

## **RESOLUTION 10: AND WE KNOW HOW TO GET IT DONE.**

### **Building the Infrastructure of Worker Power: Strengthening State Federations and Central and Area Labor Councils**

To address the opportunities and crises of the time, delegates at the 2022 AFL-CIO Convention adopted Resolution 2, “Innovation to Strengthen State, Area and Local Central Bodies,” and created a commission to explore the programmatic impact, governance, participation (including affiliation and financing), and structures of our AFL-CIO state and local labor councils.

Four years later, the urgency of this work has never been greater. America’s working people and our unions are being tested like never before. Powerful interests are laying waste to decades of progress, eroding worker protections, and attacking the right to form and join unions. We are the trusted and coherent voice this country needs to lead the fight against injustice and oppression. The infrastructure of the labor movement is intrinsically connected to the infrastructure of our democracy. Now is the time to increase participation and investment in the state and local infrastructure that supports workers and delivers real gains for working people.

State federations and central and area labor councils are chartered by the AFL-CIO to fulfill distinct yet interdependent responsibilities. A strong and coordinated labor movement depends on robust statewide and local institutions that allow unions to work together strategically, respond quickly to emerging challenges and build long-term worker power. Investing in the capacity of state federations and central and area labor councils is the key to strengthening the movement’s ability to organize, advocate and mobilize effectively.

Our goal is to create affiliate-driven organizations that, through deep participation, can build power for workers. Bold leadership, solidarity and consistent structure with alignment at all levels is how we deliver on the programmatic priorities of all affiliates. Delivering on these priorities requires deep interdependence across our federation, where every affiliate and every level of the labor movement contributes to and benefits from shared strength. A coalition of the willing alone cannot meet the challenges ahead; our democratic processes must be used to build affiliate-centered state federations and central and area labor councils capable of leading impactful and consistent programmatic work.

### **Programmatic Priorities**

This resolution therefore affirms the labor movement’s five core programmatic priorities—political action, legislative and policy advocacy, community engagement, organizing and crisis response, including contract fights and strike solidarity—and supports a structure to guide implementation for changes to strengthen state and local labor bodies.

### **Implementation**

To carry out these efforts, the president will appoint members of the Executive Council and leaders from state federations and central and area labor councils to form an Implementation and Accountability Committee to guide the implementation of reforms and address challenges. The committee will review the issues raised and, based on its findings, will make a recommendation to the president. This committee will provide regular updates to the Executive Council and elsewhere as appropriate.

The AFL-CIO will consider the programmatic impact, affiliate-driven governance structure, and alignment of state and local labor bodies. Effective programs require sufficient resources and capacity; where organizations lack the resources to carry out meaningful work, structural adjustments should be considered to ensure that affiliates' needs are met.

The AFL-CIO will educate affiliates on the value of participation in the National Affiliation Fee Program.

These structural reforms, paired with robust training and leadership development, will strengthen the federation's ability to move our agenda forward in solidarity. These efforts will codify the importance of a collaborative, mutually supportive relationship between state federations and central and area labor councils, supported by updated model constitutions and standardized COPE processes that strengthen democratic governance and coordination across the labor movement.

### **The Path Forward**

Strong internal structures are necessary to realize the aspirations of working people. And if we are to meet the ambitious goals laid out in these resolutions—including organizing 2 million members over the next four years; reforming labor law so that all working people in America who want a union can actually have one; ensuring every worker receives the pay, care, respect and security they need to live a healthy life and come home safe from work; making corporations pay their fair share and deploy technology to support workers rather than replace them; dismantling systemic racism and sexism; strengthening, not abandoning, our public schools, colleges and universities, and bolstering registered apprenticeships programs so all our children, young people and all others have an opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge they need to thrive; winning industrial policies that create good jobs across all parts of the economy; creating a pathway to citizenship for immigrant families that are the backbone of our communities; strengthening our democracy and our public sector; and building a peaceful, prosperous world—we need to forge a union movement that is bold, modern and welcoming. We must make what we do in our individual unions visible and tangible to the rest of the workforce, laying out a clear vision of—and fighting with all our might to create—a world in which all working people thrive.

Rooted in solidarity, ever-aware of the shoulders we stand on and the hard-won victories that came before, harnessing the unmatched power of the millions in our movement and the millions more ready to link arms with us, and with each and every one of you, we will create the future we deserve.

[SUBMITTED BY THE AFL-CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL]