

# *Winning for Working Families*

**Recommendations from the  
Officers of the AFL-CIO  
for Uniting and Strengthening  
the Union Movement**

**April 2005**

# A Call for Change

**I**N AUGUST 2004, President Sweeney told the AFL-CIO Executive Council that following the presidential election the AFL-CIO would begin a process of “evaluating where we are as a labor movement, the challenges we face and how we need to respond for America’s workers and their families.”

Three months later, after the defeat of John Kerry, it was clear the need for such a response was more urgent than ever. Despite renewed organizing vigor among an increasing number of affiliates and an unprecedented unified political mobilization effort, our movement’s failure to grow had clearly contributed to the inability to put a friend of working families in the White House.

America’s union movement needed to make some big changes, and the AFL-CIO needed to lead the way.

It had been nearly 50 years since the merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations created the modern AFL-CIO and united 135 unions. For decades following the merger, the basic functions of the federation changed little. The federation focused on legislation, public policy and the political efforts needed to advance the voice of working people at the national level. State and local arms of the AFL-CIO performed similar responsibilities at those levels.

The federation played no significant role in the core responsibilities of national unions—bargaining contracts, representing workers on the job and recruiting new members. When unions needed to interact and coordinate their efforts in these areas, the AFL-CIO established trade and industrial departments (some of which have been disbanded since then).

The AFL-CIO influenced public policy on a broad scale and was the key partner in a progressive coalition that fought for and won landmark legislative goals.

In 1995, with the election of the current executive officers, the AFL-CIO was turned in a new direction. President Sweeney stated bluntly that the federation, up to that point, had been created and maintained to *wield* power. What was needed now was an organization that could also *build* power—America’s working families were under attack as never before, and the American labor movement had to respond as never before.

**In August 2004, President Sweeney announced a process of ‘evaluating where we are as a labor movement, the challenges we face and how we need to respond for America’s workers and their families.’**

**The rebuilt political program grew more effective. Union household voter turnout was increased by more than 4 million between 1996 and 2000.**

Deregulation, privatization and corporate-driven global trade rules were destroying good jobs and replacing them with low-wage, low-skill contingent work. Employers had learned how to break strikes using permanent replacements and how to circumvent labor laws to thwart union organizing campaigns. Labor union membership had declined from a high of 33 percent of the workforce at the time of the merger to less than 15 percent.

The AFL-CIO set about to build the capacity needed to renew the power of American labor (see Major Changes in the AFL-CIO, 1996–2005, page 18). The Sweeney administration introduced new initiatives and developed new strategies. The federation began to move more resources into the support of national union organizing efforts and expanding and improving its program for political action. A new capital strategies program was launched to harness the power of workers' retirement savings. New fights were mounted against the tidal wave of globalization that was swamping America's industrial sector and sending good jobs overseas. The federation undertook new outreach to women, people of color, immigrant workers and students, initiated new programs for reaching out to the public through the media and began a combined public education and legislative effort to restore workers' freedom to form unions.

Each of these strategies and new initiatives saw some success, and together they kept the American labor movement in the center of important national debates.

The rebuilt political program grew more effective. In 2000, voters from union households represented 26 percent of the overall vote—compared with 23 percent in 1996 and 19 percent in 1992—with even higher proportions in key battleground states. Despite declining union density, union household voter turnout was increased by more than 4 million between 1996 and 2000, and 93 percent of members surveyed said they had received information from their union about the elections.

But the narrow losses of Al Gore in 2000 and John Kerry in 2004 made it plain that the American labor movement's growing political effectiveness could not compensate for its loss of membership density.

When George W. Bush assumed the presidency, he declared war on working families and our unions through crippling executive orders. His tax breaks for the wealthy widened our wage and wealth gap, destroyed our federal budget surplus and decimated programs for working families and the poor. Bush sided with his friends in corporate America, whose policy agenda of labor market "flexibility," unfair trade and disdain for workers' rights already was choking working people. Job loss in heavily unionized industries exploded, and America hemorrhaged 2.8 million manufacturing jobs. Key industrial unions suffered large-scale membership declines, and other unions struggled to hold even.

Despite these odds, nearly 4 million workers joined AFL-CIO unions in 1996 through 2004. As a proportion of the workforce, though, union membership continued to decline. The membership of AFL-CIO unions remained steady at about 13 million over the nine-year period, but that was no more than we had at the time of the merger.

Today, the AFL-CIO remains the core of the American labor movement, a broad federation of 57 diverse national unions, many of which did not even exist at the time of the merger in 1955.

As a movement, we have great power and potential to improve the lives of working families and effect social and economic justice.

But the voice of working families continues to diminish in our workplaces, our communities, our government and the global economy. And the situation of workers and their families is urgent: Wages are shrinking; dependable, defined-benefit pensions are being replaced with shaky 401(k) plans or nothing at all; health care costs are crushing and nearly 47 million Americans, most of them workers and their families, are without any health insurance at all.

## **Principles for Change**

In November, President Sweeney asked every union member, every national union, constituency group and allied organization to identify issues they felt should be addressed and make proposals for meeting our challenges and fostering union movement growth. He insisted that any and all ideas and proposals be guided by three basic principles:

1. Respect for the democratic rights of union members,
2. Realization that we must invest in our future and
3. Recognition that in the face of virulent attacks on working people and unions, unity and collective action are needed now more than ever.

The response was incredible—23 extensive proposals came from national unions, 40 from state federations and central labor councils, three from AFL-CIO trade departments, five from constituency groups, two from Executive Council committees, two from community partner organizations and 20 from academics and other individuals. Through an open website ([www.aflcio.org/ourfuture](http://www.aflcio.org/ourfuture)), rank-and-file union members submitted nearly 7,000 comments and recommendations.

The proposals and comments are revealing not only for their ideas—which are creative and extensive—but for their broadly shared confidence in and commitment to a strong, active, responsive, principled and united union movement. Recurrent in them are clear calls for putting more emphasis on organizing and for mobilizing union members to impact legislative decisions at all levels of

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government, to hold elected officials accountable to the needs of the working families who elected them and to boot anti-worker politicians from office.

In March of 2005, the AFL-CIO Executive Committee took an initial step toward that goal by directing that the federation prioritize the interconnected goals of organizing and political and legislative mobilization.

As officers of the AFL-CIO, we're taking another step with "Winning for Working Families," which lays out our proposals for dramatically increasing the level of organizing throughout our movement, creating a more powerful voice at all levels of government and putting into action many of the ideas submitted over the past five months.

We will take detailed recommendations for implementing the proposals in "Winning for Working Families" to our federation's Executive Council, and many of them will be deliberated and refined by Executive Council committees as we move toward the AFL-CIO Biennial Convention. We continue to invite comment from every corner of our movement and beyond.

Our goal is clear: We must rebuild our movement to create a stronger voice and a better future for working people. We must restore respect for work and rewards for workers in America. And doing that will take building not just strong individual unions, but a strong, nationwide movement—united, principled and active.

Much has changed over the past 50 years. The values that make us a movement have not. We must be bold and creative and tough and strategic. But without solidarity, there can be no justice and no hope for a better future.

We not only hope—we know—we can build a stronger future for working families if we do it together.



John J. Sweeney  
President



Richard L. Trumka  
Secretary-Treasurer



Linda Chavez-Thompson  
Executive Vice President

# Winning for Working Families

**REBUILDING THE STRENGTH** of our union movement requires broad changes at every level. We must better communicate who we are and what we stand for with actions as well as words. We must integrate strategies for meeting the challenges of the global economy into every aspect of our work. We must help workers form unions in new ways. We must expand our outreach in many directions, from forming campus coalitions to working more effectively with community allies. We must build aggressively on strong initiatives such as the remarkable work of our new community affiliate, Working America, and our increasingly successful joint efforts to build power for working families in the capital markets.

The proposals on the pages that follow are anchored by our belief that to restore the strength of our movement and win for working families, we must focus sharply on two interdependent goals: helping affiliated unions organize and engaging working people in deeper, broader, ongoing mobilization to win legislative and political gains that build a better future.

We reject the notion that we should concentrate on one of these paramount goals at the sacrifice of the other. We cannot win the policy debates and political contests challenging us without growth. Just as clearly, we cannot grow as fast as we must unless we continue to fight for and win a new, more hospitable, progressive political environment.

Moving resources and focus to these two goals demands we do less in some other areas, and we are reorganizing our staff and budget to meet that demand.

“Winning for Working Families” does not discuss every important area of current work—for example, it does not cover our capital stewardship program, which remains a top priority. Neither does it cover every area of change we are exploring. Other very important ideas and proposals—including efforts to educate new members and the public about our union movement—deserve aggressive attention, and we will work with Executive Council committees to pursue them.

We all must be clear: The challenges facing America’s working families and our unions will not be met solely by changing the structure and programs of the AFL-CIO—no matter how significant the changes. The resources that fuel our federation represent only 1 percent of the dollars our members pay in dues.

**We cannot win the policy debates and political contests challenging us without growth. Just as clearly, we cannot grow as fast as we must unless we continue to fight for and win a new, more hospitable, progressive political environment.**

**We challenge each of our affiliates to join together in a constant process of change to build power for our members and all of America's workers. We intend to lead, stimulate and support that work.**

Many of our affiliates already are taking steps to change and strengthen their organizations; they should join in leading and supporting others to do likewise to build a stronger movement. We challenge each of our affiliates to join together in a constant process of change to build power for our members and all of America's workers. We intend to lead, stimulate and support that work.

# Changing to Organize and Grow

**WE MUST INCREASE THE SIZE OF OUR MEMBERSHIP** and restore union density—especially in key industries—or no other strategies to strengthen our movement will work.

Although more unions are investing resources in organizing than ever before, too few are investing at the target level of 30 percent or more of their overall budgets. And too few are investing sufficiently in growth within their core industries or in ways that build strategic power for workers in specific markets or states.

The role of the AFL-CIO over the past nine years has been to help recruit and train organizers, to provide grants and assistance to help affiliates develop their organizing programs and to build support for legal and regulatory reform through our campaign to guarantee the freedom of every worker to gain a Voice@Work.

While those approaches have been helpful to dozens of unions, they have not been adequate to produce the major investments in strategic organizing that are necessary to make our movement grow and build power for workers.

An investment in organizing of 30 percent from AFL-CIO affiliated unions would result in annual resources for organizing of \$500 million per year from the national union level alone. Even in the tough current environment, an investment on that scale would restore workers' voice and unions' strength. Where unions have met the 30 percent standard and worked to develop strategic capacity for organizing—recruiting and training organizers, conducting strategic research and helping workers in their core industries organize—they have made a real difference in workers' lives.

Our goal is to move more resources into organizing; reorder our efforts so the federation does not duplicate the organizing responsibilities of individual unions but provides the greatest incentives, coordination and support to multiply strategic organizing; and create ways for unions to work cooperatively for consolidated strength in key industries.

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## **We propose to:**

**1 Increase the resources the AFL-CIO devotes to organizing and create a \$22.5 million STRATEGIC ORGANIZING FUND.** To encourage greater investment in organizing, up to two-thirds, or \$15 million, of the fund will be returned as rebates to the affiliates that have met high standards in changing their organizations to organize. With such scarce resources, any rebate program must ensure substantial investments in growth; only tough standards will do that. One-third, or \$7.5 million, will be allocated to assist strategic organizing campaigns by affiliates for drives of strategic importance to the entire labor movement, such as campaigns targeting Wal-Mart, Comcast, Federal Express, Toyota or a major public employer. The Organizing Committee and the Executive Council will establish criteria for the rebates and allocations. Applications for rebates will be reviewed by a panel of retired union presidents. The \$22.5 million fund represents an increase of nearly \$10 million in hard dollars over the current organizing fund.

**2 Continue to provide top-level assistance to national unions** in building strategic organizing programs as well as training for affiliate organizing staff, with a focus on developing lead and senior organizers.

**3 Create INDUSTRY COORDINATING COMMITTEES** in employment sectors where AFL-CIO unions have significant membership, with participation required. The committees will develop and implement global industry strategies to support organizing and bargaining. They will create joint strategic growth plans, establish joint bargaining programs and set up joint political and legislative programs designed to increase bargaining power and membership growth.

**4 Revise Articles XX and XXI of the AFL-CIO constitution** to reinforce the work of the Industry Coordinating Committees, promote cooperative organizing, recognize the varied approaches to organizing by different unions and encourage strategic organizing in areas, occupations, employers or industries where a union has a significant or dominant presence. We will ensure the vital dispute resolution system in Article XX does not place inflexible process considerations over the integrity of our representation of workers and our pursuit of the strongest possible contract standards in particular industries, areas and occupations. We will expand and modify the Strategic Campaign Registration Program to encourage unions to register more of their organizing campaigns.

**5 Encourage and actively facilitate voluntary mergers of unions,** especially those with common core jurisdictions, that will increase union bargaining power, contribute to the growth of the labor movement and improve the lives of America's workers.

**6 Expand the campaign to guarantee every worker the freedom to have a Voice@Work.** Nearly 60 percent of unorganized workers now say they would vote for a union if they could—a higher proportion than in any period of recent history. We will escalate our efforts to ensure their right to organize by building public and community support in the short term and changing our laws in the long term. We will build an army of frontline volunteers by extending education and mobilization training to 100,000 worksite stewards by 2008. We will expand the effort to educate elected officials and other opinion leaders about pervasive violations of this fundamental right and gain their support for collective bargaining rights in general and the Employee Free Choice Act in particular.

**7 Work to stop the Wal-Marting of good jobs by major corporations.** This will include a major global campaign to expose the greed of the world's largest employer and hold it to account, educate union members and communities about the hidden costs of Wal-Mart's practices and mobilize federation-wide support for the United Food and Commercial Workers union in its drive to protect good jobs from Wal-Martization.

**8 Build on the broad global reach of the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center** to increase support for connecting the struggles of workers in other countries and the work of affiliate organizing and bargaining campaigns with multinational employers here.

# Changing to Mobilize

**We must stay organized not just for elections but between elections, creating a permanent culture of activism.**

**OUR ABILITY TO CREATE GOOD JOBS**, ensure working families have health care and retirement security, defeat unfair trade agreements and improve and protect progressive public policies depends on effective, people-powered mobilization at the local, state and national levels. We cannot win advances for working people or restore the freedom of every worker to choose a union and bargain collectively until we transform the laws and the political environment in our country.

Over the past two years, we worked together through Labor 2004 to develop essential assets for an ongoing grassroots capacity. Now we must expand those assets to build lasting mobilization structures, rooted in our communities and relying heavily on our state and local labor movements. We must broaden, deepen and increase the activism and involvement of our members. We must stay organized not just for elections but *between* elections, creating a permanent culture of activism to defeat Social Security privatization, win quality health care for all, change the rules of the global marketplace and restore workers' freedom to form unions.

And we must adopt a longer-term, member-driven strategy focused on creating a progressive government that acts in the interests of working families—not only at the federal level, but in city halls and statehouses. We must expand what has worked and retool what has not worked. Together with the Political Committee, we must develop a detailed strategy that looks ahead not just to next year's elections or even the important presidential elections in three years, but to 2010 and beyond when we must influence the congressional redistricting that will create a new political landscape in 2012.

## **We propose to:**

**1 Move from a focus on biannual get-out-the-vote work to building a year-round, year-in-and-year-out capacity for informing and mobilizing union members**, including members of Working America, around legislative and public policy issues and for political action at all levels of government by:

- Integrating our local, state and national legislative fights with our political

mobilization and expanding our work with community allies to join the fights of union members with those of other working people at all levels.

- Working together with every national union as well as our state and local labor movements to identify tens of thousands of local union coordinators to lead worksite education and mobilization.
- Placing full-time campaign directors in key states and creating mobilization capacity in every state through joint planning and training, working with and through our state federations.

## **2 Develop and implement a long-term plan to create worker-friendly governing majorities by:**

- Leading an intensive campaign in union-dense states to consolidate and expand our strength to uproot anti-worker politicians from state legislatures, governorships, the U.S. Capitol and the White House; to turn back efforts to enact right-to-work-for-less and “paycheck deception” laws; and to create models for progressive governance.
- Building coalitions to roll back right-to-work laws in states such as Iowa and Nevada.
- Working together with our constituency groups, assisting and strengthening efforts to mobilize people of color, especially in Southern states, and to build stronger coalitions with the Latino community.
- Encouraging more ballot initiatives that improve the lives of working people (such as minimum wage, living wage and health care initiatives) and bring more working people into the electoral process.
- Increasing our efforts to recruit, train and elect union members to local, state and federal public offices.

## **3 Build on the initial success of Working America, our new community affiliate, by:**

- Extending recruitment into five new states by the end of 2005, running full-scale recruitment drives in a dozen states and increasing the membership from 900,000 to 2 million by the end of 2006.
- Enlisting the support of Working America members for local legislative and election struggles, as well as national battles over Social Security, fair trade agreements, Medicare and Medicaid, the minimum wage and education funding.
- Engaging Working America members in fights for corporate accountability, including holding Wal-Mart accountable for its corporate behavior, and mobilizing their support for organizing and contract campaigns.

**4** **To resource this work, increase our Member Mobilization Fund for legislative and political action,** raising the amount of hard money for member mobilization by approximately \$7.5 million per year, with no increase in current per capita taxes. We must complete the job of stabilizing our funding for membership mobilization by making the current assessment passed by the General Board in 2002 permanent.

**The Member Mobilization Fund includes absolutely no contributions to political candidates.**

# Changing State and Local Union Movements

**WE CANNOT BUILD THE MOBILIZATION CAPACITY** we need without strong labor movements at the state and local levels. State and local labor movements are on the front lines of our grassroots political efforts and legislative campaigns. They build support for working families' issues by establishing strong and lasting alliances with community allies, and they are key spokespersons in the community and with local media for working families' issues and concerns. They provide crucial support to affiliated unions in organizing campaigns and contract fights.

One of the most important steps we can take to build a stronger movement is to dramatically improve the performance of our state and local labor organizations that have a primary responsibility for carrying out the programs of the AFL-CIO.

We must make sure our state and local labor movements have the resources and capability to carry out permanent mobilization and support workers who are organizing in their communities, that they focus their work on the labor movement's top priorities and that they function in the most effective, coordinated and accountable way possible. This will require significant reforms because while many state federations and central labor councils are high performers, others need major improvement.

Our proposals build on the recommendations of the special committee of state federation and central labor council leaders and the vote by the Executive Council in February to implement the recommendations from the council's Committee on State and Local Strategies.

## **We propose to:**

**1 Lead integrated strategic planning and budgeting in states to build adequately resourced, coordinated, effective organizations that can move the union movement's program.** The national AFL-CIO, state federations, central labor councils, national and local unions and constituency groups must all be represented in planning and implementation, and these efforts must be supported by all levels of the labor movement.

**2 Set performance benchmarks and standards for state and local labor movements,** and step in to enforce these standards as needed to ensure effective performance.

**One of the most important steps we can take to build a stronger movement is to dramatically improve the performance of our state and local labor organizations.**

**3** **Work to develop mechanisms to achieve full affiliation and funding** and to obtain the fullest possible participation by affiliated unions.

**4** **Reform the configuration and number of central labor councils** to create large metropolitan, area and regional bodies with sufficient capacity and resources to carry out an ambitious and aggressive mobilization program.

**5** **Expand leadership development efforts** and work with state and local labor movements to ensure diversity of representation at every level.

# Changing for Diversity and Democracy

**M**ANY OF THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED to the AFL-CIO addressed the necessity to work harder to develop leaders throughout our movement who reflect the diversity of our members. Others recommended ways to change the structure and policies of our governance to give our affiliates more democratic control over decisions being made. These ranged from suggestions for allocating responsibility and authority among leadership bodies to reflections about how to make governing body meetings more productive and efficient to ideas about how to provide opportunities for diverse representation in the leadership of the federation.

We must act decisively to expand leadership diversity *and* to strengthen democracy. We must create paths for the stewards and worksite mobilizers who will lead the renewal of the labor movement to become the union leaders of tomorrow. And we must structure our governance to allow our affiliates to have active involvement that will enrich decision making, facilitate communication and lead to the mutual accountability without which a successful, growing, unified movement is not possible.

## **To act on our commitment to diversity, we propose to:**

- 1 Increase training and leadership development** to ensure capacity and diversity at the national, state and local leadership and staff levels.
- 2 Accelerate our efforts to attract and recruit a diverse pool of young people** into the labor movement through Union Summer, as well as through enhanced public and media outreach.
- 3 Require that women and people of color are represented** in credentialed delegations to AFL-CIO conventions at least in proportion to their representation in the membership of their affiliated unions, and urge affiliates to include young workers as delegates.
- 4 Require the AFL-CIO Executive Council as well as state federations and central labor councils to develop plans to achieve targeted levels of diversity by the 2009 Convention.**

**We must act decisively to expand leadership diversity and to strengthen democracy.**

**5** **Ask affiliated national unions to sign a set of “diversity principles”** and provide for affiliated national unions to report annually on the representation of women and people of color in their membership as well as in leadership positions at all levels.

**To strengthen our governance,  
we propose to:**

**1** **Maintain the current size of the Executive Council** to ensure diversity in size of union, industry sector, race, ethnicity and gender. The Executive Council should meet four times a year, with three typically one-day meetings held at the National Labor College and a longer meeting in the winter. Meeting structure will be revised to ensure staff reports on pending issues and initiatives are sent to council members in advance and the meetings themselves are devoted to discussion and decisions on issues of major importance. We will use fewer standing committees and more ad hoc Executive Council committees to explore and make recommendations on specific issues and ideas.

**2** **Reduce the size of the AFL-CIO Executive Committee to 18** plus the president of the AFL-CIO, with the two other executive officers serving in an ex officio, nonvoting capacity. The largest 15 unions in size would have permanent seats and the AFL-CIO president would appoint three additional members from other unions for terms of one year to provide for broad representation. The Executive Committee will meet on a regular date every other month to provide guidance to the officers in setting priorities, conducting activities to meet overall goals and monitoring finances between meetings of the Executive Council.

**3** **Ask each member of the Executive Committee to appoint a high-level representative to a staff workgroup** that will meet monthly to keep Executive Committee members fully informed of major activities and pending decisions and to help set the agenda of Executive Committee meetings.

**4** **Expand the General Board to include four representatives of central labor councils and six representatives of AFL-CIO constituency groups**, in addition to the current membership of the presidents of all national unions as well as representatives of trade departments and state federations.

We look forward to continued discussion and debate on these important matters. The past five months have confirmed the value of open debate and constant self-examination. Literally hundreds of important ideas and innovations have been put forward. As a movement, we must continue to invite and listen to recommendations for changes in our labor movement that will help us change our nation and our world for the better.

# Major Changes in the AFL-CIO 1996–2005

Since the election of John Sweeney, Richard Trumka and Linda Chavez-Thompson, the AFL-CIO has worked to change and strengthen the labor movement to build a better future for working families. The following is a chronology of structural changes and major activities.

## 1996

- Created an AFL-CIO Organizing Department and merged the Organizing Institute into the federation.
- Began Union Summer to expose students and young workers to the union movement and engage them in social and union activism.
- Expanded and rebuilt the AFL-CIO political program to focus on membership issue education and mobilization; established the National Labor Political Training Center within the Political Department to provide ongoing membership political training.
- Created the AFL-CIO's first Working Women's Department.
- Launched an ***America Needs a Raise*** campaign, including nationwide town hall meetings to advocate higher living standards.
- Created a new Corporate Affairs Department to provide support for affiliate activities in bargaining, capital stewardship, workplace democracy and strategic research.
- Combined and streamlined many AFL-CIO programs and activities—particularly in education, policy, public affairs and international affairs—for greater efficiency.
- Reorganized the federation's communications activities and launched new AFL-CIO publications, including the weekly *Work in Progress* and monthly leadership publication *America@work*.
- Formed Committee 2000 to examine issues of AFL-CIO structure and governance, state federation and central labor council structure and financing, strategic organizing and bargaining, member benefits, associate membership and encouraging mergers within core jurisdictions.

## 1997

### Organizing

- Promoted a new “Organizing for Change, Changing to Organize” program through 14 regional organizing conferences with nearly 12,000 participants.
- The AFL-CIO Organizing Institute trained 1,200 new and potential organizers in its three-day training programs.
- The AFL-CIO Organizing Fund supported a massive campaign to organize strawberry workers; the Building Trades Organizing Project to help organize the Las Vegas construction industry; the Steelworkers campaign

on basic steel; the UNITE and SEIU campaign on South Florida health care; and the HERE victory at MGM in Las Vegas.

### **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- Derailed Fast Track trading authority through 800,000 phone bank calls, 750,000 postcards and hundreds of rallies drawing tens of thousands of activists.
- Defeated attack on workers' comp in Ohio and right-to-work proposals in Colorado, Montana, Oklahoma, Oregon, Washington and Guam.
- The National Labor Political Training Center conducted regional training programs and helped the Steelworkers and Machinists develop their own training sessions.
- Launched 2000 in 2000 initiative—a program to put 2,000 union members on ballots in two years.
- Began a grassroots National Issues Mobilization project and voter registration drive.

### **Global Economy**

- Launched a Common Sense Economics education program to help workers understand and act upon their economic interests.
- Created the popular AFL-CIO CEO PayWatch website.
- Mobilized members across the country and internationally in support of the Teamsters' UPS strike.

### **Capital Stewardship**

- Created a Center for Working Capital, a nonprofit organization to train pension fund trustees and managers to facilitate high-road investments that promote equitable long-term economic development.

### **Community Outreach**

- Built a network of 50,000 working women and held a first-ever working women's conference.
- Began a Union Cities program, which enrolled 115 central labor councils in 41 states, to build strong community labor councils; more than 30 labor councils formed Street Heat mobilization teams to support organizing and issue campaigns.
- Tested a television advertising campaign to redefine and reposition today's unions, educating the public about who we are and how we fight for working families.
- Launched Workers' Voice state legislative conference.
- Conducted the first Ask a Working Woman survey.
- Established the National Labor College, the nation's only labor college, which received full accreditation in 2004 and offers Bachelor of Arts degrees in seven major areas and more than 70 intensive, weeklong continuing education programs in organizing, union building and leadership development.

# 1998

### **Organizing**

- To advance "Changing to Organize," conducted two national and six regional Elected Leader Task Force retreats and intensive local-level work through Union Cities labor councils.
- The AFL-CIO Organizing Institute trained 1,400 potential organizers and 65 potential lead organizers.
- Provided assistance to six industry and four cooperative organizing campaigns.

### **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- Defeated California's Proposition 226 and other "paycheck deception" attempts.

- Defeated Fast Track and congressional attacks on wage and hour, safety and health, job classification and other protections for workers.
- Boosted union household voters to 23 percent in midterm election, with 71 percent voting for union-endorsed candidates.
- Provided training through the National Labor Political Training Center for members seeking elective office. Some 626 union candidates who ran for office in 1998 and 420 were elected or re-elected.

### **Capital Stewardship**

- Created a database cataloging workers' assets, supported affiliates' capital stewardship programs, doubled the number of shareholder resolutions filed and exposed corporate board of director conflicts.
- Launched the *Working Capital* newsletter and conducted a nationwide road show to share strategies for capital stewardship and high-road economic development with state federations and central labor councils.

### **Community Outreach**

- Held forums on women and Social Security and established the AFL-CIO as a leader on two issues of key concern to working women and their families: equal pay and child care.
- Held Full Participation conference as part of growing partnership with women and people of color.
- Created the Working for America Institute to bring together unions, employers, industry groups, community groups, academic and political leaders, foundations and government agencies to give workers a voice in their jobs and communities a voice in their economic development.

# 1999

### **Organizing**

- Created a Voice@Work campaign to shine a light on employer abuse of workers seeking to organize.
- The Executive Council enacted a strategic campaign registration program and adopted a policy to encourage strategic organizing in core jurisdictions.
- Assisted affiliate unions in expanding their ability to organize by conducting retreats for elected leaders engaged in the Change to Organize process and assisting affiliates in developing Change to Organize programs.
- The AFL-CIO Organizing Institute ran 39 multiunion organizer training programs, and with the George Meany Center provided lead organizer training to more than 200 organizers; trained more than 300 new organizers through field training and apprenticeships.
- Provided organizing assistance to the Maritime Trades unions' Gulf Coast mariners campaign as well as to workers organizing at the Los Angeles International Airport and Avondale shipyard workers.

### **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- Increased the number of political coordinators in the field to 1,400 and prepared them for extensive work on Labor 2000.
- Advocated a positive Working Families Agenda and led grassroots campaigns on strengthening Social Security and Medicare and the Patients' Bill of Rights and protected the OSHA ergonomics standard from congressional interference.
- Targeted 15 largely minority urban communities for intensive get-out-the-vote efforts.

### **Global Economy**

- Organized a massive World Trade Organization protest in Seattle by more than 30,000 activists that forced trade ministers to abandon efforts to come out of the meeting with new pro-capital, anti-worker trade rules.

- Built capacity to monitor, analyze and report on collective bargaining relationships and trends.

### **Capital Stewardship**

- Supported affiliate capital stewardship projects and launched a project to map and catalog global pension fund investment and governance. Designed and launched a range of shareholder initiatives aimed at director accountability.

### **Community Outreach**

- Provided communications training to 375 organizers from 90 local unions at regional Communicating to Organize conferences.
- Provided training for affiliates, state federations and local labor councils in communicating how unions benefit working families and their communities.
- Developed and launched a New Alliance plan to unify, restructure and strengthen the union movement in targeted states.
- Defeated “paycheck deception” attempts in 18 states and stopped right-to-work proposals in nine states.
- In 80 cities, 100,000 people participated in Labor in the Pulpits observances over the Labor Day weekend.
- In 100 communities, 12,000 union members participated in Voice@Work events.
- Facilitated thousands of Ask a Working Woman events, including 14 with such leaders as Vice President Al Gore and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

## **2000**

### **Organizing**

- Restructured the AFL-CIO Organizing Department to put increased focus on assisting affiliates with their national organizing priorities. Provided targeted organizing assistance to UAW campaigns, graduate teaching assistants trying to form unions, workers organizing at the San Francisco and Los Angeles airports and Delta Air Lines flight attendants.
- Launched Seminary Summer program with 24 interns to help support organizing campaigns.
- Conducted *7 Days in June*, on behalf of the Voice@Work campaign, in which thousands of activists participated in nearly 200 events spotlighting the obstacles workers face when they try to gain a voice at work.
- Helped affiliates organize by assisting them in development and implementation of Voice@Work strategies. In Milwaukee and San Francisco, Voice@Work strategies helped local labor councils win “labor peace” ordinances; the Cleveland AFL-CIO Federation of Labor and affiliates won more than 20 card-check agreements covering the CWA, HERE, OPEIU, SEIU and others; and at Allegheny General and Beaver Health Systems support from elected officials helped 2,000 registered nurses.

### **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- In November 2000, 4.1 million more union household voters turned out than in 1996. Union household members accounted for 26 percent of the vote and 93 percent of members surveyed said they had received information from their union about the elections.
- As part of the AFL-CIO Labor 2000 volunteer force, tens of thousands of working people knocked on doors, made phone calls, distributed literature and talked with co-workers.
- Through the AFL-CIO’s 2000 in 2000 program, more than 2,600 union members had gained elected office.
- Union activists ordered some 3.5 million worksite leaflets through the AFL-CIO Working Families Toolkit website, which allows local unions, state federations and local labor councils to customize issue and candidate fliers for their members. The online-leafleting system pioneered by the AFL-CIO has been adopted by affiliates.

## **Global Economy**

- Led the Campaign for Global Fairness in which AFL-CIO and coalition partners put the issues of workers' rights, environmental protection, sustainable development and democracy on the table of the globalization debate.
- Working for America Institute identified and studied high-road partnerships working to convert low-wage jobs into high-paying, family-sustaining jobs and worked to generate a steady supply of highly skilled workers to fill these jobs.
- Played an active role in major bargaining successes with General Electric, Boeing, the Seattle newspapers and the advertising industry struck by SAG and AFTRA.

## **Community Outreach**

- Created the Union Community Fund to enable union members to help shape their communities through charitable giving.
- Conducted a series of forums collecting testimony about the lives and working conditions of immigrant workers in this country.

# 2001

## **Administrative**

- Reorganized and reduced the size of AFL-CIO staff from 500 to 450 while placing added emphasis on politics, issue mobilization and organizing.

## **Organizing**

- Adopted a plan at the 2001 Convention to expand organizing by encouraging more investment at every level of the union movement, using knowledge and relationships in new ways for growth and changing the environment in which we organize.
- Integrated the AFL-CIO Center for Strategic Research into the Organizing Department to train union researchers dedicated to conducting strategic corporate research to support organizing. The center conducted two trainings a year with an average of 40 affiliate staff members.

## **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- Worked on Capitol Hill and in communities to mitigate for working families the economic aftershocks of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.
- Recruited worksite coordinators for Labor 2002 from national and local unions and reallocated federation staff to dedicate 20 field staff members to full-time member mobilization work.
- Building on 2000 in 2000, established Target 5000, the AFL-CIO's effort to train and assist union member candidates and see 5,000 of them in office over the next few election cycles.

## **Community Outreach**

- Created the Alliance for Retired Americans to provide an effective political and legislative voice for 3 million union retirees.
- Hosted first AFL-CIO Work & Family Conference aimed at highlighting best practices and building momentum for bargaining and policymaking around issues such as control over work hours.
- Unions and union members contributed more than \$3 million to the Union Community Fund's special Sept. 11 Fund to help community groups meet the needs of families that lost members and jobs because of the terrorist attacks.

- The Working for America Institute and the AFL-CIO community services network helped create and operate one-stop centers and employment centers in New York, Washington, D.C., Syracuse, N.Y., Las Vegas, Boston and Chicago.
- Some 800 congregations in 160 cities participated in Labor in the Pulpits, delivering the union message to more than 150,000 people of faith.

# 2002

## **Organizing**

- Created “partnership agreements” with national unions to which the federation provided “change to organize” guidance, capacity-building assistance and other support for strategic research, communications and building community and political backing for organizing campaigns.
- Dedicated 25 additional federation staff members to organizing support.
- Launched Law Student Union Summer.

## **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- Through Labor 2002 member-to-member outreach, contacted more union members than ever in a midterm election. In battleground Senate races, 72 percent of union members voted for the Democratic candidate, with similar results in U.S. House races.
- Launched “No More Business As Usual” national days of action in 100 cities, demanding candidates for public office take a stand against corporate greed and for working families.
- The AFL-CIO General Board voted to increase the assessment and to fund ongoing union member education, voter registration and mobilization around working family issues.
- Through the George Meany Center, established the Institute for Political Leadership so union members can polish their political skills.

## **Global Economy**

- Led a national effort for major corporate reform and measures to increase corporate accountability in light of the Enron and WorldCom scandals.
- Expanded the Global Fairness Campaign to work with unions around the world to inject the voices of workers into the debates on global trade and financial institutions, while working for assistance for developing countries in the forms of debt relief and public health aid to fight HIV/AIDS globally.
- Restructured the Corporate Affairs Department to include a Center for Bargaining and a Center for Strategic Campaigns.
- With affiliated unions, established the Industrial Union Council to revitalize manufacturing through joint strategies for creating and maintaining manufacturing jobs.

## **Capital Stewardship**

- Worked for financial relief for Enron and WorldCom workers left jobless and without health or retirement protection as the companies failed; led efforts to win severance packages in bankruptcy courts, unseat corporate directors and strengthen oversight of corporate accounting practices.

## **Community Outreach**

- Implemented new leadership development training for central labor councils and developed similar programs for state federations, working with the George Meany Center and National Labor College.

# 2003

## **Administrative**

- Reduced administrative costs from 26 percent to 21 percent over three budget cycles.
- Reduced staff overall by 6.5 percent; between 2000 and 2005, AFL-CIO reduced staff from 515 to 421, an 18 percent reduction.

## **Voice@Work**

- Spearheaded Dec. 10, National Day of Action, in which more than 35,000 worker-activists gathered in 90 events—from teach-ins to rallies and marches—in 37 states. Dec. 10 commemorates the 1948 ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Developed a Voice@Work member education and mobilization workshop available in multiple formats; trained 122 activists and staff from AFL-CIO and affiliates as trainers; put 3,000 people from 22 affiliates through the workshop by November 2003.
- Held extensive briefings for members of Congress and presidential candidates on why workers want unions and what employers do to block their success. Six Democratic presidential candidates participated in AFL-CIO-organized roundtable discussions with workers to hear stories about employer interference with organizing and card-check recognition as an alternative.
- Worked to gain congressional co-sponsors for the Employee Free Choice Act introduced Nov. 13, 2003; over a year the measure gained 210 co-sponsors in the House and more than 30 in the Senate.

## **Organizing**

- Increased direct expenses for organizing support from 22 percent to 24 percent of AFL-CIO budget.
- Established 18 partnership agreements that delineated the financial and in-kind resources the federation would provide to organizing, including support for national or comprehensive campaigns to increase union density within core industries.
- Placed 100 new organizers with affiliate unions through the Organizing Institute, which offered a lead organizer training model, developed a Member Organizer Training Program and engaged affiliates in developing a complete volunteer organizer program. Twenty-five affiliates utilized one or more AFL-CIO Organizing Institute programs.
- Dedicated 25 additional full-time staff members to support affiliate organizing in the field.

## **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- In working family issues fights, generated more than 1.5 million e-mail and fax messages, 48,000 phone calls and more than 100 in-state lobby visits to members of Congress; distributed 379,000 postcards; collected 415,000 signatures on online and print petitions; and produced customizable worksite fliers that more than 655 union locals downloaded from the Working Families Toolkit.
- On the Medicare drug issue, AFL-CIO and the Alliance for Retired Americans generated more than 100,000 faxes, 31,000 phone calls and 90 in-state visits to members of Congress; produced customizable worksite fliers that more than 89 union locals downloaded; and ran television spots on CNN nationally.
- Working Families Network online e-mail activist program included 24 national unions and hundreds of their locals and 80 state federations, central labor councils and other union organizations, with nearly 1.5 million union activists joining the network. Fifty million e-mail messages were sent through the network resulting in some 7 million faxes and e-mails to more than 2,000 campaign targets. In 2003, the AFL-CIO tested the network's fundraising performance and within days, generated more than \$100,000 in donations to support striking UFCW grocery workers. By the end of the strike, donations grew to \$269,000.

- Launched swing voter targeting initiative for the upcoming presidential election. Virtual Targeting, an intricate statistical analysis of survey, targeting, demographic and publicly available consumer data, was used to identify groups of people likely to be swing voters.
- Conducted the first national Presidential Forum, which drew all nine Democratic presidential candidates; published and distributed, in print and online, responses to a presidential candidate questionnaire.
- The AFL-CIO Health and Safety Department secured more than \$5 million in training funds for union programs for fiscal year 2004; and with the Legislative and Legal departments and more than 30 unions, developed labor's legislative proposals and lobbying for federal legislation to ensure fair compensation for the 1.5 million expected future victims of asbestos disease.
- Hosted Workers' Voice State Legislative Conference, which included 160 participants from 37 state federations, 14 affiliates, six allied organizations and several union-friendly state legislators as part of state-level legislative work.
- Defeated 14 of 15 "paycheck deception" and right-to-work-for-less measures in states.
- Expanded network of pro-worker state legislators through the National Labor Caucus of State Legislators, which now has 535 members, including at least 152 union members.
- Provided Economic Richter Scale reports for every state on unemployment, jobs, poverty, health care coverage, household incomes and bankruptcy rates.

### **Global Economy**

- Coordinated union participation in a 20,000-strong march and rally in Miami to stop the Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement.
- Held the first Industrial Union Council legislative conference in Washington, D.C., with more than 3,700 delegates discussing strategies to restore manufacturing and visiting members of Congress.

### **Capital Stewardship**

- Working through the Office of Investment and the AFL-CIO Center for Working Capital, affiliated pension funds in 2003 sponsored 380 corporate governance resolutions at the top 100 companies. The department continued to develop standards for worker capital and disseminates them through the *AFL-CIO Proxy Voting Guidelines*, *Key Vote Survey* and *Investment Product Review*.

### **Community Outreach**

- Launched WORKING AMERICA, a community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, which since then has recruited 800,000 members in four states.
- Assisted in the massive Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride.
- Convened three regional conferences on Health Care Bargaining and Policy to share with trade unionists the challenges unions face in bargaining and to strategize solutions.
- Launched State Federation Partner Program in which six experienced state federation presidents mentor six newly elected colleagues.
- Moved functions of the AFL-CIO Education Department to George Meany Center-National Labor College and worked with 15 unions and the AFL-CIO to develop curricula.

# 2004

## **Organizing**

- Assisted union affiliates in major campaigns, including Teamsters for 3,330 customer service representatives at America West; UAW for 1,000 workers at Thomas Built Buses in North Carolina; AFT for 2,000 graduate employees at the University of Illinois-Chicago campus; HERE for 600 hotel workers at the Houston Hilton; Ironworkers for 1,000 workers at J.D. Steel; and many smaller campaigns, including the Teamsters' campaign at DHL Package Delivery.
- Recruited and trained 300 organizers through the Organizing Institute, which emphasized training workers of color by running Spanish-language trainings, trainings for students at historically black colleges and universities and trainings geared to lesbian and gay young people.

## **Legislative and Political Mobilization**

- Coordinated more than 225,000 union activist volunteers for voter education and outreach in Labor 2004. These volunteers contacted more than 90 percent of America's union members, knocking on 6 million doors and making more than 100 million phone calls. Volunteers handed out more than 32 million leaflets at worksites and neighborhoods, most of which were produced through the AFL-CIO Working Families Toolkit website. The AFL-CIO also mailed 30 million issues pamphlets to union members and AFL-CIO affiliated unions sent millions more.
- Reached hundreds of thousands of working family Internet activists who received nearly 15.6 million voter education e-mails as part of Labor 2004; mobilized online activists to send more than 1.6 million e-mail, mail and fax messages to the White House, Congress and Department of Labor between March 2003 and August 2004 in an effort to stop Bush's overtime pay take-away. The Working Families Network now has more than 3 million online participants.
- Coordinated a woman-to-woman letter-writing campaign in support of Sen. John Kerry that got nearly 5,000 handwritten letters to undecided union women voters in battleground states; generated 20,000 messages to Sen. Kerry and President Bush on issues of concern to working women as part of Working Women Vote activities.

## **Global Economy**

- Assisted 27 affiliates with international research on 40 strategic campaigns and worked with unions from 35 countries to address trade union and human rights violations. The International Affairs Department also organized three high-level briefings for Executive Council members on key geopolitical developments in Iraq, the Middle East and China.
- Led more than 3,000 members of industrial unions in meetings with members of Congress during the second Industrial Union Council legislative conference in Washington, D.C.

## **Capital Stewardship**

- Union-sponsored funds submitted a record 390 shareholder resolutions, representing 43 percent of all corporate governance proposals voted on in 2004. A majority of shareholders voted in favor of 46 union-sponsored fund resolutions. Union-sponsored funds also participated in a variety of high profile vote-no campaigns against underperforming directors.
- Supported a Securities and Exchange Commission proposal to allow shareholders to nominate their own director candidates. For the first time, mutual funds were also required to disclose their proxy votes as the result of an AFL-CIO-backed rulemaking. The Financial Accounting Standards Board moved to require the expensing of stock options, a reform long sought by the AFL-CIO.