such low prices it often is impossible for the producers to pay union-scale wages and benefits.
- The high cost of advertising. Small- and medium-sized unionized companies often cannot afford to advertise through print, radio or TV.

Marketing on the Internet bypasses the large retail stores and high-priced ad companies, allowing the UL&STD to reach millions of consumers directly and inexpensively, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The UL&STD committed to launching a year-round marketing presence on the Internet and began rebuilding and completely revamping the Union Label database

and website after the tremendous consumer response to the department's all-union Internet shopping site launched in fall 2004. Coinciding with the AFL-CIO-endorsed "Buy Union Week" promotion—a national effort to stimulate sales of union-made goods and services during the 10 days after Thanksgiving, the busiest shopping days of the year—the site demonstrated the potential for robust, Web-based marketing.

In May 2005, the UL&STD launched [www.ShopUnionMade.org](http://www.ShopUnionMade.org), an eye-catching, high-speed website that enables consumers to purchase goods and services online and allows union companies to advertise. Backed by a large and growing database, the all-union Internet shopping site offers consumers the option of searching for products by category—such as automotive, clothing and house and home—or searching by keyword. Product information also is available for goods that can be accessed online or offline, providing consumers with the widest range of purchasing options.

With [ShopUnionMade.org](http://ShopUnionMade.org) now in place, the UL&STD plans to expand its Web-based outreach, building on *Buy Union Week* momentum and promoting special sales events such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, back to school and Labor Day.

## Building Support for Organizing and Education

Building broad support for good union jobs is the goal of all UL&STD efforts, and the [ShopUnionMade](http://ShopUnionMade.org) website is but one component of the UL&STD presence on the Internet. The department's redesigned Union Label home page, [www.UnionLabel.org](http://www.UnionLabel.org), is focused on educating and organizing the public in support of unions and pro-worker economic and social policies.

**In May 2005, the UL&STD launched [www.ShopUnionMade.org](http://www.ShopUnionMade.org), an eye-catching, high-speed website that enables consumers to purchase goods and services online.**

The new website actively promotes numerous union programs, including Wake Up Wal-Mart, Good Jobs First, the Apollo Alliance, Sweat-free Communities and United Students Against Sweatshops.

The new site features breaking news from Workers Independent News (WIN), Press Associates Inc. and other sources; background information on vital issues; the AFL-CIO Boycott List and updates; and links to the Economic Policy Institute, Citizens for Tax Justice and other respected pro-worker organizations.

In addition to communicating with union members, the UL&STD is focused on reaching and influencing the tens of millions of people who are increasingly alarmed by the erosion of jobs and living standards and who are searching for ways to fight back. Polling shows millions of workers without union representation would join a union today if they could, and UL&STD's goal is to reach those workers. In addition, the website has the potential to reach millions of others who are indifferent or even hostile to unions and who may consider themselves conservative or apolitical but whose world views are in increasing conflict with the reality around them. The department seeks to provide a coherent alternative to the anti-worker ideologies of reactionary political extremists by offering a more humane, reality-based explanation of world events and multiple opportunities to engage in practical programs for change at the local, state and national levels.

## Looking to the Future

The [www.ShopUnionMade.org](http://www.ShopUnionMade.org) website should begin producing advertising revenue sufficient to operate and expand the website and finance significant new initiatives to promote union-made goods and services and to educate and organize people around

the fight for good jobs. In the near future, the UL&STD will:

- Add thousands of new union-made goods and services to the database by working with affiliated unions and through the department's partnership with the University of Massachusetts Labor Center in Amherst;
- Consider programming the site so consumers can order goods and services from multiple companies, place the orders in a single online shopping cart and execute one convenient sale;
- Protect the integrity of the Union Label. Too many companies today blur the line between union- and nonunion-made goods and services or engage in outright fraud. The UL&STD will protect union jobs and honest union companies by promoting proper use of the Union Label;
- Strengthen Union Label Councils and create new councils;
- Begin publishing material in Spanish and examine the need to publish in other languages as well;
- Strengthen its working relationships with allied groups and organizations promoting workers' and union rights; and
- Increase the department's focus on promoting union services. With more people every year holding service-sector jobs, better information on unionized service providers is necessary to find creative ways to promote union services. This requires involving more service-sector unions in the work of the Union Label Department through affiliations and active collaboration.

Not since the Great Depression have so many wage earners in North America experienced such profound economic dislocations—and the global forces driving the turmoil and unrest are bound to

accelerate for years to come. Millions of people today are looking for answers; millions of people are looking for something they can do, *right now*, to make things better.

This was made clear to us in 1999 and early 2000 by the overwhelming public support for the UL&STD-led campaign to outlaw use of the Made in the USA label on garments made in the U.S. protectorate of Saipan. Public pressure was so intense that in a worker-unfriendly, GOP-dominated Congress, 237 House members and 51 senators agreed to sponsor the UL&STD-backed legislation. Only the refusal of Speaker Dennis Hastert to permit a floor vote prevented the bill from passing in the House.

The UL&STD is committed to helping the public understand its vast untapped power to alter the face of the economy. Sixty-eight percent of the U.S. gross domestic product—\$6.8 trillion of the \$10 trillion of wealth created annually in this country—derives from personal consumer spending on everyday products such as toothpaste, diapers and dish soap.

Such consumer power offers the union movement a key opportunity to build on the Union Label, educate and mobilize concerned consumers and generate a powerful mass movement for good union jobs.

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