



Label Letter

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Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO AFL-CIO Convention Re-Elects Shuler and Redmond, Sets Priorities Through 2030



Delegates representing 65 affiliated unions and approximately 15 million workers gathered in Minneapolis in June for the AFL-CIO's 30th Constitutional Convention, re-electing President Liz Shuler and Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond while adopting resolutions that will guide the federation's work over the next four years.

The convention served as both a celebration of labor's recent gains and a strategy session for the challenges ahead. Organizing, economic policy, worker rights, democracy, and artificial intelligence dominated discussion throughout the week as delegates debated how organized labor should respond to a rapidly changing political and economic landscape.

SHULER AND REDMOND RE-ELECTED

One of the convention's first orders of business was the re-election of Liz Shuler and Fred Redmond to another four-year term leading the nation's largest federation of unions.

Shuler, the first woman elected president of the AFL-CIO, used her remarks to emphasize organizing and growth. Redmond, who made history as the first African American elected secretary-treasurer of the federation, focused on solidarity and the need for unions to continue building power across industries and communities.



International President Kenneth W. Cooper of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) nominated Liz Shuler for reelection at the 2026 AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention.

“Our movement is growing because workers know collective action works.”

— Liz Shuler

Delegates also welcomed the return of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to the AFL-CIO, a move that expands the federation's membership and strengthens cooperation among affiliated unions.

ORGANIZING REMAINS LABOR'S CENTRAL MISSION

The dominant theme of the convention was growth.

AFL-CIO leaders announced a goal of helping organize two million new workers by 2031, one of the most ambitious organizing initiatives in the federation's history. Speakers pointed to growing public support for unions and successful organizing campaigns across healthcare, logistics, retail, education, hospitality, manufactur-

ing, and the service sector as evidence that workers continue to seek a collective voice on the job.

“Our movement is growing because workers know collective action works,” Shuler told delegates.

The organizing goal was reflected throughout the convention's resolutions, many of which called for increased investment in organizing campaigns, stronger coordination among affiliates, and expanded efforts to reach workers in emerging industries and occupations.

Delegates repeatedly argued that organizing remains labor's most effective tool for improving wages, benefits, workplace safety, retirement security, and economic opportunity.

RESOLUTIONS FOCUS ON WORKER POWER AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Delegates spent much of the week considering resolutions that will shape AFL-CIO policy and advocacy efforts through the end of the decade.

SEE AFL-CIO CONVENTION, PAGE 4

House Passes Faster Labor Contracts Act, Giving Workers a Fair Shot at a First Contract

Working people across the country scored an important victory when the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Faster Labor Contracts Act, legislation designed to prevent employers from dragging out negotiations after workers vote to form a union.

For decades, one of the most effective anti-union tactics has been delay. Even after workers exercise their legal right to organize and win union representation, some employers intentionally stall contract negotiations in hopes of weakening worker support, creating frustration, and ultimately undermining the newly certified union. In too many cases, workers who successfully organize never reach a first contract.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act addresses that problem by establishing a clear timeline for bargaining. Employers and unions would be required to begin negotiations promptly following union certification. If the parties are unable to reach agreement within established timeframes, federal mediation and arbitration procedures would ensure that workers are not left waiting indefinitely for the wages, benefits, and workplace protections they voted to secure. Under the legislation, bargaining must begin within 10 days of a union's request, followed by mediation and, if necessary, binding arbitration to secure a first agreement.

The legislation recognizes the simple reality that workers should not have to fight one battle to win a union election and then fight a second battle just to get their employer to come to the bargaining table in good faith.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions have been strong advocates for first-contract reform for many years. Labor leaders have consistently highlighted how employers exploit delays in the bargaining process to discourage workers and weaken organizing drives. The labor movement's sustained advocacy, grassroots mobilization, and legislative outreach helped build support for this measure and keep the issue in front of lawmakers. In recent months, the AFL-CIO formally urged Congress to support the legislation and backed efforts to force a House vote,

describing the bill as an important step toward broader labor law reforms that strengthen workers' ability to organize and bargain collectively.

Richard Kline, president of the Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, welcomed House passage of the legislation and urged the Senate to act quickly.

"Workers who successfully organize a union should not have to wait years to secure the contract they voted for," Kline said. "The Faster Labor Contracts Act helps ensure that employers cannot use delay as a tactic to undermine workers' voices in the workplace. We applaud Rep. Donald Norcross and all those who helped advance this legislation through the House, and we urge the Senate to move swiftly to pass it. Working people deserve a fair path to a first contract and the opportunity to realize the benefits of collective bargaining."

The legislation has also earned strong support from labor leaders across the movement. Teamsters General President Sean O'Brien called it "one of the most consequential labor bills to come before Congress in generations" because it would help prevent employers from endlessly delaying first-contract negotiations.

Special recognition is due to Norcross, who led the effort in the House and worked to build bipartisan support for the legislation. Norcross spearheaded the discharge petition that ultimately forced House action and helped move the bill forward despite significant opposition from corporate interests. His leadership ensured that workers' voices were heard and that this important reform received the vote it deserved.

Passage in the House is an important milestone, but the fight is not over. The legislation must now clear the Senate before it can become law.

Union members and supporters can help by contacting their U.S. Senators and urging them to support the Faster Labor Contracts Act. Every call, email, and letter reinforces the message that workers deserve a fair process and a meaningful opportunity to secure a first collective bargaining agreement.

Take Action: Tell the Senate to Pass the Faster Labor Contracts Act

The House has done its job. Now it is time for the Senate to act.

Union members, retirees, family members, and allies are encouraged to contact their U.S. Senators and urge them to support the Faster Labor Contracts Act. This important legislation would help ensure that workers who vote to form a union have a fair opportunity to secure a first contract without facing endless delays and obstruction from employers.

CALL THE CAPITOL SWITCHBOARD

Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at **(202) 224-3121** and **ask to be connected to your Senators**. You can also contact your Senators' Washington offices directly.

A SIMPLE MESSAGE IS ALL IT TAKES:

"I am calling to urge Senator _____ to support the Faster Labor Contracts Act. Workers who vote to form a union deserve a fair path to a first contract. Please support this legislation and stand with working families."

Congressional offices track constituent calls closely. Every phone call helps demonstrate public support for protecting workers' right to organize and bargain collectively.

The labor movement fought hard to secure passage of this legislation in the House. With your help, we can build the momentum needed to get it across the finish line in the Senate.

The Systematic Dismantling of America's Civil Service



For more than 140 years, the United States has maintained a professional civil service based on a simple principle: federal employees should be hired, promoted, and retained based on merit, qualifications, and expertise—not political loyalty.

Today, that principle faces one of its most serious challenges in modern history.

The Trump administration has launched a sweeping effort to reshape the federal workforce through executive orders, personnel changes, restrictions on collective bargaining rights, and new policies that critics warn will politicize government service and undermine the independence of career federal employees.

Taken together, these actions represent a fundamental transformation of the federal civil service.

SCHEDULE POLICY/CAREER REOPENS THE DOOR TO POLITICAL PATRONAGE

At the center of that effort is the revival of Schedule F, now renamed Schedule Policy/Career.

In June, President Trump signed an executive order transferring approximately 8,000 career federal positions into the new excepted service category. Employees designated as Schedule Policy/Career can be removed more easily than traditional career civil servants and lose many of the protections that have long insulated federal employees from political pressure.

Supporters argue the change increases accountability. Critics argue it weakens the merit system and creates incentives for federal employees to prioritize political considerations over professional judgment. The concern is not simply that employees may be fired more easily, but that workers may feel pressure to align their profession-

al recommendations with political priorities.

The modern civil service was created to prevent precisely that outcome. Federal employment was removed from the patronage system so government could be staffed by qualified professionals rather than political loyalists.

WEAKENING WHISTLEBLOWER AND WORKER PROTECTIONS

The administration has also proposed a government-wide nondisclosure agreement (NDA) that whistleblower advocates say could chill lawful disclosures of waste, fraud, abuse, and misconduct.

Particularly troubling is language that appears to omit the Office of Special Counsel from key whistleblower protection provisions. Federal law specifically protects disclosures made to Inspectors General and the Office of Special Counsel. Critics argue the omission could create confusion about employees' rights and discourage use of one of the government's most important independent oversight channels.

Federal employees are also being directed to install a new White House mobile application on government-issued devices. Critics have questioned why the app is necessary and whether it belongs on federal systems at all. Cybersecurity experts warn that every new application introduced across government networks creates potential security risks and should be subject to careful review before widespread deployment.

At the same time, Schedule Policy/Career employees lose traditional civil service appeal rights, and the administration has moved to curtail collective bargaining rights for hundreds of thousands of federal employees. Together, these actions reduce many of the safeguards that have historically protected federal workers from retaliation and arbitrary treatment.

A WORKFORCE IN RETREAT

The cumulative impact of these policies is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

Federal agencies are already struggling to recruit and retain skilled employees.

Experienced workers are retiring. Others are leaving for private-sector opportunities. Younger workers increasingly question whether federal service offers the stability, independence, and professional protections that once made government careers attractive.

The federal government competes with the private sector for cybersecurity professionals, engineers, scientists, healthcare workers, and countless other skilled employees. Recruiting those workers becomes substantially harder when job protections are weakened, collective bargaining rights are curtailed, and career employees can be reclassified as at-will workers.

LABOR LEADERS SOUND THE ALARM

Everett Kelley, President of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), has warned that the administration's personnel policies threaten to replace a professional, nonpartisan workforce with one increasingly subject to political influence.

"Schedule F is one of the largest acts of political corruption in American history," Kelley said when the policy was first proposed, warning that federal positions could be filled based on political loyalty rather than expertise.

Federal employee unions across the labor movement have echoed those concerns.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

America's civil service exists to serve the Constitution, the law, and the public. It functions best when employees are free to provide honest expertise, report wrongdoing, exercise legally protected rights, and perform their duties without political interference.

The federal workforce deserves modernization, investment, training, and support. What it does not need is a return to a system where political loyalty matters more than professional expertise.

The future of the American civil service—and the quality of government services upon which millions of Americans depend—may well depend on preserving that distinction.



AFL-CIO CONVENTION, FROM PAGE 1

Many resolutions focused on strengthening worker power in both the workplace and the broader economy. Delegates approved measures supporting collective bargaining rights, protecting workers' ability to organize, expanding apprenticeship and workforce development opportunities, and promoting policies that create family-sustaining jobs.

Economic policy emerged as a major focus. Convention speakers argued that workers must share more fully in the wealth they create and that economic growth should be measured not only by corporate performance but by rising living standards for working families.

Several resolutions addressed domestic investment, manufacturing, infrastructure, retirement security, healthcare affordability, and workplace safety. Others focused on protecting voting rights, combating discrimination, and defending democratic institutions that delegates argued are closely linked to worker rights.

Throughout the debate, speakers returned to the idea that labor's role extends beyond collective bargaining. Delegates described unions as institutions that help workers exercise a voice not only in the workplace, but also in their communities and in public life.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EMERGES AS A DEFINING WORKPLACE ISSUE

No topic generated more discussion about the future than artificial intelligence.

Delegates adopted resolutions calling for a worker-centered approach to AI and automation, emphasizing that workers must have a voice in how emerging tech-

nologies are deployed in the workplace.

The resolutions seek greater transparency when employers use AI systems in hiring, scheduling, performance evaluations, discipline, or workplace surveillance. Delegates also supported policies requiring meaningful human oversight when technology is used to make employment decisions.

The debate reflected growing concern that AI could be used to weaken worker protections or eliminate jobs if implemented without safeguards.

Shuler has described artificial intelligence as a "right now issue" for workers, arguing that many employees are already experiencing the effects of AI in their workplaces. Convention delegates echoed that concern, while also recognizing the technology's potential benefits when imple-

mented responsibly and with worker input.

Rather than opposing technological innovation, labor leaders emphasized that workers should help shape how new technologies are introduced and governed. Collective bargaining was frequently cited as the mechanism best suited to balancing innovation, productivity, accountability, and worker protections.

The prominence of AI throughout the convention underscored how quickly the issue has moved from a future concern to a present-day bargaining challenge. As unions negotiate contracts and advocate for workplace protections in the years ahead, delegates made clear that artificial intelligence will remain a central focus of the labor movement's agenda.



Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, national executive director and chief negotiator of SAG-AFTRA, addresses AFL-CIO convention delegates on the role unions can play in protecting workers as artificial intelligence reshapes workplaces across the economy.

Put a Union Label on It

Organizing Gains Show Labor's Momentum Across Emerging Industries



One of the clearest messages to emerge from the AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention in Minneapolis was that organized labor continues to grow in places that were once considered difficult, if not impossible, to organize.

From ride-share drivers and warehouse workers to flight attendants and entertainment professionals, unions are finding success in sectors shaped by technology, changing business models, and nontraditional employment arrangements. While the industries differ, workers are organizing around many of the same concerns: wages, job security, workplace voice, scheduling, safety, and the growing impact of automation and artificial intelligence.

The campaigns also demonstrate that workers continue to see unions as the most effective way to secure a seat at the table when decisions affecting their jobs are made.

DRIVERS SEEK A VOICE IN THE GIG ECONOMY

The gig economy has long been viewed as one of labor's most challenging organizing environments, but workers are beginning to break new ground.

In Massachusetts, ride-share drivers for Uber and Lyft recently secured the state's first certified statewide ride-hailing union. The effort has been supported by drivers working with the Machinists (IAM), SEIU, and labor allies seeking greater worker input into pay, benefits, working conditions, and algorithm-driven management systems.

As technology increasingly determines how drivers receive assignments and compensation, many workers see collective bargaining as an essential tool for protecting their livelihoods and ensuring greater transparency in workplace decisions.

AMAZON WORKERS CONTINUE ORGANIZING EFFORTS

Amazon remains one of organized labor's most closely watched campaigns.

The Amazon Labor Union (ALU), which made history at the company's Staten Island facility, continues its efforts alongside the Teamsters, who have expand-

ed organizing and bargaining campaigns at Amazon facilities across the country. Workers have cited concerns about safety, production quotas, scheduling, wages, and the company's resistance to collective bargaining.

While first-contract negotiations remain a challenge, labor leaders view Amazon as a critical test of whether workers can successfully organize within one of the nation's largest and most influential employers.

WHOLE FOODS WORKERS JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Workers at Whole Foods stores have also become part of labor's recent organizing surge.

Supported by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), employees at several locations have sought union representation to address concerns about staffing levels, wages, scheduling, and workplace policies. Organizers argue that workers deserve a stronger voice in decisions affecting their jobs and working conditions.

Because Whole Foods is owned by Amazon, these campaigns have taken on added significance as unions seek to build worker power throughout the company's operations.

FLIGHT ATTENDANTS BUILD ON INDUSTRY RECOVERY

The airline industry has experienced a wave of bargaining activity as unions seek contracts that reflect the sector's strong recovery from the pandemic.

This year, members of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA-CWA) ratified a new agreement with United Airlines covering approximately 28,000 flight attendants. The agreement includes substantial wage increases, scheduling improvements, and other quality-of-life provisions that workers had sought for years.

The contract demonstrates how collective bargaining continues to deliver tangible gains for workers in one of the nation's most visible industries.

HOLLYWOOD'S AI FIGHT SETS A NATIONAL EXAMPLE

Few unions have shaped the national conversation around artificial intelligence more than SAG-AFTRA and the Writers Guild of America.

Following their historic contract fights with major studios and streaming companies, both unions secured groundbreaking protections governing the use of artificial intelligence, digital replicas, and creative works. Those agreements established new standards for worker consent, compensation, and transparency when AI technologies are used.

As unions across the economy confront similar questions about automation and emerging technologies, many labor leaders point to the gains achieved by SAG-AFTRA and the WGA as a blueprint for protecting workers while embracing innovation.

A GROWING MOVEMENT

The organizing campaigns unfolding across the gig economy, retail, logistics, aviation, and entertainment industries may appear different on the surface, but they reflect a common reality. Workers want a meaningful voice in the decisions that affect their jobs and their futures.

Whether negotiating protections against the misuse of artificial intelligence, securing better contracts, or forming unions for the first time, workers continue to demonstrate that collective action remains one of the most powerful tools for building economic security and workplace democracy.

The momentum highlighted in Minneapolis suggests that labor's next chapter will not be defined solely by traditional industries. Increasingly, it is being written by workers organizing in new sectors, confronting new challenges, and expanding the reach of the labor movement into workplaces that once seemed beyond its grasp.

DO BUY: Summer Entertainment Edition



Looking for ways to support union jobs this summer? Whether you're heading to a concert, taking in a ballgame, strolling through your favorite museum, or enjoying a night at the theater, organized labor is helping make the entertainment happen.

VISIT A UNION MUSEUM

Looking for a summer day trip? Consider visiting museums where workers have organized for a voice on the job.

EAST COAST

- » Smithsonian Museums (Washington, DC)
- » Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York)
- » Museum of Modern Art (New York)
- » Whitney Museum of American Art (New York)
- » Glenstone Museum (Maryland)

MIDWEST

- » Art Institute of Chicago
- » Field Museum (Illinois)
- » Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
- » Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

WEST COAST

- » San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
- » Seattle Art Museum
- » Oakland Museum of California
- » Exploratorium (San Francisco, CA)

In recent years, museum workers across the country have organized to improve wages, benefits, workplace transparency, and job security. Supporting these cultural institutions also supports the workers who help preserve and share our history, art, and culture.

SEE A BROADWAY TOUR

Many touring productions employ members of Actors' Equity, IATSE, and the American Federation of Musicians.

THIS SUMMER, LOOK FOR:

- » Hamilton
- » Wicked
- » The Lion King
- » MJ the Musical
- » & Juliet

CATCH A CONCERT

Major concert tours rely on union musicians and IATSE stagehands to bring live performances to audiences across the country.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

From the players, umpires, stadium workers and concession staff to broadcast technicians and musicians, union members help make America's favorite pastime possible.

LOOK FOR THE UNION LABEL

When you choose entertainment produced by union performers, writers, musicians, stagehands, technicians, and support staff, you're helping support good jobs and the workers who make the magic happen.

For more union-made products and services, visit the Union Label and Service Trades Department's website unionlabel.org

STREAM UNION-MADE ENTERTAINMENT

Look for productions created under contracts with:

- » SAG-AFTRA
- » Writers Guild of America (WGA)
- » International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE)

MOVIE NIGHT FAVORITES

POPCORN

- » ACT II
- » Orville Redenbacher's

CANDY

- » Tootsie Roll
- » Junior Mints
- » Dots
- » Sugar Babies
- » Hot Tamales

ICE CREAM

- » Blue Bunny
- » Prairie Farms

SODA

- » Coca-Cola products
- » Pepsi products

AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS

JUL-AUG 2026



RETAIL

SUBMITTED BY **AMERICAN FEDERATION** **OF TEACHERS (AFT)**

- » Target — Do not shop at Target for back-to-school and other school-related supplies.

COMMUNICATIONS

SUBMITTED BY **COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF** **AMERICA (CWA)**

- » T-Mobile

FOOD

SUBMITTED BY **Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco** **Workers and Grain Millers** **International Union (BCTGM)**

- » Mondelez International Snack Foods (those made in Mexico)

HOTELS

SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!

Please support the workers in these hotels by continuing to boycott the following properties:

ALASKA:

- » Hilton Anchorage
- » Marriott Anchorage Downtown
- » Homewood Suites by Hilton Anchorage
- » Hampton Inn Anchorage
- » Hilton Garden Inn

CALIFORNIA:

- » Hilton Long Beach
- » Hyatt Centric Fisherman's Wharf
- » The Jay, Autograph Collection
- » Hilton Los Angeles Airport
- » Terranea Resort
- » Hyatt Regency Santa Clara
- » Four Seasons Beverly Hills
- » Langham Huntington

LEGAL

SUBMITTED BY **American Federation of State,** **County & Municipal Employees**

- » Gleason, Dunn, Walsh & O'Shea
- » McDonald, Lamond, Canzoneri and Hickernell

OTHER

SUBMITTED BY Farm Labor **Organizing Committee (FLOC)**

- » Reynolds American, Inc., Vuse e-cigarettes

RESTAURANTS

SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!

WASHINGTON, DC:

- » **STARR restaurants:** The Occidental, Osteria Mozza and Le Diplomate
- » **Knightsbridge Restaurant Group:** Modena, Bombay Club and Rasika

When some labor disputes with businesses cannot be resolved, the AFL-CIO supports its affiliates by endorsing their boycotts.

A boycott is an act of solidarity by voluntarily abstaining from the purchase or use of a product or service.

POLICY GUIDELINE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF AFFILIATES' BOYCOTTS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has developed policy guidelines that regulate how the federation endorses boycotts undertaken by its affiliates. To get AFL-CIO sanction, boycotts should be directed at primary employers.

THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE PROVISIONS:

All requests to the national AFL-CIO for endorsement must be made by a national or international union.

Any affiliated union with a contract in force with the same primary employer will be contacted by the AFL-CIO to determine whether there is an objection to the federation's endorsement.

Affiliates will be asked to provide the AFL-CIO with background information on the dispute in a confidential information survey. Prior to endorsement of the boycott, the executive officers, or their designees, will meet with the national union's officers, or their designees, to discuss the union's strategic plan and timetable for the boycott, or other appropriate tactics, and to discuss the federation's role.

The national or international union initiating the boycott is primarily responsible for all boycott activities; the AFL-CIO will provide supplemental support.

Boycotts will be carried on the AFL-CIO national boycott list for a period of one year, and the endorsement will expire automatically at the end of that time. National and international unions may request one-year extensions of the listings for actions where an organizing or bargaining campaign is actively in place.

(These guidelines were adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in April 2011.)

In This Issue...

AFL-CIO Convention Re-Elects Shuler and Redmond, Sets Priorities Through 2030	1
House Passes Faster Labor Contracts Act.	2
The Systematic Dismantling of America's Civil Service	3
Organizing Gains Show Labor's Momentum Across Emerging Industries	5
Do Buy: Summer Entertainment Edition.	6
AFL-CIO Official Boycott List ..	7

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TIME VALUE

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EndNotes



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By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*

AFL-CIO Votes to Grow Labor by Two Million



The Labor Movement is a dynamic force for social and economic progress for all Americans. The just-concluded AFL-CIO Convention confirms this assessment in broad programs addressing current economic and political issues.

The Convention called for protecting government workers from the politicization of their workplace and strengthening Civil Service protections to addressing the growing threat to all workers from new technologies that are upending many workplaces, blue collar and white collar alike.

Although workers and their unions face many challenges, the opportunity to confront issues and to press successfully for change is clear: passage of the Faster Labor Contracts Act in the U.S. House of Representatives is one example of a successful action.

Now, the second half of that challenge calls for pressure on the U.S. Senate to enact the measure. This issue of the *Label Letter* gives ideas on how to join the call for passage of a bill that would make gaining union representation easier.

Organizing and fighting for workers' rights is a continuing struggle for justice. From Amazon to Starbucks to Apple and so many more major corporations, workers are fighting to win their

labor rights. The anti-union stance of many business necessitates passage of the Faster Labor Contracts Act.

The AFL-CIO Convention demonstrated its determination to build the Labor Movement and to bring union benefits to more workers. The Fed seeks to add two million members to the Labor Movement by 2031 and Convention delegates supported the expansion of efforts to make this happen.

The challenges facing working people are significant, but so is the collective strength of workers acting together. The AFL-CIO Convention made clear that the Labor Movement is not standing still in the face of economic change, technological disruption, or political attacks on workers' rights. It is organizing, growing, and advancing an agenda that puts working families first.

Whether the fight is for stronger labor laws, a fair voice on the job, protection from workplace abuses, or the right to organize free from intimidation, progress depends on workers and allies remaining engaged. The Labor Movement has always been at its strongest when working people refuse to accept the status quo and instead demand a better future. The work continues, and so does the opportunity to build a stronger voice for workers across North America.