

RESOLUTION 1

BUILDING WORKER POWER TO INCREASE THE PACE AND SCALE OF ORGANIZING

Submitted by the Committee on Organizing and the Executive Council

Workers in the United States are in crisis. For decades, employers have used illegal and legal tactics to stymie organizing efforts, resulting in stagnant wages, rising inequality, race and gender-based discrimination, a weakened labor movement and a democracy under attack. No problem we face is more serious than the need to make the promise of union membership a reality for unorganized workers.

To this end, delegates to the 2017 AFL-CIO Convention passed two resolutions on organizing: Resolution 4 (Organizing to Win Power for Working People), which called on the presidents of AFL-CIO-affiliated unions to devise a labor movementwide strategy for organizing, and Resolution 15 (AFL-CIO Prioritizing Organizing and Growth of Affiliate Unions—All in the Service of Helping Working People Organize).

Since 2017, under the leadership of AFL-CIO officers and Organizing Committee Chair Marc Perrone, presidents and organizing directors of unions representing workers across the economy have been coordinating on strategies to increase the scale and pace of organizing. We have:

- Launched the Presidents' Organizing Initiative in three pilot cities.
- Coordinated approaches and shared resources to support Amazon worker organizing.
- Shared strike strategies and launched a federation working group to support striking workers.
- Met to coordinate organizing assistance for workers in the South.

At the same time, the labor movement has faced renewed attacks on the freedom to engage in collective bargaining through the Supreme Court's *Janus* decision and "right

to work" legislation. Public sector union members countered these attacks by re-engaging with members and nonmembers in massive sign-up campaigns, and in the process inspired many private sector unions to do the same.

Simultaneously, worker militancy is on the rise. Strikes have increased, workers in new industries are organizing, workers from fast food to high tech are engaging in protest, and public approval of unions is at a 50-year high. The COVID-19 pandemic and the racial justice reckoning that the country has experienced have laid bare the lack of faith so many Americans feel in their institutions. All of these trends have set the table for an organizing revival.

The AFL-CIO therefore resolves to do the following:

- Call on union presidents to continue to meet to develop unity around a labor movementwide strategy to increase the scale and pace of organizing in order to make the promise of union membership a reality for unorganized workers.
- Prioritize worker organizing in all of our activities. Political campaigns, policy initiatives, digital and data strategies, international alliances, health and safety, and legal work will be in support of the organizing mission of AFL-CIO-affiliated unions.
- Nurture worker activism, especially among young workers, women, Black and Indigenous workers and people of color, Southerners and workers in emerging sectors, including renewables and high tech.
- Forge partnerships with allies (community, environmental, immigrant rights, racial justice, women's, LGBTQ+, workers' rights and religious) to find areas of mutual interest and ways we can support our common goals to advance justice for all working people.
- Build the case for the Protecting the Right to Organize

(PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act by engaging more workers in active organizing campaigns.

- Encourage maximum solidarity with the growing number of workers who are choosing to strike, including in union recognition campaigns, and the maintenance of strong strike funds and solidarity funds to support striking workers.
- Encourage the entire labor movement to continue working together in multiunion efforts to build on recent organizing campaigns, including at Amazon.
- Call on the leadership of nonprofits and other organizations that espouse the labor movement's values to support the efforts of their employees to organize without reservation, and support the efforts of their workers to organize, bargain collectively and negotiate first contracts without spending resources on union-busting law firms or consultants.