AFL-CIO COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF WORK AND UNIONS

REPORT TO THE AFL-CIO GENERAL BOARD

AFL-CIO

SEPTEMBER 2019

To the AFL-CIO General Board:

In the pages that follow, you will read the report of the AFL-CIO Commission on the Future of Work and Unions, an exciting initiative spanning nearly two years focused on bringing workers' voices into the future of work debate and rebuilding worker bargaining power in an economy that is leaving too many people behind. We recognize this report is a first step and that our mandate of positioning the labor movement to win a future of work that is fair and just must be continuous.

Our affiliated unions came together at the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention to declare: "Our values are timeless, and we know that throughout history collective bargaining has been and will be the key to power for working families. We must confront the realities that threaten our future, and we must evolve to overcome them."

We are grateful for the time and energy put forth by our sector chairs, commissioners, staff and outside contributors, all of whom lent their creativity and expertise to this final product. Our report is stronger because of these collective efforts.

At our commission's kickoff event in May 2018, I posed the following question: Will we let the drivers of inequality pervert technology to foster greater economic injustice and social unrest? Or will we demand that technology improves lives and raises standards and wages across the board?

This report is our plan to achieve the latter. It is a recognition that technology doesn't just fall from the sky and inequality is not inevitable. It is also a reflection of the commitment and purpose that defines today's union members and workers not yet in unions, an unprecedented number of whom are embracing the idea that strong and growing worker bargaining power is our surest path to an economy that works for all of us, not just the wealthy elites. Our movement must rise to meet this moment.

Workers are striking and marching and demanding a voice on the job and a say in the future. We are their best bet, and they are our greatest hope.

This report is our commitment to all of these workers and to each other.

In solidarity,

Richard L. Trumka
AFL-CIO President
Commission Chair

Contents

Staking Workers' Claim in the Debate

For the better part of four decades, workers have been more productive than ever, creating massive amounts of wealth—but rigged economic rules, unmitigated corporate greed and unrelenting political attacks have weakened our voices, stifled our wages and eroded our economic security. Yet as we write this report, a wave of collective action is sweeping the nation. Working people across industries and demographics are joining together for a better life. This uprising comes at a critical moment, as the astounding technologies of the digital revolution have the potential to improve workers' lives, but also threaten to degrade or eliminate millions of jobs.

That's why, in the United States and around the world, key stakeholders are engaging in a discussion about the future of work. This conversation is happening around us, often without us. In many of these rooms, the first item on the agenda is silencing our voices, part of an elite-driven fallacy that the future of work is something that will be done to workers instead of shaped by us.

The AFL-CIO Commission on the Future of Work and Unions, formed by a unanimous vote of the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention, is putting working people where we belong—at the center of shaping the economy, work, unions and the AFL-CIO. The resolution gave our commission an ambitious charge to "rethink ways of building bargaining power and providing economic security for millions of Americans, and...make sure that we as a movement are effectively organized and structured to get it done."

The commission, composed of the officers of the AFL-CIO and affiliated, national union leaders, is anchored by 10 subcommittees corresponding to sectors of the economy—building trades, energy, the federal sector, health care, manufacturing, professionals, the public sector, service and retail, transportation and demographic constituency groups.

AFL-CIO Commission on the Future of Work and Unions
Richard L. Trumka, AFL-CIO President
Elizabeth H. Shuler, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer
Tefere A. Gebre, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President

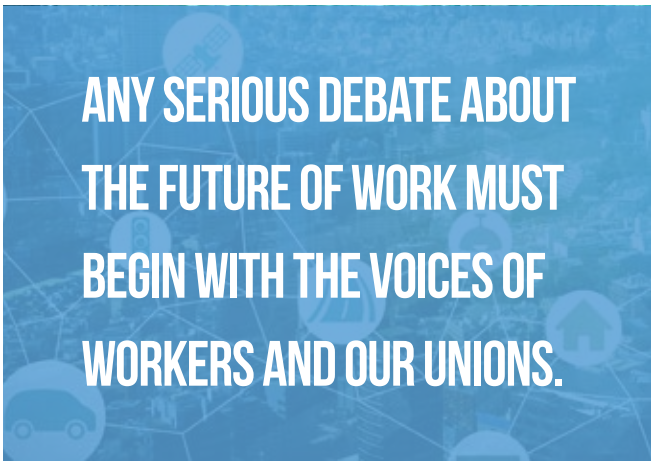
Sector Chairs
Building Trades: Eric Dean, Ironworkers
Demographic Constituencies: Terrence Melvin, CBTU/New York State AFL-CIO
Energy: Cecil Roberts, UMWA
Federal: Fredric V. Rolando, NALC
Health Care: Bonnie Castillo, NNU
Manufacturing: Robert Martinez Jr., IAM
Professional: Gabrielle Carteris, SAG-AFTRA
Public: Randi Weingarten, AFT
Service and Retail: Marc Perrone, UFCW
Transportation: Paul Rinaldi, NATCA

Commission Members

J. David Cox Sr., AFGE
Lee A. Saunders, AFSCME
Capt. Joe DePete, ALPA
Mark Dimondstein, APWU
Lawrence J. Hanley, ATU (In Memoriam)
James Boland, BAC
David Durkee, BCTGM
Christopher Shelton, CWA
James McCourt, HFIU
Harold Schaitberger, IAFF
Lonnie R. Stephenson, IBEW
Paul Shearon, IFPTE
James Callahan, IUOE
Kenneth Rigmaiden, IUPAT
Richard Lanigan, OPEIU
Joseph Sellers Jr., SMART
John Samuelsen, TWU
Gary Jones, UAW
D. Taylor, UNITE HERE
Leo W. Gerard, USW

We have heard from dozens of subject matter experts. We've studied various reform efforts. We've solicited the advice of global labor counterparts, collaborated with major research institutions and formed a historic partnership with Carnegie Mellon University.

Let us be perfectly clear: Any serious debate about the future of work must begin with the voices of workers and our unions. We aren't just asking for a seat at the table—we are claiming that seat for millions of workers who deserve to be heard.



We kicked off the commission with a public event in May 2018 where we heard from experts on the future of work and the pace of technological change, and listened to a group of young workers who have the most riding on our success. That summer, we looked at ways the labor movement can shape a rapidly changing economy, which is increasingly global and driven by finance capital. In September 2018, we studied how business models based on outsourcing and the rise of automation, digitization and artificial intelligence are impacting work. In December, we turned our attention to the future of unions, asking why union membership is lagging behind working people's desire for a voice on the job and exploring new strategies. And in March 2019, we debated the best ways to build the strongest and most effective AFL-CIO possible.

Throughout this process, it was clear that a generation of rigged economic rules and anti-worker attacks had awakened the incredible passion and power of collective action. Something is happening in America. From teacher strikes in historically anti-union states to a walkout at tech giant Google—from small towns in Oklahoma and West Virginia to the nation's most upscale hotels—working people are winning on the picket line, at the bargaining table and in the court of public opinion.

Our commission is inspired by, and answerable to, these determined workers. We have sought in drafting this report to be an effective instrument of their hopes, their spirit and their vision for a fairer America.

We know it will not be easy. Workers continue to face an unrivaled economic and political onslaught. From the boardroom to governors' mansions to the U.S. Supreme Court, anti-worker interests are trying to wipe unions out of existence. Their motives are undeniable: The labor movement is the last line of defense standing in the way of total corporate control.

We've suffered under a generation of policies designed to enrich the wealthy few and weaken worker bargaining power. It's not just the outright attacks on workers and our unions. Trade policy has become less about selling goods and more about pitting workers against each other and promoting a race to the bottom. Financial deregulation has handed over the keys of the economy to Wall Street. Emerging business models have encouraged management to wash its hands of any responsibility for workers. It is no coincidence that during this era of diminished bargaining power, millions of workers have suffered from historic wage and wealth inequality.

Technology either can be a tool to help reverse this course or an excuse to double down on it. These are decisions, not destiny. The labor movement does not fear technological change. We know innovation drives productivity, which means working people can create more wealth to share in. Cutting-edge technological advancements solve challenges and save lives, and have the potential to give us new opportunities and make our jobs safer.

Technology has always involved changing the way we work, and it has always meant eliminating some jobs, even as new ones are created. But our future as a democracy and a stable global economy requires that workers be full partners in the entire process—from design and deployment to upskilling and job retraining to bargaining over the benefits of new tools.

To win this fight, we also must look within. Our commission's mandate from the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention was to undertake a serious self-assessment, formulating a plan to increase the bargaining power of working people and exploring new ways to engage and attract a workforce that is growing increasingly more diverse.

America's workers, particularly young people, are tired of being silenced, working harder and harder and still falling behind. We are hungry for connection to each other, so we can influence the decisions that will shape the future of our workplaces, our communities, our nation and our world.

We present this report with fresh optimism that working people can and will build a future of work that works for all of us. But getting the job done requires more than engaging with innovation in the workplace. We must innovate ourselves, strengthen our unions, organize new ones and bring more workers into our ranks.

The stakes are enormous. A system that fails to provide a decent standard of living for its people will not stand. So if technology and public policy continue to be used to further concentrate economic power in the hands of the wealthy few, our system of government and our way of life are in grave danger. But it doesn't have to be that way. The labor movement can be inclusive enough and strong enough to raise living standards across the economy and ensure good jobs for everyone who wants to work.

This report is our plan to make that happen.

A Moment for Unions

The organizational structure of the labor movement has always been about bringing together and elevating the voices of working people to demand quality jobs, advocate for pro-worker policies, and spark and support mass mobilization. But we also must recognize our responsibility as the elected leaders of America's unions to the 64 million workers who want a voice on the job and do not yet have one.

For more than a century, unions have been the single best pathway to a dignified workplace, fair compensation, a decent life, retirement security and a voice in the deployment of technology. Working people in unions earn, on average, 13% higher pay and are much more likely to have health care, paid sick time and a pension. Unions are the ultimate disruptor of poverty, discrimination on the job and a health care system that leaves millions unprotected.

When it comes to innovation, unions empower workers to have a say in the technology we produce and deploy. In Las Vegas, workers bargained a contract with casino owners that guarantees the right to negotiate over the future implementation of new technologies. Through their unions, construction workers across the country are shaping innovations in their industries thanks to smart, constantly evolving and scaled training and apprenticeship programs. Writers at the newest, web-based publications such as BuzzFeed have joined together in unions. All together, more working people took collective action to alter the future of work in 2018 than in any single year for more than three decades.

Workers coming together not only lifts those covered by a collective bargaining agreement; strong unions apply upward pressure on wages and standards across the board. This happens in three primary ways.

First, when union members bargain for higher wages and better benefits, there is a "spillover effect" on unrepresented workers. In order to compete for workers and in an effort to convince their employees not to unionize, nonunion employers raise wages and improve benefits to match their union competitors. In 2016, wages in states with lower rates of union representation lagged behind those with higher rates by more than $100 a week.

Profs. Jennifer Laird, Patrick Denice and Jake Rosenfeld, of City University of New York, Western University (Ontario, California) and Washington University, respectively, report that if the rate of union representation had held steady between 1977 and 2015, nonunion men working in the private sector would have earned an average of $3,172 more per year, and nonunion women would have taken home $936 more each year.

Second, the benefits of collective bargaining extend beyond wages. Strong unions have produced innovative benefit plans, scheduling policies and other fair employment practices that subsequently have spread to nonunion workplaces.

The reality is that the standards achieved by unions through decades of bargaining set the stage for the modern middle class that today is cratering, as too many people are forced to fend for themselves.

Third, unions historically have been the primary backers of a range of laws that apply to all working people, such as a minimum wage, occupational safety and health, and equal employment opportunity. The American labor movement has fought for more than a century to make quality health care a basic right in the United States. As part of that effort, delegates to the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention unanimously adopted a resolution committing the labor movement to move "expeditiously toward a single-payer system, like Medicare for All, that provides universal coverage using a social insurance model, while retaining a role for workers' health plans." Winning progress on health care and other policies that broadly benefit working people is one important way to grab our fair share of technological progress and economic growth.

As political scientists Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson write in their 2010 book, *Winner-Take-All Politics*: "While there are many 'progressive' groups in the American universe of organized interests, labor is the only major one focused on the broad economic concerns of those with modest incomes." Our commission's Public Sector Subcommittee echoed that sentiment, saying: "We advocate for economic and social justice for our members and for all workers, and for the people we serve and the communities in which we live."

Put simply, thriving unions are good for America, and at this moment of massive inequality, technological revolution and historic collective action, our role has never been more important.

Strengthening Worker Bargaining Power

If our commission's work could be boiled down to one central finding, it's the urgent need for an increase in worker bargaining power. Whether our future is one of shared prosperity or rising inequality, and social and economic dysfunction, depends on the strength of working people's bargaining power.

When working people exercise sufficient bargaining power—individually and collectively, in our workplaces, communities and economy—we can be sure to receive a fair share of the wealth we help create. There will be a lot of wealth created in the future, especially if the pace of automation speeds up. The main thing standing between us and the future we want is insufficient bargaining power, and the resulting economic and political imbalance in our country.

As John Schmitt of the Economic Policy Institute explained in a presentation to our commission, strong unions raise wages across industries and occupations and drive economic growth by putting money in the hands of people who spend it. When workers have money in our pockets, we create healthy domestic markets that make businesses want to invest and create jobs in the United States. Unions help create a virtuous cycle of rising living standards and falling inequality, ensuring that all working people, not just the elite, share in the wealth we create.

In addition to strong unions, a second building block of worker bargaining power is "full employment," or tight labor markets with enough jobs for pretty much everyone who wants to work. Full employment puts upward pressure on wages across the board, and especially boosts pay for low-income workers, women and people of color. It creates a more supportive environment for workers to organize unions, and for unions to wield enough power to negotiate good contracts. Full employment also makes it easier for laid-off workers to transition to another good job.

A third building block of worker bargaining power is worker protections like a robust minimum wage, strong prevailing wage standards, transit labor protections, broad overtime coverage, protection against wage theft and a crackdown on the misclassification of employees as independent contractors. These protections help working people at all income levels, but especially low-wage workers and people of color.

A fourth building block of worker bargaining power is smart public investment, and not just during economic downturns. Investment in quality public services like health care, infrastructure, public education, public transportation, first responder systems, workforce training and unemployment compensation make life better for working people and keep us from having to dig into our pockets or go into debt for the services the public sector should provide.

Public investment is also a driver of job creation, and the innovation and productivity that makes our country competitive in the global economy. Ensuring adequate levels of public investment in the future will require more revenue, which means our elected leaders should require the wealthy and big corporations to pay their fair share in taxes.

GLOBALIZATION

Strengthening worker bargaining power and ensuring working people share in the benefits of technological change starts with rewriting the rules of the global economy. We must understand the economy not as something abstract and immovable, but as a global system governed by rules that are desperately in need of change.

Our commission understands that the fate of American workers is tied to the fate of working people around the world. Working people in every country have been harmed by the current rules, and we all should benefit from rewriting them.

The current rules of the global economy have been written by a coalition of elite interests in the United States and other countries to ensure access to cheap labor for domestic and global firms. A key feature of the current rules is the absence of enforceable, transnational labor, environmental and human rights standards.

Among the leading architects of the current rules are such multilateral institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which for decades have recommended and imposed a package of neoliberal economic policies, including tax cuts for the wealthy and big business; privatization; deregulation; “labor market flexibility”; decentralization of collective bargaining; investment guarantees for offshoring; and export-led growth.

Other leading architects of the current rules are the authors and supporters of so-called “free trade” agreements. These agreements feature enforceable protections for investors, which encourage offshore investment and re-importation into the United States, but lack enforceable provisions to maintain or lift labor standards for working people. Similarly, the “Open Skies” agreements that govern international

aviation have failed to curtail anti-worker and anti-competitive behavior from airlines who use flags of convenience and labor law forum shopping to lower wages and standards.

As argued by Prof. Dani Rodrik of Harvard's Kennedy School in a paper presented to our commission, one of the biggest blunders perpetrated by the architects of the current rules was the promotion of financial globalization and global capital mobility at the same time that the global supply of workers more than doubled. The result has been a dramatic imbalance in bargaining power between globalized capital, on the one hand, and labor movements restricted by national boundaries on the other.

This mismatch is on display when global corporations threaten workers in developed and developing countries alike with relocating production. Corporations use this threat to discourage worker organizing, keep wages low and extract concessions from workers and local and national governments, putting downward pressure on labor and environmental standards and depleting tax revenues everywhere.

The secret sauce that makes the current rigged rules profitable for elites in the United States and partner countries is overvaluation of the U.S. dollar, which has increased by more than 20% since 2014. Dollar overvaluation makes imports cheaper and exports more expensive, and contributes to large and growing U.S. trade deficits. However, overvaluation of the dollar also generates huge profits for such companies as Walmart, Amazon, Nike and Apple that reimport production from offshore, and is great for Wall Street because it encourages overseas investors to buy dollar-denominated assets and securities.

Defenders of the current rules insist that U.S. trade deficits do not matter, but they are wrong. As EPI's John Schmitt explained to our commission, when our economy is not at full employment, the trade deficit weakens domestic demand. When the economy is at full employment, the trade deficit changes the makeup of employment—for example, by replacing good-paying manufacturing jobs with lower-paying service jobs. Over the past 20 years, U.S. trade deficits have wiped out almost 5 million manufacturing jobs and 90,000 factories, according to Robert Scott of EPI.

The overriding objective of ensuring a steady supply of cheap labor plays out in especially harmful ways for immigrant workers. In the United States, wages for foreign-born workers are significantly lower for a variety of reasons, including exclusion from, and poor enforcement of, labor and employment protections, which drags down wages and working conditions for all workers. Economic elites enjoy the benefits of a system they have rigged for their benefit, and then blame the mess they created on the very workers they are exploiting.

What should the new rules look like? They should strengthen worker bargaining power and collective bargaining in countries across the world; encourage strong domestic demand over export-led growth; establish enforceable minimum labor and environmental

THE CURRENT RULES OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY HAVE FAILED, AND FAILURE TO REWRITE THEM RISKS ECONOMIC INSTABILITY, AND POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONFLICT. HOWEVER, IT NOW IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE REALISTIC TO CONTEMPLATE REWRITING THE RULES TO BENEFIT WORKING PEOPLE.

standards at the global level; establish enforceable accountability for global corporations to uphold labor rights and other human rights in global supply chains; protect the rights of immigrant workers; and more generally correct the imbalance of bargaining power between global capital and localized labor. In addition to rewriting the rules, labor unions can help equalize bargaining power by forming strategic global alliances with workers in other countries, as recommended by our commission's Manufacturing Sector Subcommittee report, and moving toward transnational bargaining. The end goal should be to create a virtuous cycle of "high-road" growth and rising standards for working people in the United States and other countries that leads to a more sustainable global economy.

FINANCIALIZATION

"Financialization" is a term used to describe the growing size and wealth of the financial sector (also known as "Wall Street"), and its undue power and influence over our economy and society. Working people and unions must challenge financialization aggressively if we want to build worker bargaining power in an increasingly financialized economy.

The current course of financialization threatens workers, unions, communities and the stability of the American financial system. Together with the failed U.S. approach to globalization, financialization has been a primary driver of economic inequality and the weakening of worker bargaining power in the United States.

There are numerous indicators of the growing size, wealth and influence of the financial sector. The financial sector's share of the economy has almost doubled over the past four decades. CEO compensation, one of the signature features of financialization, spiked dramatically in that period. The AFL-CIO's most recent Executive Paywatch report shows that CEOs are making 287 times what rank-and-file workers earn.

One key feature of financialization is growing pressure from financial actors for firms to "maximize value for shareholders" by focusing on increasing short-term returns and stock prices. This focus on

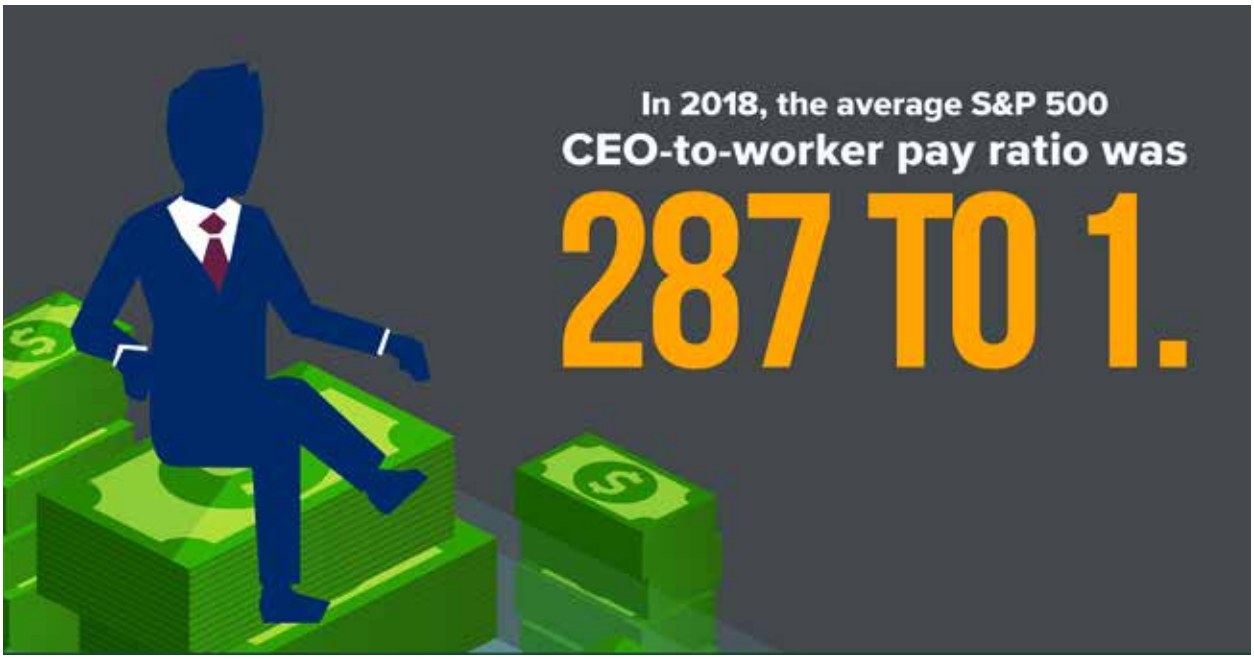
maximizing short-term returns has inflicted serious damage on the U.S. economy. It has led to less investment in products and services of value to the real economy; less investment in basic and applied research and development that lays the foundation for long-term growth; less employment and vitality in the manufacturing sector; less investment in workers' skills and wages; and more outsourcing.

Collectively bargained retirement plans, which account for more than $7 trillion of invested capital, are long-term investors. We need the companies we invest in to be responsible, reliable stewards of our capital. We lose out when short-termism and financial speculation dominate the real economy.

Some of the most important financial actors with the greatest impact on our economy are private equity firms, which have grown dramatically over the past decade. Private equity-owned companies are now major employers in health care, retail and manufacturing, with nearly 11.3 million employees.

The private equity model allows extremely wealthy managers to take control of, and extract wealth from, businesses in the real economy that provide goods and services of value to the public. Private equity often is associated with leveraged buyouts, a financing technique used to acquire operating companies with only a small amount of cash up front and a large amount of debt that the operating companies then have to pay off. Paying off this debt often forces acquired companies to forgo investments that would make them more competitive, or to cut workers' wages and benefits. The acquired companies often end up in bankruptcy, at which point workers, suppliers and other creditors are stuck paying the tab. Bankruptcy law has been transformed into a tool to routinely void union contracts and extract concessions from workers.

Another indicator of the growth and power of the financial sector is the alarming size of the largest banks, which have grown even bigger since the 2008 financial crisis. It is hard to imagine how one or more of these institutions could fail without producing another financial crisis that threatens U.S. and global economic stability and requires another Wall Street bailout.



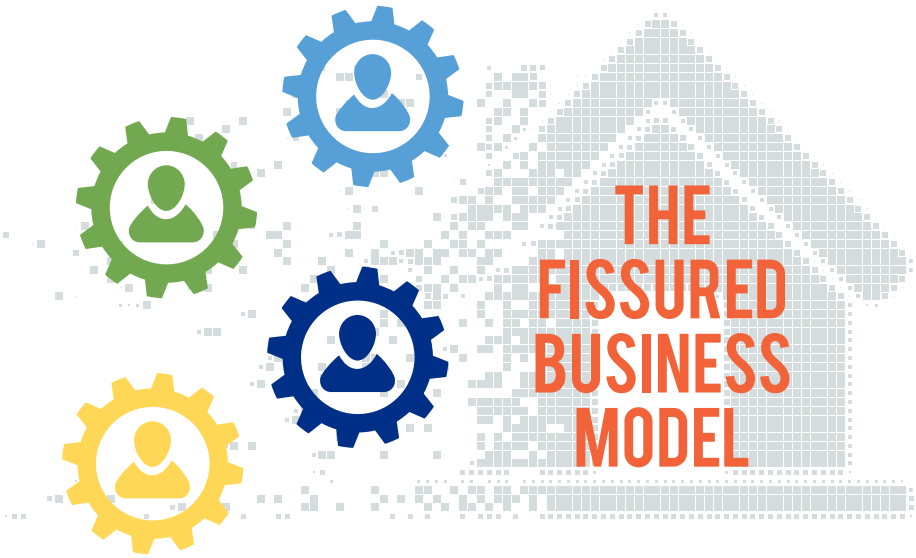
Working people and our unions long have been at the forefront of reforming Wall Street. Since the 1990s, the labor movement has been the most powerful force advocating for stronger financial regulation such as the post-Enron reforms, Dodd-Frank and the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The capital stewardship programs of the AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions have given workers a voice in the capital markets by leading shareholder initiatives and advocating for Wall Street reform. The Committee for Better Banks is organizing in the banking industry not simply to improve pay and benefits for 1 million nonunion bank workers and call center employees, but also to reform the financial system to serve the common good instead of driving economic inequality. Americans for Financial Reform has advocated for full implementation of Dodd-Frank, defended the CFPB and opposed deregulation of Wall Street. Take on Wall Street has campaigned to break up the "too big to fail" banks, build support for a financial speculation tax, close the carried interest loophole for hedge fund and private equity managers, and end the tax loophole for CEO bonuses. Hedge Clippers has called out the behavior of hedge funds in Puerto Rico.

Given the harmful impact of financialization on workers and our unions in almost every sector of the economy, the involvement and leadership of the labor movement in these coordinated responses are essential. We must rewrite the rules of the economy to force Wall Street to channel savings toward investment in businesses in the real economy that create family-sustaining jobs. We can start by requiring worker representatives on corporate boards; making corporations more accountable to working people; discouraging short-termism with a Wall Street speculation tax; ending the loopholes and carve-outs in securities, bankruptcy and tax law that make the private equity model so profitable; reregulating banking; and breaking up the "too big to fail" banks.

OUTSOURCING AND FISSURED WORK

In recent decades, businesses have restructured themselves by adopting new business models of outsourcing and "fissured work" in order to skirt their employment responsibilities and lower labor costs. These models are characterized by subcontracting to outside firms and reliance on staffing firms, temp agencies, franchisors and independent contractors, many of whom are misclassified employees.

As explained in a presentation to our commission by Dean David Weil of Brandeis University, author of *The Fissured Workplace* (2014), these new business models are being driven to a significant extent by financialization—intense pressure from financial actors to maximize returns to shareholders and investors in the short term by lowering labor costs and shifting risk to workers.



The subcontracting model has led to the deterioration of workers' wages, working conditions and bargaining power. Firms that once were unified have separated to make it easier to concentrate profits at the top of the food chain. Amazon, for example, is extremely profitable, but the logistics firms on which it relies are not. Lead firms in subcontracted production networks capture profits by requiring highly competitive bidding among subcontractors, which therefore have lower profit margins and are less able to provide decent work. The increasing importance of these production networks, and the differences among firms in their ability to capture profits in them, have contributed significantly to the rise of economic inequality in the United States.

Employers have externalized their labor costs and shifted risk to workers in different ways throughout the economy. Subcontracted production networks and third-party management intermediaries are most common in manufacturing, entertainment and media, retail, telecommunications, hospitality, building services, airlines, health care, food processing and the tech sector. Franchising is most common in food service. Temp agency work is most common in manufacturing and the federal sector. In higher education, employers increasingly have relied on contingent nontenure-track faculty, part-time adjunct faculty and graduate employees. Privatization of operations and maintenance functions has been used in transit to lower wage and benefit standards, and privatization has been rampant in the public sector generally. U.S. airlines continue to outsource maintenance work to foreign stations that do not meet high safety and security standards. The misclassification of employees as independent contractors has been a persistent problem in construction, trucking, agriculture, aviation, domestic work and, more recently, the platform economy, including on-demand transportation providers.

However, contrary to some media accounts, independent contractors do not represent a large or growing share of the U.S. workforce, and there is no data to suggest that self-employment will be the future of work. As John Schmitt of EPI pointed out in a presentation to our commission, independent contractors have made up about 7% of the workforce for the past 20 years, and self-employment is in long-term decline in the United States and in most developed countries. Digital platform "gig" workers make up about 1% of the workforce today. It may be true that more firms in the future will use digital platforms to organize work and provide services to the public, but it is not inevitable that workers who are managed in this way will be independent contractors who lack the rights and protections of employees.

The degree to which companies externalize their labor costs and shift risk to workers through any of these fissured business models will depend largely on the policy environment. The easier it is for businesses to get away with evading their responsibilities to ensure decent work for the people who help them create wealth, the more they will do so.

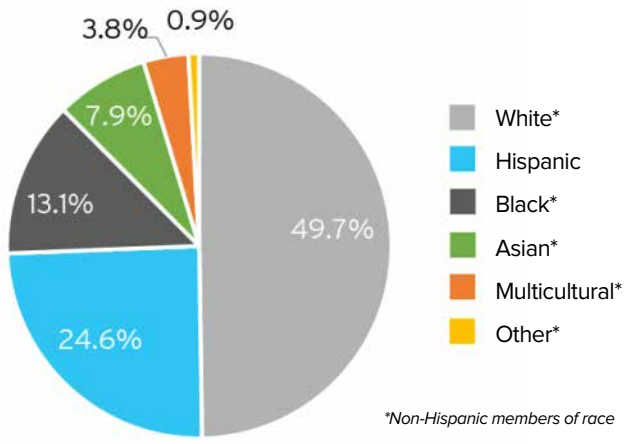
Employers, joint employers and lead firms all must be held accountable for ensuring decent work. We can start by preventing the misclassification of employees as independent contractors, including passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 2474/S. 1306); broadly defining the joint employers liable for compliance with labor and employment laws; penalizing lead companies when their contractors violate labor and employment laws; regulating temp and staffing agencies and raising standards for their workers; and holding global corporations and governments accountable for labor standards in their supply chains, including public procurement.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

The specific ways in which working people will rebuild our bargaining power in the future will be shaped by demographic changes in the workforce.

According to projections by the U.S. Census Bureau, people of color will become the majority of the U.S. population by 2045. The shift will occur by 2020 for those younger than 18, and already has occurred among public school students. In a paper presented to our commission, Valerie Wilson of EPI estimates that by 2031, people of color will be a majority of workers lacking a four-year college degree. Moreover, according to the Center for Economic and Policy Research, if recent trends continue, women will be more than half of the union workforce by 2025.

Racial Profile of U.S. Population, 2045



Source: William H. Frey analysis of U.S. population projections released March 13, 2018, and revised Spet. 6, 2018

The foundational principle of the labor movement is working-class solidarity. If we want to strengthen overall worker bargaining power, we will have to actively build this solidarity based on the struggles of all working people, including young workers.

As Wilson argued in her presentation to our commission, it will be hard to address racial and other inequalities without addressing class inequality and raising wages across the board. At the same time, *all* workers would benefit from closing racial, ethnic and gender disparities.

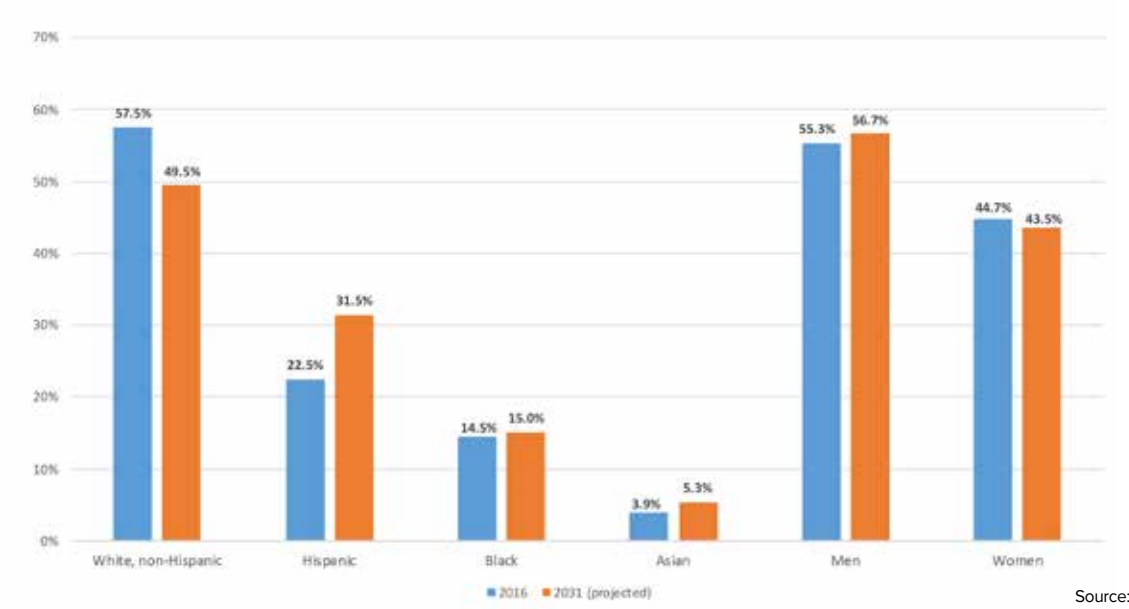
The tools we use to reduce class inequality benefit all workers, but are especially beneficial for women and workers of color. For example, unions close pay gaps between white workers and people of color. The union wage premium is high for all workers, but remains especially substantial for people of color. This is one reason why African American workers represent a higher share of the labor movement than the workforce as a whole.

However, closing inequities in education, employment and compensation will require more than broad-based approaches to raising living standards for the working class. Strengthening fair employment laws and their enforcement will provide crucial protection for workers who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity. Comprehensive reform of our immigration laws is necessary to improve and sustain labor standards for immigrant workers and, as a result, all working people. Protecting the voting rights of people of color and all American citizens is critical to maintaining and rebuilding worker bargaining power. Providing a path to secure work and upward mobility for young people,

while offering opportunities for debt-free education and job training, will help convince current and future generations to join our ranks.

The strength of worker bargaining power overall will depend on whether we are able to build inclusive working-class solidarity and prevent working people from being pitted against one another, a longstanding tactic of the wealthy elites who use such division to enrich themselves. Strengthening worker bargaining power overall, in turn, will help build a better future for those who historically have been excluded.

Racial/Ethnic and Gender Composition of Workers Without a Four-Year Degree



Source: EPI

Making Sure the Benefits of Technological Change are Shared Broadly

While technology presents working people with the real threat of disruption, many analysts also predict that artificial intelligence and other advances will make Americans far more productive in the future, allowing us to produce more with fewer hours of work and create greater wealth as a society. If America makes the right choices, we would have the ability to conquer poverty and workers could spend less time at work while enjoying far higher standards of living.

The central question is whether the benefits of technological progress will be distributed fairly and broadly—or whether they will continue to be hoarded by the most privileged segments of our society.

How do we ensure these benefits are distributed fairly? Once again, the bargaining power of working people is the key. When working people exercise sufficient bargaining power collectively, we can receive a fair share of the wealth we help create.

Contrary to what many experts espouse, technology does not inevitably result in weaker worker bargaining power or greater inequality. When we make wise choices, technological advances can have the opposite effect. In the 1950s and ’60s, technology-driven productivity was increasing faster than it is today, yet lower-wage workers benefited more than those at the top, and our country reduced inequality more than at any other time in our history.

Yet it is also true that technological progress and rising productivity do not automatically lead to higher wages and better standards of living for working people. What they do is create wealth that will benefit working people *if and only if* we have the bargaining power to claim our fair share.

Working people will share in the benefits of technological change when we have good jobs with rising wages and rising living standards; when union representation, and strong worker protections and quality public services, help sustain our bargaining power; and when we easily can find another good job with good wages when we lose our jobs.

Real worker bargaining power not only will allow working people to capture our fair share of the benefits of technological change, but also will help determine the course of technological change itself. Stronger worker bargaining power will help drive policy decisions regarding innovation that are more beneficial to the broad majority of working people.

SHAPING INNOVATION

We reject the assumption that the only question for working people to decide is how we should passively adapt to technological change. Technology does not fall from the sky. It is developed through public policy choices, and by businesses and working people in our workplaces and the marketplace. Public policy decisions and public funding drive U.S. innovation policy, and there are multiple choices involved in the design and deployment of technological applications at the firm level.

The far-reaching implications of artificial intelligence and other technologies—and numerous proposals to continue or increase public funding to develop such technologies—make it increasingly obvious that working people must have a seat at the table in making the choices that shape our work and our lives.

As Prof. Anton Korinek of the University of Virginia points out: "Technological progress is the result of conscious and targeted efforts of innovators—unlike the way it is described in many of our economic models, in which progress just happens exogenously." In a paper presented to our commission, Prof. Mariana Mazzucato of University College London observes: "The striking aspect of U.S. funding of innovation has been its active engagement across the whole innovation chain, not only 'fixing' markets, but creating them as well.

"Although the United States has liked to portray itself as a country that relies on businesses and markets, it has had one of the most active public sectors when it comes to innovation," Mazzucato continues. "One could say that the government has liked to talk like Thomas Jefferson, but act like Alexander Hamilton. In almost every sector, from IT to biotech, nanotech and clean tech, it has been U.S. government funding that has led the way, investing in key areas across the entire innovation chain, with the private sector entering only after new markets were created." The space program is a classic example.

In addition, Mazzucato underscores that most of the technologies used in smart phones and other smart products—from the internet to GPS—emerged as spillovers from public funding of innovation and innovation policy generally.

The central role of public funding in U.S. innovation policy provides a clear rationale for actively steering the direction of research and innovation to ensure that technological advances benefit workers and society broadly, not just a handful of private interests. Government-supported technology also should lead to production and servicing in the United States, especially when it is vital to national security.

Another set of critical decisions about innovation is made at the firm level in the design and deployment of technological applications. As detailed in a memo presented to our commission by Lisa Kresge of the University of California, Berkeley Labor Center, unions have a long history of negotiating contract provisions designed to ensure the involvement of workers and our unions early in the decision-making and planning processes.

Valuing the expertise and contribution of workers, and involving working people early in the decision-making process, are often the key to successful innovation. In a presentation to our commission, Prof. Susan Helper of Case Western Reserve University recommended an approach to automation and big data that builds on worker skills and expertise rather than substituting for them. In her view, this approach is more likely to result in workers getting a larger slice of the economic pie, as well as increasing the size of the pie.

VALUING THE EXPERTISE AND CONTRIBUTION OF WORKERS, AND INVOLVING WORKING PEOPLE EARLY IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, ARE OFTEN THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL INNOVATION.

One key problem is that the rigid hierarchies of most U.S. workplaces tend to prevent the early involvement of workers. In a presentation to our commission, Prof. Zeynep Ton of MIT pointed to examples of technology rollouts that failed because management's top-down approach did not involve workers. Our commission's Service and Retail Sector Subcommittee points to additional examples where "limitations on worker voice have resulted in inferior outcomes for workers and firms themselves as employers have sought to over-automate at the expense of operational performance....Workers themselves can help firms avoid such mistakes, as they are often best positioned to evaluate the use of technology in the workplace," the subcommittee concluded. In addition, the short-term focus of corporate managers, a hallmark of financialization, threatens to drive firms to prioritize labor substitution.

In the end, any successful approach to innovation will require buy-in and support from impacted workers and society as a whole. Failure to engage working people early in the decisions that shape our lives endangers both the future of innovation and our economic future.

The labor movement should continue to proactively engage with technology leaders early in the process of research and development, including through applying for federal grant money; exploring avenues for funding research and development designed to benefit working people; and exploring various models for ensuring that publicly funded or assisted research and development has broad societal benefit.

ADDRESSING TECHNOLOGICAL JOB LOSS

Discussions about job loss caused by automation and technology tend to focus on training and income support for displaced workers. While these are extremely important, they must be part of a comprehensive good jobs strategy, and unions and collective bargaining are essential to making such a strategy work.

There is no shortage of predictions about the scale and pace of technological job loss in the future, but the truth is that nobody really knows for sure. While the precise impact is not yet clear, we know disruption and job loss have been massive over the past two centuries, and will continue to be significant into the future. Our commission understands that we must start preparing now.

We will have to manage change more successfully in the future than we have in the recent past. Job loss from deindustrialization, caused by our failed approach to globalization, was both unfair and cruel. The careers and livelihoods of millions of people have been sacrificed, and entire communities have been decimated. Changes today in the energy sector are being similarly mismanaged. Workers are being asked to bear the full brunt of energy transition, with little assistance from anyone in the corridors of power. We must do better.

We know that change can be managed successfully. As stated earlier, in the 1950s and '60s the pace of productivity growth was faster than today, and workers experienced a tremendous amount of job loss and displacement. Yet displaced workers generally were able to transition to good new jobs thanks to strong worker bargaining power—a potent mix of full employment, collective bargaining by strong unions, robust worker protections and high levels of public investment.

Unions have been at the forefront of addressing technology-driven changes in the workplace, including job loss, for more than a century. Perhaps the most important lesson we have learned is that the best strategy for addressing job loss is ensuring the availability of good jobs. The best solution for the individual worker who loses his or her job is to find another good union job quickly. Training, education and income support can play important supporting roles, but there must be good jobs for workers to transition to.

A good place to start is by insisting on economic policies that produce full employment, which have been the calling card of the labor movement historically. As Reiner Hoffman, president of the German labor federation, emphasized in a presentation to our commission, we must be very clear that full employment is possible if we make the right policy choices. Even if the scale of future job loss is enormous, and entire sectors are eliminated, this does not mean we are condemned to a jobless future. In the past, automation has generated enough new jobs to keep unemployment from rising, by creating demand for complementary jobs and freeing up new spending as goods and services become

less expensive. In the future, we can expect new jobs and entirely new sectors of the economy to be created, even if we have no inkling today what those jobs and sectors might be. As John Schmitt of EPI pointed out in his presentation to our commission, the share of Americans working in agriculture fell from more than 80% in 1800 to about 2% today, largely due to technological change, but the result was not mass unemployment. Nobody in 1800 could have predicted all the new jobs that would be created.

Full employment policies may not be enough, however. We also will need a good jobs strategy tailored to specific sectors of the economy. For example, for many years we have advocated for an industrial policy to create and sustain good jobs in the manufacturing sector. In addition, the recent report of the ILO's Global Commission on the Future of Work recommends targeted investment in physical and digital infrastructure; the care economy (child care, early childhood education, health care and elder care); the "green economy"; and the rural economy.

There is no reason why jobs created through this kind of investment should be outsourced or automated, nor is there any reason why they cannot be good union jobs. If we make up our infrastructure deficit of $3.2 trillion, we can put millions of people to work in good union jobs and maintain strong job growth. Investment in infrastructure also will create jobs in the manufacturing sector—for example, in the production of buses and rail cars, and throughout the resulting supply chains. Building a digital infrastructure, including investment in universal broadband, can create good union jobs while ensuring the benefits of technological progress are shared broadly in all localities by all populations. The care economy is expected to grow in the future, and most of these workers are women, and many are immigrants and people of color.

In addition, millions of good jobs can be created by investing, organizing and raising labor standards in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors; by domestic production and commercial application of advanced energy systems; by decreasing our reliance on imported clean energy goods; and by realizing that the battle to combat climate change cannot be waged on a project-by-project basis. As delegates to the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention recognized, the fastest and most equitable way to address climate change is for labor to be at the center of creating solutions that reduce emissions while investing in our communities, maintaining and creating high-wage union jobs and reducing poverty. Our commission's Manufacturing Sector Subcommittee understands this firsthand, recommending policies to encourage U.S. manufacturing related to "better batteries; solar power; wind power; biofuels; commuter rail; electric cars; carbon capture and storage; and other technologies needed to address our environmental crisis."

Job loss will affect some communities and regions more than others, and markets cannot be trusted to sort these things out on their own. Our commission's Transportation Sector Subcommittee highlights the proposal for a "transportation workforce fund," paid for by a mileage-based user fee on highly automated vehicles. Dedicated public investment will be necessary for economic development, public services and infrastructure as local tax revenues fall. We also must safeguard the pensions of impacted workers and reform bankruptcy law, in particular to prevent the breach of collective bargaining agreements.

An indispensable element of a successful good jobs strategy is collective bargaining. Union representation is an important reason why automation in the past has not been more traumatic. Collective bargaining will be critical to involve workers in the decision making about future transitions, sustain the demand necessary to create new jobs and ensure that newly created jobs include good pay, benefits and a voice. It should be the highest national priority that new jobs and emerging sectors have union representation.

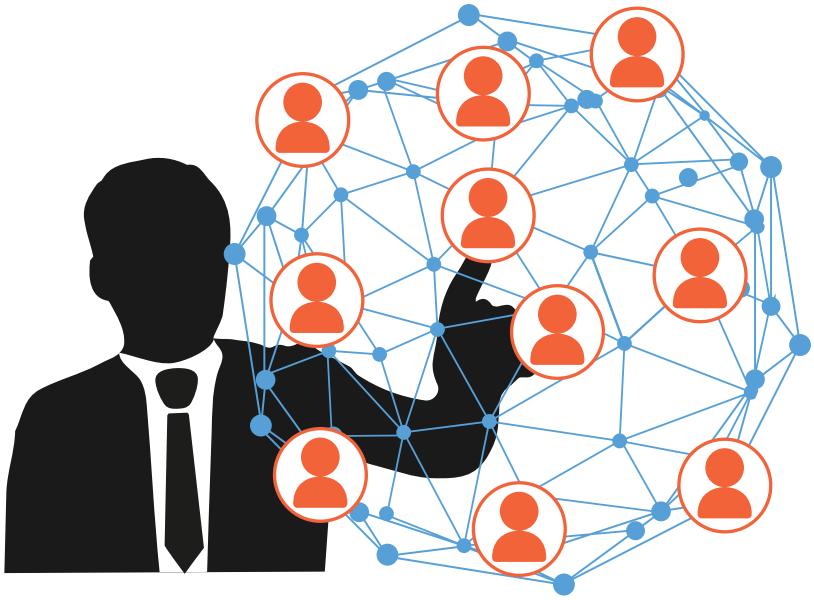
DATA AND ALGORITHMS

In addition to addressing the impact of technology on jobs, tasks and skills, we must address its impact on the quality of jobs. While unions have years of experience negotiating provisions addressing workplace monitoring, surveillance and worker privacy, troubling issues are emerging in these areas that will need to be regulated through bargaining and legislation. These issues include "management by algorithm," new forms of monitoring and surveillance, the use and exploitation of data generated from workers, and the potential for these practices to exacerbate discrimination and systemic inequality.

Artificial intelligence, the use of big data and management by algorithm are already a reality in many workplaces. Managers are using these tools to make decisions about who gets hired, fired and promoted, how work is organized and evaluated, and how work hours are scheduled, often without the consent or input of workers. This is a form of managerial power, the very thing unions were created to contain. Ironically, the companies most aggressive in using technology to control their workers are often the ones trying to avoid their responsibilities as employers.

The new digital tools are making it possible to monitor, surveil and collect an enormous amount of data about workers to an extent that was unthinkable in the past. GPS systems allow monitoring of the position and speed of truck, delivery and rideshare drivers. Uber and Lyft drivers are more intensely monitored today than assembly line workers were at GM plants in 1950. More workers have "wearable" instruments that track our location by the minute and measure our work pace and breaks. Software patented by Walmart allows management to hear every sound in its stores, including conversations by employees. Our commission's Health Care Subcommittee reports that "worker surveillance is increasingly pervasive, with the identification badges of health care workers...outfitted not only with location sensors, but also with microphones and other intrusive features."

Wearable devices are being used to collect biometric data from workers. The NFL Players Association has arranged for players to collect their own biometric data through wearable devices, while the National Basketball Players Association and the Major League Baseball Players Association have negotiated contracts to regulate the collection of such biometric data.



Artificial intelligence and algorithms are being used to evaluate workers. Amazon uses an app to warn workers they are not meeting unilaterally set goals, and to terminate employees without input from managers.

Management by algorithm also creates enormous potential for discrimination. Algorithms have been shown to reflect the human biases encoded in the data, intentionally or unintentionally. The relative lack of diversity among their

human programmers only makes the problem worse. It is especially troubling that machines can compound biases as they learn more about the data they are processing through machine learning, so that racial, gender and other disparities are being embedded invisibly into new decision-making processes.

Then there is the question of who controls and profits from the trail of data we leave behind every day inside and outside the workplace. UNI Global Union observes that data has been called "the new gold," which is traded, analyzed and used in marketing, advertising and human resource management. UNI notes that 15% to 20% of the world's combined output by 2030 will be based on data flows.

Regulation will be necessary to mitigate the potentially harmful effects of these new technological tools on job quality and human dignity. Such regulation already exists in other countries, including the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation.

In addition to a general default legislative framework, tailored regulation through collective bargaining will be essential, since optimal rules for data collection and use may vary considerably among workplaces. UNI has published principles for data privacy and protection and ethical development, along with application and use of artificial intelligence, which are to be implemented through collective bargaining.

WORK HOURS

Predictions that artificial intelligence and other new technologies will make workers far more productive in the future have generated interest in the prospect of a "leisure dividend" that allows for the reduction of overall work hours. The key question is whether this "leisure dividend" will be shared broadly by working people.

Even if the predicted spike in worker productivity never materializes, there is a very strong case for redistributing work hours today—that is, for limiting the excessive hours worked by some people, thereby making more work hours available to those who want to work more, and giving all workers more "time sovereignty" over our working life.

The movement for an eight-hour day, followed by the demand for a 40-hour week, was driven by the U.S. labor movement. The authors of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 intended to redistribute work by giving businesses an incentive to reduce excessive hours for some workers and reallocate them to the unemployed and underemployed.

Passage of the FLSA ushered in a period of about four decades in which average weekly work hours steadily fell. In recent decades, however, progress has stalled, and U.S. workers work more hours per year than workers in most other developed countries. At the same time,

there has been a recurrence of the problem of insufficient work hours for some and irregular schedules for many, especially for workers in the retail and fast food industries.

In a paper presented to our commission, Prof. Juliet Schor of Boston College, author of *The Overworked American* (1992), argues that reducing overall working time has the potential to produce a "triple dividend": (1) spreading work hours to more employees, thus minimizing unemployment; (2) lowering stress levels, increasing leisure time and improving workers' quality of life; and (3) reducing adverse impact on the environment.

Our commission's Service and Retail and the Federal Sector Subcommittees recommend strengthening the labor movement by mobilizing around such big issues as shorter work days and workweeks with no reduction in pay for workers. Work hours can be reduced by bargaining or legislating a four-day workweek; earlier retirement; stronger overtime protections; paid holidays; paid vacations; partial unemployment benefits for workers whose hours are reduced ("short-time compensation"); and the "right to disconnect" from digital devices and work. Most of these policies would redistribute work hours to those who have too little work.

Insufficient work hours also can be addressed specifically by legislating or bargaining minimum work hours and giving part-time workers first claim on available work. Unpredictable schedules can be addressed by bargaining or legislating premium pay for on-call scheduling (schedule changes that occur without sufficient warning) and shifts that offer insufficient hours, as well as more worker control over scheduling ("time sovereignty"). Reforms to make scheduling fairer and improve work-life balance will be especially important in meeting the needs of workers, particularly working parents, enabling more of them to pursue their careers.

If working people can bargain or legislate more time sovereignty and a "leisure dividend" without any reduction in our pay, this could be a key mechanism to help ensure the benefits of technological progress are shared broadly by working people.

IF WORKING PEOPLE CAN BARGAIN OR LEGISLATE MORE TIME SOVEREIGNTY AND A "LEISURE DIVIDEND" WITHOUT ANY REDUCTION IN OUR PAY, THIS COULD BE A KEY MECHANISM TO HELP ENSURE THE BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS ARE SHARED BROADLY BY WORKING PEOPLE.

An Action Plan for Continuous Labor Movement Reform

What follows is an effort to confront head on some of the challenges facing unions and the labor movement, and to embrace change. The steps outlined below will not alone give working people the power we need to shape the future of work, but we believe they are a substantial leap in the right direction.

These recommendations are the beginning of a process of continuous reflection, innovation and reform.

CLAIMING OUR FAIR SHARE

As discussed at length in the previous section, **our commission recommends that the labor movement do everything we can to take control of our own destiny and rewrite the rules of the economy to ensure working people receive our fair share of technological progress and economic growth,** as laid out in greater detail in the above discussion of strengthening workers' bargaining power; globalization; financialization; demographic change; shaping technology; addressing technological job loss; data and algorithms; and reducing work hours.

A DIVERSE AND DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

The best way to ensure unions evolve to meet the needs of more workers is by preserving and strengthening our democratic character. All unions have democratically elected officers. Democratic governance ensures that unions are the faithful agent of the working people we represent.

Working people want members to lead unions. In a poll of working people not currently represented by unions conducted for our commission, perception of control was strongly correlated with whether people think joining a union would make life better or worse. Some 86% of those who think unions are controlled by members also think union representation would make their life better.

A commitment to this democratic process will position working people to elect union leaders who reflect the composition of our membership. This already is starting to happen. The AFL-CIO has diverse leadership at the top with a female secretary-treasurer and an executive vice president who is a person of color and an immigrant. The two largest unions in the AFL-CIO are headed by an LGBTQ woman and a person of color. The two largest nonaffiliated unions, the National Education Association (NEA) and SEIU, are respectively led by a woman of color and an LGBTQ woman.

The AFL-CIO has taken concrete steps to diversify its governing bodies, including requiring that delegates to its Convention reflect the membership in our unions. The AFL-CIO has supported strong, independent constituency groups that have advocated for underrepresented workers, including the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI), founded in 1965; the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), founded in 1972; the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), founded in 1973; the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), founded in 1974; the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), founded in 1992; and Pride At Work (P@W), founded in 1994. These organizations have representation on the AFL-CIO's General Board and are able to affiliate with state and local federations. Where there are viable groups affiliated at the state and local level, they are required to be seated at the leadership level.

In addition, the AFL-CIO Executive Council adopted a Code of Conduct in March 2017, outlining binding rules to foster a culture of inclusion free from harassment and discrimination. Information about the code is read before every AFL-CIO meeting. Additionally, the code requires federation bodies to designate individuals as a first point of contact should anyone experience inappropriate behavior, and provides a fair process for addressing complaints.

But more must be done to identify and develop talented, diverse leaders. The report of the Demographic Constituency Groups Subcommittee called for "leadership development programs that mirror the National War College, an institution of higher learning that trains military and civilian leaders to ascend to leadership and prepares them for future advancements in their career." **Our commission recommends that unions and the AFL-CIO expand efforts to remove barriers to upward mobility in union leadership; create a more inclusive environment, continuing to build on the recommendations of the AFL-CIO Labor Commission on Racial and Economic Justice; and provide opportunities for a diverse set of members to have a seat at the leadership table and run for elected office.**

A COMMITMENT TO COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The unions of the AFL-CIO employ a wide range of methods to assist working people. In addition to collecting information, data and perspectives from outside experts, our commission also brought our diverse unions into dialogue with one another. This was invaluable. Unions representing airline pilots sat and strategized with those representing nurses, machinists with performers, ironworkers with letter carriers, and so on. The clear lesson from this process was that unions have much to teach one another based on our unique expertise and approaches, but often common challenges.

Our commission recommends that unions, through the AFL-CIO, continually report on innovations, reforms and other changes that have produced efficiencies or additional resources, or led to more effective organizing, representation or community partnerships.

The Organizing Institute already plays this role, bringing together affiliate organizing directors to share best practices around growth. Its function should be expanded.

Unions, through and with the AFL-CIO, also should create a database or dashboard of all worker organizing and contract campaigns, to permit more effective coordination and mutual aid and assistance among unions.

DRAMATICALLY EXPAND UNION MEMBERSHIP

Our commission recommends that unions, through the AFL-CIO Executive Council Committee on Organizing, develop viable strategies to dramatically expand efforts to assist working people to come together in unions. While there is a consensus that individual unions have primary responsibility for organizing, there is also a consensus that a wide variety of forms of cooperation and joint action are necessary.

It no longer is enough to avoid conflict. Nor is sending in organizers in the final week before an election sufficient mutual aid. Rather, new and diverse forms of cooperation and multiunion focus on coordinated, sectoral strategies are needed to organize more workers.

Unions have diverse assets with which to assist working people to come together; some have more revenue, others more organizers or organizers with needed language skills and cultural awareness; some have existing relationships with a key employer; others are located or represent employees in a key geography. Unions need to be able to combine our assets in a nimble and flexible manner to assist diverse working people. As Prof. Nelson Lichtenstein of the University of California, Santa Barbara explained in a paper for our commission, this form of "union solidarity" has been present whenever working people sought to organize in "new industrial and demographic terrain." Through the AFL-CIO Committee on Organizing, unions can explore new structures for joint action that help working people come together in our core industries, but also expand our footprint into new and expanding sectors.

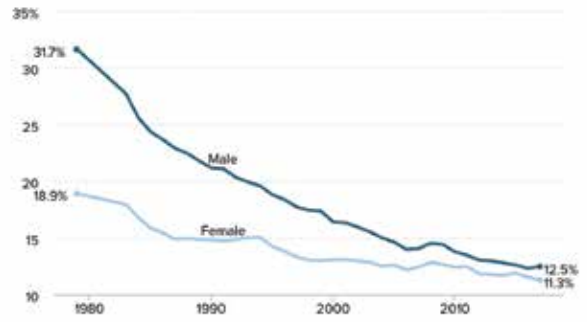
The AFL-CIO also should expand its strategic research capacity to support large and important efforts by workers to come together in unions. But its "strategic research" function should not be narrowly understood, and should encompass more long-term research and development. The AFL-CIO should track employment growth and contraction as well as National Labor Relations Board, National Mediation Board and other data to identify trends in working people's efforts to come together in unions. And the AFL-CIO, through the Committee on Organizing, should serve as the incubator of new strategies.

USING DATA TO EMPOWER WORKERS

Our commission believes innovation is essential to empower unions to better meet the needs of working people. Just as work and workers are changing, so is union membership. Unions need to use the most sophisticated tools available to understand the changing workforce and working people's evolving needs and desires.

For example, the gender composition of union membership has shifted dramatically. In 1980, men were almost twice as likely as women to be represented at work. By 2019, the percentage of men and women in unions is nearly the same.

Percentage of Workforce Represented by a Union, by Gender, 1979–2017

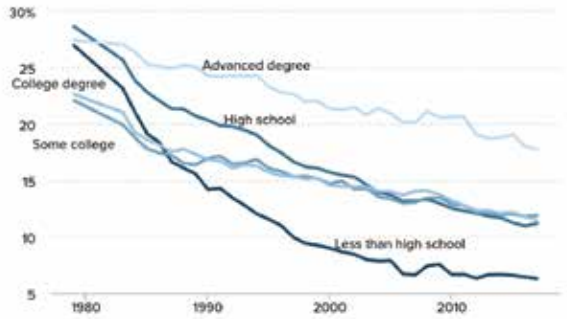


Source: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata

Education levels also have changed. While the percentage of workers in unions holding advanced degrees has held relatively steady, representation among those with less than a high school degree has fallen dramatically.

Finally, the racial and ethnic composition of union membership continues to evolve as more people of color join the labor movement. The percentage of union members who are white fell from more than 80% in 1979 to just less than 64% in 2017.

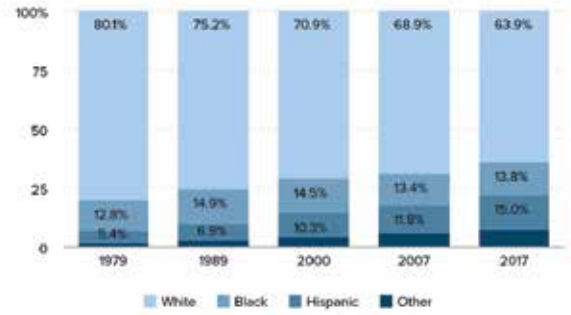
Percentage of Workforce Represented by a Union, by Education, 1979–2017



Source: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata

Union Composition

Shares of the union workforce, by race/ethnicity, 1979–2017



Source: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata

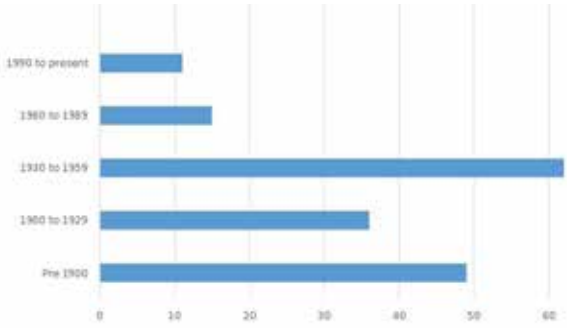
Our commission believes unions must understand members not only as workers, but whole and complex people—parts of communities and families. **We recommend that unions, through the AFL-CIO, collectively form an advisory task force aimed at deploying the most sophisticated data collection, analysis and experimental techniques to understand what working people want and to suggest how we retool to meet those needs and desires.**

The task force should be composed of scholars (several of whom have contributed papers to our commission) and the most highly skilled data analysts in the labor movement. The task force should propose data collection and use protocols, ongoing data collection projects and data analysis relevant to workers' joining together in unions, as well as collective bargaining and contract enforcement.

NEW MODELS

Our commission believes unions must consider what form of representation workers want and adapt to meet those evolving desires. Existing unions must adapt because the formation of new unions has not been a significant source of innovation in the past several decades, at least at the national level. Most of the national unions that exist today were formed more than 50 years ago, with the period of most rapid union formation between 1930 and 1959. Aside from mergers, only two national unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO have been founded since 1990.

Periods of AFL-CIO Union Formation



Source: AFL-CIO

The labor movement has continuously evolved. In a paper written for our commission, Profs. Joseph McCartin and Kalmanovitz Initiative Associate Director Lane Windham of Georgetown University observed, "The labor movement has attempted more innovation...since the 1970s than most (even within the movement) realize."

When it comes to union consolidation, there have been 30 mergers at the national level since 1990. But they follow no clear pattern. Some have combined unions to increase worker power in an industry; for example, the merger of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) in 2012. Some have increased the amalgamated nature of the resulting union, like when the Sheet Metal Workers (SMWIA) and the United Transportation Union (UTU) came together to form SMART that same year. Unions also appear to have had different experiences post-merger, and while some forcefully advocated in favor of unification within an industry (including SAG-AFTRA) directly to our commission, there is no consensus on the benefits or possibility of mergers within or across industries.

Other forms of worker advocacy organizations have emerged in the past decade, particularly worker centers and other "alt labor" constructs, but these groups have achieved neither significant scale nor self-sufficiency. Since the 1980s, approximately 200 worker centers have been created. These are mostly small, largely foundation-funded service and advocacy organizations that do not seek to represent workers in collective bargaining and, in most cases, do not have elected officers.

The AFL-CIO and many individual unions have experimented with a number of forms of partnerships with worker centers at the national, state and local levels in an effort to find synergies that multiply benefits for working people. For example, the national AFL-CIO has entered into partnership with several associations of worker centers, starting with the National Day Laborers Organizing Network in 2006; has permitted worker centers to affiliate with state and local federations; and has created (along with a number of foundations) a fund (the Labor Innovations for the 21st Century, or LIFT Fund,) that supports partnerships between local unions and worker centers. Yet a model for cooperation that would leverage the resources of both unions and worker centers to advance the interests of working people has not been identified to date.

A number of unions also have experimented with forms of membership outside traditional collective bargaining units both in the private and public sectors. One of the largest examples is Working America. Formed in 2003, Working America is a community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, but does not seek to represent working people for purposes of collective bargaining. Working America is national in scope and is not concentrated in any sector, industry or occupation. Membership in Working America is open to any union supporter.

The Machinists (IAM) helped create the Independent Drivers Guild that represents Uber workers, who are treated as independent contractors. Unions also have partnered with the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership in creating a unionized temporary help agency, Triada Employment Services.

Pro-worker scholars have urged unions to further experiment with nonbargaining representation that provides valuable information and services to working people. The challenges to this approach are that it does not empower workers collectively to address our grievances and aspirations, and there is not yet a proven financing model.

Unions also might experiment with a form of membership or affiliation founded on ideological alignment rather than provision of services—an organization of people who want to learn about and support unions

but are not currently represented by a union—similar to the American Civil Liberties Union, Sierra Club or National Rifle Association. These diffuse supporters could be a source of leaders and support for efforts by working people to come together in a union or to bargain a fair contract, as well as for pro-worker policy initiatives.

New forms of social media and digital communications have made identifying, communicating with and possibly assisting such diffuse union supporters easier. Unions have developed highly sophisticated digital communications capacity. Many unions have made major investments in digital staff and resources to keep up with new technologies and new ways to engage working people. We also have experimented with innovative uses of Facebook and other social media platforms, as well as peer-to-peer texting to engage existing members and help more working people come together.

Unions have continued to innovate in the benefits we provide our members. In 1986, a partnership between the AFL-CIO and affiliated national unions created Union Plus (originally called Union Privilege). Union Plus has sought to mobilize the collective buying power of union members as consumers to negotiate discounts and other benefits on everything from credit cards and mortgages to cell phones and rental cars. Unions have always provided benefits to members outside collective bargaining, but the innovation of Union Plus has served as a sophisticated agent to negotiate the best terms for a wide array of goods and services at scale.

Our commission believes unions will continue to build on this history of innovation to become the movement working people want. Survey research among currently unrepresented workers presented to our commission by scholars at MIT and Columbia is probing the important question of worker needs and desires. **We recommend that this research be extended and deepened to guide union innovation and experimentation with diverse methods of assisting workers in all kinds of work arrangements to join together.** But this innovation must be accompanied by rigorous evaluation of costs and benefits, so that promising advances can be pursued while failed experiments are abandoned.

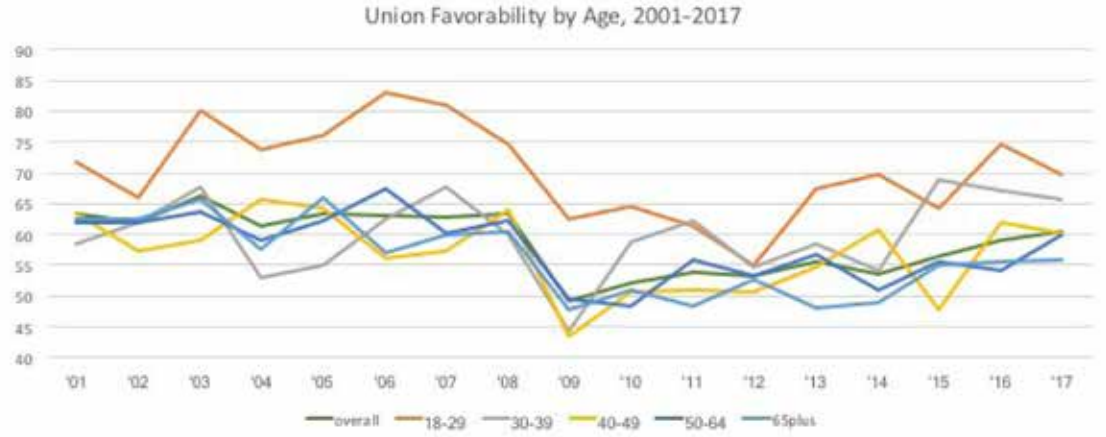
LABOR LAW THAT LIFTS OUR VOICES

Working people want to form unions. In survey research reported on to our commission, Profs. Thomas A. Kochan and William Kimball of MIT and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez of Columbia University found that nearly half of all nonunion respondents said they would vote for a union if an election were held at their workplace. That amounts to more than 60 million people, and is approximately one-third more than comparable surveys conducted in 1977 and 1995.

Public support for unions also is rising, particularly among young people. According to Gallup, union approval has been climbing steadily since 2009 and now stands at 64%, the highest in nearly 50 years.

Importantly, the people most knowledgeable about collective bargaining, union members and our families, register the highest levels of support for unions. Equally important, millennials are the most supportive age group, with respondents ages 18 to 29 most favorable toward unions, while those ages 30 to 39 are moving toward us faster than any other group.

Favorability Highest Among 18–29s, while 30–39s Seeing Most Favorability Growth



Source: AFL-CIO Analysis of Gallup Work and Education Series

Yet, despite working people's overwhelming desire for a voice on the job, the percentage of workers represented by a union has been declining steadily since the mid-1950s. In January 2019, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the percentage of U.S. workers represented by a union was 10.5.

Why? A large part of the answer is what University of Oregon Prof. Gordon Lafer described in a paper written for our commission as increasingly "ferocious" campaigns by employers to prevent a union on the job. Lafer reported that employers unlawfully fired pro-union workers in a third of campaigns, and in 90% of cases, employees were required to attend meetings where their employer made the case against a union, with the average worker being subject to 10 such "captive-audience" sessions.

In the past decade, corporate interests have carried these tactics into the public sector, seeking to strip collective bargaining rights under state law and weaken public workers' collective voice, for example, through the litigation that resulted in *Janus v. AFSCME*. The *Janus* decision, which barred public employers and unions from fairly distributing the cost of bargaining among all those employees who receive its benefits, represents a decades-long effort by the rich to weaken the voice of public workers. While public workers have stuck together and continued to support our unions, this assault is ongoing in both state legislatures and the courts, where an avalanche of lawsuits has been filed in the wake of *Janus,* and anti-union lawyers are seeking to kick out other foundations of public-sector collective bargaining.

Workers must travel a long and complicated path to form unions, and the process permits far too much opportunity for employers to exert undue and, often, illegal influence. The choice to form a union should be that of workers alone. Employers have no business attempting to influence who sits across the bargaining table from them. Moreover, the law's paltry remedies all but encourage employers to violate the law by punishing union supporters in order to chill organizing efforts. And, even if workers successfully navigate the path to representation, in too many cases our employer simply never negotiates in good faith to reach a first collective bargaining agreement.

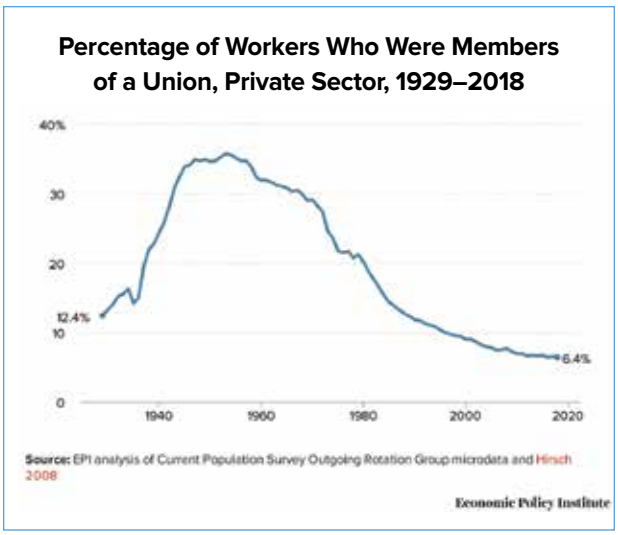
As the courageous, recent actions of teachers, hotel workers, supermarket employees and others have reminded us, the ultimate power held by workers is to withhold our labor. Yet the right to strike embodied in current law is hollow, permitting employers to permanently replace workers who are willing to forgo pay to right a wrong.

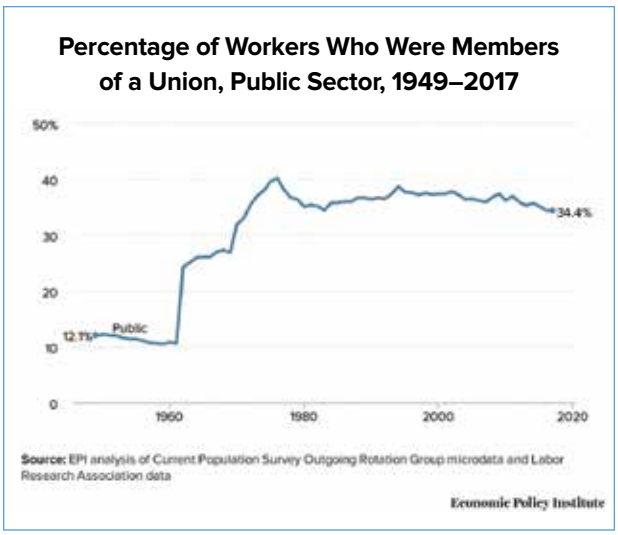
Existing federal law also does not grant a right to organize and bargain to agricultural laborers, all domestic workers and low-level supervisors. These exclusions must be eliminated, and misclassification of employees as independent contractors must be stopped.

Our commission believes the gap between the representation workers want and what we have been able to obtain evidences a failure of public policy. **Our commission recommends that unions mount a campaign, coordinated by the AFL-CIO, for a new labor law under which working people can freely and fairly come together in a union.** Passage of three bills now pending in Congress would be crucial steps forward. The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act would give private-sector workers a clear path to winning a voice on the job. The Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act and the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act would do the same for state and local public employees, from firefighters and teachers to sanitation and clerical workers.

Workers formed the modern U.S. labor movement largely in two dramatic spurts, each of which coincided with major changes in the law. In the private sector, the spurt occurred roughly in the two decades after passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935.

In the public sector, the spurt occurred roughly in the two decades after the passage of the first comprehensive public-sector collective bargaining law in Wisconsin in 1959, and continued through the wave of similar laws that ended in Ohio in 1983.





The environment today is ripe for a third such spurt, and labor law reform can help provide a level playing field to make it happen.

TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE

In order to continue to reshape work to the benefit of all working people, our commission believes unions must be experts on the most cutting-edge technology and have the knowledge and capacity to engage broadly in the complex innovation process. **Our commission recommends that unions, through the AFL-CIO, collectively form a technology institute to develop expertise and gain access to critical information concerning new technologies that may transform work and displace workers, but also can help unions more effectively represent working people.** The institute should:

- Develop expertise on emerging technologies;
- Coordinate with specific unions on a range of methods to engage working people early in the process of planning, designing and deploying new technologies;
- Explore strategies to steer technological progress through public funding of basic and applied research that will have broad and positive societal benefits;
- Serve as a hub to collect and share collective bargaining strategies and contract language relating to technology;
- Collect and share best practices regarding the use of technology in training programs and the development of training programs to prepare workers for the application and use of new technologies, and changes in work caused by them;
- Build on and expand key partnerships with universities and research institutions, like our commission's work with Carnegie Mellon University; and
- Work with the AFL-CIO and affiliated unions to invest at scale to develop and adopt new technologies to better assist working people to come together in unions and to make representation more effective. The AFL-CIO, using a co-design process with more than 20 affiliate unions, developed and deployed a tool for organizing in workplaces called Action Builder. This form of collaboration around data and technology should be extended.

TRAINING AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Training and upskilling will become even more necessary if, as expected, workers in the future have to learn continuously to work with new technologies, and as these innovations eliminate job tasks and entire jobs. As our commission's Public Sector Subcommittee reports, the worker of the future is one who will never stop learning, and working people will need continuing education and training to advance in our careers. Yet, as MIT Prof. Paul Osterman pointed out in a presentation to our commission, employers are providing less and less training, and there has been a steady decline in federal funding for job training across the past two presidential administrations.

Unions continue to be a major source of training for both new workers and working people who want to expand our skills or enter a new occupation. Unions are uniquely situated to provide training that creates a clear pathway to employment, transferable skills and usable credentials. Training is a benefit for union members and, potentially, a positive introduction of the labor movement to students and young workers while they are in high school or community college.

The building and construction trades unions provide an exemplary model of a training program that gives working people real skills, leads to good jobs, strengthens the bond between members and unions, and

benefits the construction industry and the public. These unions, together with their signatory contractors, invest almost $1.9 billion annually in apprentice and journey-level training delivered at 1,900 training centers across the United States and Canada. They invest another $10 billion in apprentice wages and benefits. If the building trades' training system was a degree-granting university, it would be the largest in the United States. The training programs employ state-of-the-art technology. In fact, developers of new construction technology often vie with one another to have their product used in a training center as a means of breaking into the market.

The building trades also have expanded their training, in partnership with community organizations, to create the largest apprenticeship readiness program in the United States, teaching a multicraft core curriculum. One hundred fifty such programs are in operation. In 2016, nearly 1,000 people completed the program—more than 80% of whom were people of color, 25% of whom were women.

Jointly funded or union-sponsored training programs exist in other sectors as well. For example, the Machinists and Boeing operate joint training programs in the Seattle area and collaborate with local community colleges to provide classes for people who want to work in the aerospace industry. The Culinary Academy of Las Vegas, a joint labor-management training program of UNITE HERE and the major casino employers, trains thousands of people every year for successful hospitality careers in Las Vegas. Nine in 10 students are people of color and the class is evenly divided between women and men.

But, outside workplaces where we formally represent the employees, unions play too limited a role in continuing education and training. **Our commission recommends that unions expand our provision of training into new sectors through new delivery models to better equip working people for the work of the future.** The labor movement should explore opportunities to provide training beyond represented units through partnerships with high schools and community colleges—and education unions are key players in these partnerships. The labor movement also should seek additional sources of funding for training, including public grants and contracts, dedicated revenues and foundation funding, as recommended by our commission's Manufacturing Sector Subcommittee. A growing body of research shows that sectoral or regional partnerships are especially effective in providing transferable skills necessary to succeed in on-demand industries. The labor movement also should work with local governments, school boards, our own education unions and community groups to provide vocational training and pre-apprenticeship programs in high schools. Finally, working with community allies and religious organizations, unions can help lift up those who face barriers to employment via such training, including women, people of color, people with disabilities and the formerly incarcerated.

MAKING OUR INVESTMENTS WORK FOR US

Collectively, working people have significant investments in the capital markets, including some assets held by unions ourselves. But for workers to have an effective voice in the capital markets, our funds must act together to support the interests of working people.

Since the launch of the AFL-CIO's Capital Stewardship Program in 1997 and parallel efforts by affiliated unions, workers' benefit funds have become important voices for corporate accountability. The pension funds of unions—including both multiemployer funds and large public-sector funds—have done important work lifting labor standards and creating good union jobs for working people. However, exerting

influence on big corporations and the capital markets continues to require coordination and increased sophistication given the complex nature of financial regulation and the rise of such new, powerful actors in recent years as private equity, hedge funds and mega-mutual fund complexes. Our hard-earned savings should work for us—first and foremost to provide a secure retirement but also, consistent with that objective, to broadly improve our lives and those of our children. **We recommend that the entire labor movement increase its capacity to give working people an effective voice in capital markets, and that the AFL-CIO continue and expand this important function, working cooperatively with affiliated unions, including strengthening the AFL-CIO's capacity to lead labor campaigns to address abuses in the capital markets that hurt our funds and our members.**

EDUCATING WORKING PEOPLE ABOUT UNIONS

The most basic precondition for working people to come together in unions is knowledge of our role and power in the workplace. Yet survey data suggests many working people not in unions are largely unfamiliar with what we do. A survey of nonunion members conducted for our commission in late 2018 found that 56% of respondents said joining a union would make their life better. But, when asked why they had not joined a union, 57% said they did not know or had never considered it. APALA reported to our commission that a survey of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders found that more had never heard of unions or had no opinion than opposed them. The Professional Sector Subcommittee's report to our commission observed "misperceptions abound, particularly among young professionals, about what the labor movement is and why it is relevant to them."

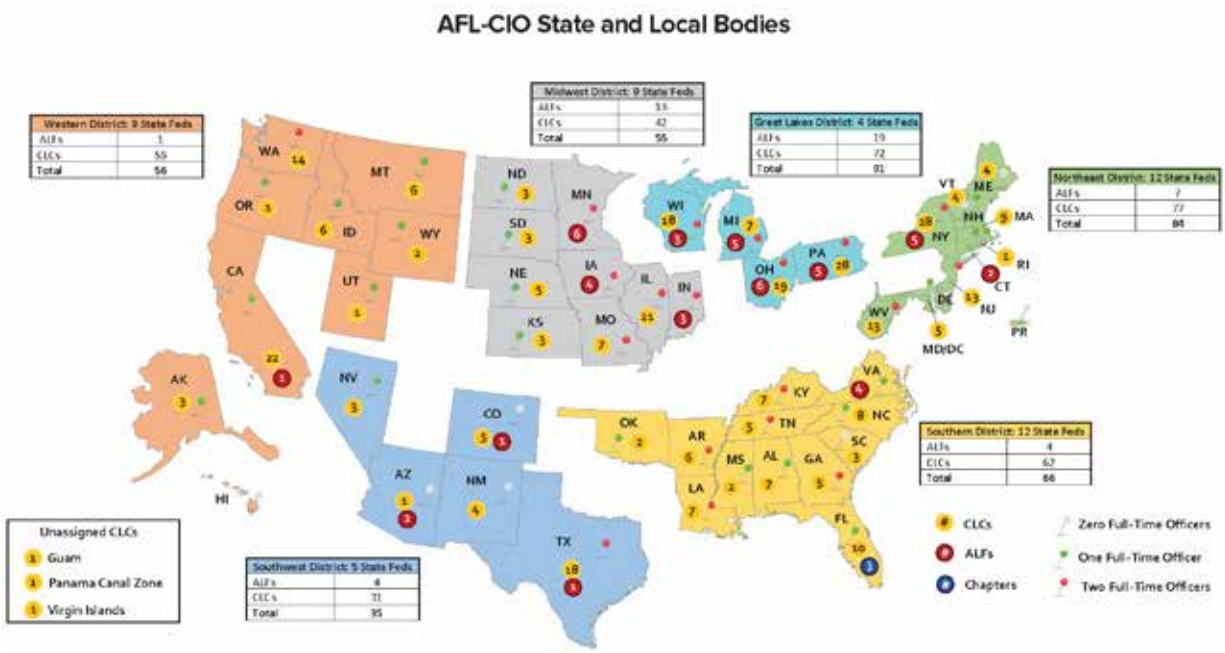
Our commission recommends that unions develop a coordinated public narrative about union members, joining together in a union and union representation, including in new and expanding sectors. In calling for the labor movement to brand ourselves, the Professional Sector Subcommittee report said this "isn't a logo, a color, a saying or a sign. It is the living representation of the heart and soul of an organization."

Dissemination of our narrative should consider where working people already are coming together in unions, geographically as well as sectorally. No public education effort should begin without a thorough analysis of the costs, benefits and methods of prior efforts.

LOCAL UNIONS EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

Local labor unions, with democratically elected leaders, exist in every state and almost every city in the country. There are well more than 20,000 local unions in the United States. Most unions collect dues at the local level and most of the labor movement's revenue remains there. The AFL-CIO coordinates the activities of those local unions through state federations of labor in every state, the District of Columbia, the commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam, along with almost 400 area labor federations and central labor councils in cities and communities across the country.

In urban and rural areas, unionized letter carriers, teachers, firefighters and other union members interact with almost every resident on a daily basis. Unions often maintain halls and other physical meeting places used not only by our own members, but by community organizations and allied advocacy groups. In other words, local unions are often a hub of the communities we serve. As our commission's Public



WEST REGION		CENTRAL REGION		EAST REGION	
WESTERN	SOUTHWEST	MIDWEST	GREAT LAKES	SOUTHERN	NORTHEAST
AK, CA, HI, ID, MT, OR, UT, WA, WY	AZ, CO, NM, NV, TX	IA, IL, IN, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD	MI, OH, PA, WI	AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, VA	CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PR, RI, VT, WV

Source: AFL-CIO

Sector Subcommittee report explained: "Union power is local power. Power comes from the ground up. Members join labor locally. Local unions are uniquely able to connect directly to members in the worksites and communities in which they live. Powerful unions are built locally and then networked together." Outside major religious denominations, no institution of civil society has the geographic reach and organizational and physical infrastructure of the labor movement.

Our commission believes strong, inclusive and effective state and local AFL-CIO bodies with deep and lasting ties to our communities are essential to advancing the interests of working people. We received input on how to strengthen these bodies from the AFL-CIO's State Federation and Central Labor Council Advisory Committee. Based on that advice, **our commission recommends creating a panel of leaders, including representatives of affiliated unions, the AFL-CIO and state and local bodies, under the oversight of the State Federation and Central Labor Council Advisory Committee and the Executive Council Committee on State and Local Labor Councils and Community Partnerships, to develop a plan to increase union participation in state and local bodies, improve support, expand capacity, correct deficiencies in performance and, generally, strengthen the central role of our local unions in supporting healthy communities.**

A UNIFIED LABOR MOVEMENT

At the national level, the AFL-CIO is the largest federation of independent unions in the world. It consists of 55 affiliated national or international unions that are widely diverse—in size, scope and structure.

Federation and other bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperation among unions gives workers power because it permits a large and diverse group of unions to speak with one voice to support efforts by workers to come together in unions, bargain fair contracts, elect union members and allies to public office, and adopt pro-worker laws and policies at every level of government.

The diversity of the AFL-CIO is a source of strength. A labor movement that represents hotel housekeepers and auto workers, iron workers and cashiers can speak to and on behalf of every worker in the labor force. No union outside the AFL-CIO can do so.

When unions speak with one voice, we can make significant gains, as happened in June 2019 in Nevada when the labor movement-endorsed governor signed a law championed by AFSCME, UNITE HERE and other unions granting the right to organize and bargain to public-sector workers. We can beat back vicious attacks, as happened in August 2018 in Missouri when a popular referendum repealed "right to work" with more than two-thirds of the vote. We can score historic victories, as happened in January 2019 in Los Angeles when public school teachers struck to improve their schools. And we can elect our own, as we did in November 2018, sending nearly 1,000 union members to office at every level of government. While such unity is difficult to maintain in a large, diverse federation, our commission believes it is essential to meeting the evolving needs of working people.

With that in mind, **we recommend that steps be taken to strengthen and maintain labor solidarity.** Disagreement is natural, indeed inevitable and often healthy in a large, diverse organization. But disagreement must be expressed openly and respectfully, and resolved by democratic processes within the governing bodies of the federation. As our Public Sector Subcommittee report put it, it is the AFL-CIO "that all of us have in common, the potential point of our aggregated power."

In general, the AFL-CIO should take positions and act concerning core labor issues: employment, job creation, wages, hours, workplace safety, the right to organize and engage in collective bargaining, equal employment opportunity, universal labor protections and related issues. Significant activities or expenditures outside the core should be approved by the Executive Committee, the Executive Council or the AFL-CIO Convention, as suggested by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in response to a survey of affiliated unions conducted for our commission.

The AFL-CIO must give its affiliated unions—representing working people in diverse industries—clearer roles in establishing priorities and implementing programs of the AFL-CIO. The number and function of the AFL-CIO's Executive Council committees should be reviewed to ensure each has a clear and committed membership and their size is large enough to be representative but small enough to be functional. Committees also should have a clear mission statement, an established meeting schedule with attendance expected except in extraordinary circumstances and a continuous relationship with the relevant AFL-CIO staff. They should not propose resolutions or endorse goals without also developing a plan that includes a budget, allocation of roles and a timeline. In the words of the American Postal Workers Union's survey response, the AFL-CIO should have less "resolutionary politics and more action."

People working in the same sector have common interests and our unions thus have an ongoing need to cooperate. Yet the AFL-CIO structures for such sectoral cooperation are both incomplete and varied in levels of capacity. Moreover, the amalgamated nature of many national unions makes it difficult to even identify all the unions representing working people in a particular sector—for example, service and retail. The Professional Sector Subcommittee report called for "developing sector-based strategies to maximize collective impact." Greater sectoral cooperation and focus is needed, particularly with respect to helping working people come together in unions, bargaining, training, shaping the introduction of new technology and developing public policy.

The structure of our commission has provided a vehicle for a new form of communication and cooperation within sectors. As an interim measure, that sectoral structure should continue to function, and each sector should consider whether an alternative would be beneficial to working people in the sector and what its elements should be.

Labor unity is currently imperfect at the national level, and thus the voice of working people is not as clear and powerful as it should be. Several major unions left the AFL-CIO in 2005 and two have not returned despite their continued participation in the AFL-CIO's state and local bodies. Several unions have never been part of the federation. The sector subcommittee chairs, together with the officers of the AFL-CIO, should immediately open a dialogue with all unaffiliated unions about fully unifying the labor movement at the national level. As the Demographic Constituencies Subcommittee report suggested: "This reuniting should be understood as a reformation of the labor movement that will necessitate consideration being given to new forms of labor organization and cooperation."

Next Steps

Our commission recognizes that this report is and should be only a first step. The recommendations made herein must be implemented, tested and adjusted. And the process of adjustment and reform must be a continuous one. For those reasons, we recommend either that the sector subcommittee chairs be retained as a body but renamed the Committee on Innovation and Continuous Reform, or this function be assumed by the AFL-CIO Executive Committee. In either case, the Executive Committee will have overall responsibility for reviewing the implementation of our commission's recommendations and recommending adjustments and additional reforms.

In some places, our commission has recommended that specific existing bodies have responsibility for refining and implementing recommendations. Where responsibility has not been specifically assigned, the Committee on Innovation and Continuous Reform or the Executive Committee will identify an existing body or recommend creation of a working group to assume the responsibility.

The Committee on Innovation and Continuous Reform or the Executive Committee should report to the AFL-CIO's next quadrennial Convention in 2021.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AFL-CIO COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF WORK AND UNIONS

The commission proceeded in four stages, considering the economy, work, unions and the AFL-CIO.

2018

MAY 3—PUBLIC OPENING MEETING

Future of Work

Michael Chui, Partner, McKinsey Global Institute

Susan Helper, Frank Tracy Carlton Professor of Economics, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve; former Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Commerce; former Senior Economist, White House Council of Economic Advisors

Howie Choset, Professor of Robotics and Co-Director, Biorobotics Lab, Carnegie Mellon University

John Schmitt, Vice President, Economic Policy Institute

Young Workers Speak to the Future

Glenn Kelly, Bricklayers (BAC), AFL-CIO Young Worker Advisory Council *(facilitator)*

Charleeka Thompson, United Steelworkers (USW), paper worker from Oklahoma

Karen Rice, graduate employee, Georgetown University, organizing with AFT

Courtney Jenkins, American Postal Workers Union (APWU)

Shawn Grundy, Ironworkers, Harmon Inc.

Bjorn Westerfeld, software engineer, organizing with Communications Workers of America (CWA)

JUNE 18—SECTOR CHAIRS MEETING

JULY 19—JOINT MEETING WITH AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

ILO Future of Work Initiative

Guy Ryder, Director-General, International Labor Organization

JULY 24—FULL COMMISSION MEETING ON ECONOMY

Survey of Activities Related to the Future of Work in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Countries

Anna Byhovskaya, Senior Policy Adviser, Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)

Impact of Globalization on Particular Industries and Union Responses

David Viviano, Chief Economist, SAG-AFTRA

Owen Herrnstadt, Chief of Staff, Machinists (IAM)

Roxanne Brown, International Vice President at Large, United Steelworkers (USW)

Impact of Financialization on Particular Industries and Union Responses

Elizabeth Parisian, Assistant Director, Research and Strategic Initiatives, AFT

Jim Kane, Coordinator, Financial Research and Strategies, UNITE HERE

JULY 26—EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Report to the Executive Council on the progress of the commission

SEPT. 14—FULL COMMISSION MEETING ON WORK

Union Density in Emerging Sectors, Nonstandard Work Arrangements and Working Time

John Schmitt, Vice President, Economic Policy Institute

Changing Demographics of the Workforce

Valerie Wilson, Director, Program on Race, Ethnicity and the Economy, Economic Policy Institute

Discussants

Terry Melvin, President, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and Secretary-Treasurer, New York State AFL-CIO

William Spriggs, Chief Economist, AFL-CIO, and Professor of Economics, Howard University

Impact of Automation, Artificial Intelligence and Technology on the Workforce in Specific Sectors

Stacy Scopano, Vice President, Skanska USA (construction)

Sridhar Kota, Executive Director, Alliance for Manufacturing Foresight; Professor of Engineering, University of Michigan (manufacturing)

Zeynep Ton, Professor, MIT Sloan School of Management (retail)

Discussants

Jen Kelly, Research Director, UAW

D. Taylor, President, UNITE HERE

Marc Perrone, International President, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)

Capt. Tim Canoll, President, Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA)

Fissuring of the Employment Relationship

David Weil, Dean and Professor, Heller School of Public Policy, Brandeis University; former Wage and Hour Administrator; author, *The Fissured Workplace*

Discussants

Nell Geiser, Assistant Research Director for Strategic Campaigns, Communications Workers of America (CWA)

Stephen Nelms, Organizing Director, Bricklayers (BAC)

Steve Kreisberg, Director of Research and Collective Bargaining, AFSCME

Skills and Training

Paul Osterman, Professor of Human Resources and Management, Nanyang Technological University; Co-Director, MIT Sloan Institute for Work and Employment Research

Discussants

Paul Morris, Director of Project Management, IBEW Electrical Training ALLIANCE

Marla Ucelli-Kashyap, Director of Education Issues, AFT

Chris Nielsen, Lead Educator, NNU

SEPT. 20—JOINT MEETING WITH GERMAN TRADE UNIONISTS CO-SPONSORED BY GERMAN EMBASSY

Reiner Hoffman, President, German Trade Union Confederation

OCT. 9—VISIT TO CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Briefings on technology and work; robotics; machine learning; additive manufacturing; and 3-D printing, including sector analyses

NOV. 27—TRADE UNION REFORM AND CONSOLIDATION IN GERMANY

Wolfgang Lemb, Managing Director, IG Metall

DEC. 12—WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ATTITUDES TOWARD UNIONS AND REPRESENTATION

David Binder, David Binder Research
Geoff Garin and Guy Molyneux, Hart Research
Anna Greenberg and Elizabeth Sena, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research
Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Professor, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University
Thomas Kochan, George Maverick Bunker Professor of Management and Co-Director of Institute for Work and Employment Research, MIT Sloan School of Management
Mark Mellman, The Mellman Group
David Mermin, Lake Research Partners

DEC. 17—FULL COMMISSION MEETING ON UNIONS

What is Needed to Achieve Union Density Goals in the Next 10 Years?

Lawrence Mishel, Distinguished Fellow, Economic Policy Institute

2019

JAN. 8–10—VISIT TO CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW, LAS VEGAS, HOSTED BY SAG-AFTRA

JAN. 31—DISCUSSION REGARDING HOW EMPLOYERS ENVISION THE FUTURE OF WORK

William Kerr, Professor, Harvard Business School, and Co-Director, Managing the Future of Work Initiative

FEB. 12—SECTOR CHAIRS MEETING

MARCH 5—SECTOR CHAIRS MEETING

MARCH 12—FULL COMMISSION MEETING ON THE AFL-CIO

MARCH 12—REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Progress to date, reports from commission chair and sector chairs

APRIL 12—VISIT TO AFL-CIO BY CARNEGIE MELLON FACULTY AND STAFF

Learn about unions and discuss further collaboration

MAY 2—SECTOR CHAIRS MEETING

JULY 16—SECTOR CHAIRS MEETING

AUG. 27—FULL COMMISSION MEETING

Draft report presented by the AFL-CIO officers and sector chairs

SEPT. 13—AFL-CIO GENERAL BOARD MEETING

Presentation of the deliberations and recommendations of the AFL-CIO Commission on the Future of Work and Unions to the General Board pursuant to Resolution 5, adopted at the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention

THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTED ORIGINAL RESEARCH OR WRITING TO THE AFL-CIO COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF WORK AND UNIONS:

Eileen Appelbaum, Co-Director, Senior Economist, Center for Economic and Policy Research

Jacob Barnes, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

Cecilia Behgam, Strategic Researcher, Economic Power and Growth, AFL-CIO

Michelle Blau, former Digital Director, AFL-CIO

Bob Bruno, Director of and Professor, Labor Education Program, School of Labor and Employment Relations, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Paul Carlson, Political Targeting Analyst, Data, Analytics and Infrastructure Resource Department, AFL-CIO

John-Paul Ferguson, Professor, Desautels Faculty of Management, McGill University

Janice Fine, Professor, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Professor, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Michelle Kaminski, Professor, Department of Human Resources and Labor Relations, Michigan State University

Jeffrey H. Keefe, Professor Emeritus, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

William Kimball, Ph.D. Candidate, MIT Sloan School of Management

Thomas Kochan, George Maverick Bunker Professor, MIT Sloan School of Management; Co-Director, MIT Sloan Institute for Work and Employment

Gordon Lafer, Professor, Labor Education & Research Center, University of Oregon

Nelson Lichtenstein, Professor, Department of History, and Director, Center for Study of Work, Labor and Democracy, University of California, Santa Barbara

John Lund, Pacific Northwest Labor Research LLC; former Director of Office of Labor- Management Standards, U.S. Department of Labor

Barry C. Lynn, Executive Director, Open Markets Institute

Mariana Mazzucato, Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value, and Founder/Director of the Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, University College London

Joseph McCartin, Professor, Department of History, and Executive Director, Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, Georgetown University

Lawrence Mishel, Distinguished Fellow, Economic Policy Institute

Suresh Naidu, Professor, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Victor Narro, Project Director, UCLA Labor Center

Michiah Prull, Chief Executive Officer, Avalanche

Dani Rodrik, Ford Foundation Professor of International Political Economy, Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government

John Schmitt, Vice President, Economic Policy Institute

Juliet Schor, Professor, Department of Sociology, Boston College

William Spriggs, Professor, Department of Economics, Howard University, and Chief Economist, AFL-CIO

Mitch Stevens, President, Union Plus

Jelle Visser, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, University of Amsterdam

Valerie Wilson, Director, Program on Race, Ethnicity and the Economy, Economic Policy Institute

Lane Windham, Associate Director, Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, Georgetown University

Julia Wolfe, Research Assistant, Economic Policy Institute

AFL-CIO

aflcio.org

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
President

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
Secretary-Treasurer

TEFERE A. GEBRE
Executive Vice President