



SOLIDARITY

In The Sunshine

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HISTORY IN THE MAKING! Florida's Labor Movement Approves New Alliance



Alliance plan. The restructuring was overwhelmingly approved by almost 99% of all of Florida's affiliated local unions.

The challenges facing the labor movement nationally and in the state demand that significant changes be made immediately so a stronger, more effective and more unified Florida labor movement emerges. The New Alliance process will create a labor movement that more clearly aligns the work of the Florida AFL-CIO and the central labor councils with the priorities of the national AFL-CIO and affiliated unions. Union density has been declining for decades, and the labor movement is fractured at a time when we are most in need of unity and solidarity to face the challenges ahead. The disaffiliation from the AFL-CIO of several unions has diminished resources and capacity at the state and local levels. Consequently, it is critically important for the remaining AFL-CIO unions to fully participate in the state and local central bodies if we are to prevail on behalf of working families. If the Florida labor movement is to be successful in achieving economic and social justice for working fami-

lies, it is essential that we organize at a pace and scale that dramatically enhances our influence in the political and legislative arenas and increases our leverage at the bargaining table. We will organize, mobilize and expand our political power so working families will have a stronger voice in policy decisions made in Washington, D.C., in Tallahassee and in municipalities across the state.

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The New Alliance comprehensive program will entail:

- Biennial strategic planning and budgeting.
- Coordination of organizing and politics with affiliates.
- A unified political and legislative program—with clear requirements for political endorsement, a unified Candidate Questionnaire and voter registration program.
- Increased involvement in key primary elections.
- A statewide mobilization structure—with a CLC/zone level integration-mobilization coordinator in each zone; political, legislative, issue, and/or organizing campaigns; response to community; and mobilization of 1 percent of state's union membership.
- Expansion of communication systems, using the local union activists database, blast faxes and phone banks and the full integration of Working America, the AFL-CIO's community affiliate program.

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Get the Tools You Need on the Working Families Toolkit!

Well, it is that time again; the 2006 Mid-Term Elections are upon us. Florida's union members are some of the most civically engaged, politically active people around, but in order for our members to spread the word about our issues and our endorsed candidates, we need some tools to help us out.

Has your union ever thought about doing a worksite leaflet event but didn't know where to get the information for the leaflets?

Ever wonder how your union can get those great looking flyers for mailing? Look no further than the AFL-CIO Working Families Toolkit. The Toolkit is an internet based resource that

allows you to customize candidate and issue campaign materials for distribution quickly and conveniently. All the research on the issues, the writing and design work are already done for you. All you have to do is add your specific local information and viola...professional looking campaign materials ready for you to distribute to your members. The AFL-CIO can even handle the printing for you at a nominal cost.

The AFL-CIO launched the toolkit for the 2004 Elections and it was a huge success. Now we are looking to expand the scope of this valuable resource by getting more union locals using the program.

Currently on the toolkit you can find materials about Senator Bill Nelson and his record, the flawed strong-mayor initiative in Miami, information about the FCAT based pay plan for our teachers and sign-in sheets for the ongoing petition campaigns across the state. Materials to educate our members about our opposition to Amendment 3 (the constitutional power grab) and other issue and candidate flyers are also in production.

Don't start this critical campaign season without the tools you need for your member. Visit the Working Families Toolkit today, set-up your personalized password and begin exploring the program today.

www.workingfamielstoolkit.com

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Save the Date – September 9th

We are currently preparing for what promises the biggest single electoral mobilization in the history of the Florida AFL-CIO. We are working to put 10,000 union members in communities across the state for a door to door neighborhood walk for labor's endorsed candidate in the 2006 Gubernatorial Race. All of our affiliates will be contacted in the weeks ahead about this historic event but for now...**SAVE THE DATE!**

GETTING READY FOR OUR BIG DAY!

In 1893 as the nation languished in the grip of severe economic depression, George Pullman, one of the worst villains in the history of labor relations was faced with declining profits as orders for his luxurious railroad passengers fell off. Pullman had created a disgraceful company town of Pullman, Illinois to house his factory and workers in 1880. The town was feudally organized, the workers operating as serfs to his lordship. Pullman owned the workers' housing, the company store and paid his workers in Pullman "script" drawn from the Pullman bank. As profits went down so did wages, but rents and food costs went up leaving the workers with almost nothing. With nothing else to lose, the workers walked out demanding lower rents and higher wages. The American Railway Union, led by a young Eugene V. Debs, came to the cause of the striking workers, and railroad workers across the nation boycotted trains carrying Pullman cars. The strike instantly became a national issue. President Grover Cleveland, faced with nervous railroad executives and interrupted mail trains, declared the strike a federal crime and deployed 12,000 troops to break the strike. Violence erupted, and two men were killed when U.S. deputy marshals fired on protesters in Kensington, near Chicago...the strike was doomed. The ARU was disbanded and the Pullman employees signed a pledge that they would never again unionize.

1894 was an election year and as protests erupted all over the country in response to Cleveland's harsh reaction to the Pullman Strike, Cleveland conceded to the growing demand for a day to celebrate the working men and women of America and President Cleveland signed the law creating Labor Day. In 1898, Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, called it "the day for which the toilers in past centuries looked forward, when their rights and their wrongs would be discussed...that the workers of our day may not only lay down their tools of labor for a holiday, but upon which they may touch shoulders in marching phalanx and feel the stronger for it."

Labor Day is a critical part of our heritage but too many Americans have come to view the holiday as nothing more than a day off for shopping at the mall. It is vital that we work to remind the nation what Labor Day is really all about...the celebration of a movement that has helped guide and shape this nation from the very beginning. This year, the Florida AFL-CIO is working to produce a calendar of events so that we can help promote them to the general public and to members of the media. We are asking all local unions and Central Labor Councils to send us information about their own Labor Day events to help us put this together. Please contact Rich Templin in our office to make sure that your event is included on the calendar at (850) 224-6926 or by email at templin@flafcio.org. Here is a preliminary listing of what we know right now, more details will be published once we get them.

Palm Beach/Treasure Coast CLC

Sunday, September 3rd - Labor Day picnic at Carlin Park on the Beach in Jupiter

Central Florida AFL-CIO

Saturday, Sept. 2nd—Monday, Sept. 4th, Daytona Beach
Labor Day Jazz Escape, City Island Park.

Sunday, September 3rd - Union Sponsored Poker Run

Monday, September 4th - Picnic & Barbeque
11:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m., Bethune Pointe Park, Daytona Beach
Rides for kids, Live music and lots of food!

West Central Florida Federation of Labor

Monday, Sept. 4 - Labor Day Celebration at the Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa
11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Broward AFL-CIO

Saturday, September 2nd - Annual Labor Ball

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In order to accomplish this, Florida's affiliated unions have approved a restructuring of our per-capita payment structures that will provide the State Federation and Central Labor Councils the resources they need to hire new staff and implement new programs to reach our goals. The plan will help increase affiliations at both the State and CLC levels so that our movement is more inclusive and more unified than ever before.

The restructuring and increase in resources will also enable our movement to make tremendous improvements in our communications and outreach programs, enabling us to build stronger connections to our communities and increase the diversity of our ranks.

This plan was created and approved by you, the constituent unions, and in the months ahead we all be working together to see that it is implemented. This is an incredible opportunity for all of us. This is truly a historic time and the work we will be doing will ensure that our children and grandchildren will have a movement of working people that they can be proud of.



Takin' it To the Streets...

Florida's labor movement will start hitting the pavement for our endorsed candidates in August and we need everyone on board. We are currently planning walks in three Congressional Districts for Saturday, August 11th. We will be spreading the word about three of our endorsed candidates throughout their districts. This will be a pivotal event in the Labor 2006 program. We need to announce our presence on this year's political stage with authority and the only way we can do that is with your help. Our opponents have the corporate power of deep pockets. We have the union power of thousands of engaged members and their families. Please help us in this effort by participating in these walks, regardless of where you live. Nothing like a little weekend road trip for democracy! The districts, candidates and contact information for the walk coordinators is listed below.

Congressional District 8 (Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola counties) – Candidate Charlie Stuart – Contact Carlos Carrillo (305) 607-0801

Congressional District 16 (Charlotte, Glades, Hendry, Highlands, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, St. Lucie counties) – Candidate Tim Mahoney – Contact Deborah Dion (305) 593-8886

Congressional District 22 (Broward, Palm Beach counties) – Candidate Ron Klein – Contact Deborah Dion (305) 593-8886



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