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Press Release

Restructuring and Staffing Changes at the Florida AFL-CIO

The 2010 mid-term elections made it clear that Florida's labor movement must increase its efforts to fully engage union members in every aspect of the legislative process. The way in which laws are made in Florida is far too insular and there are not enough working people fully aware of all of the political games and brinkmanship that shape the policies that impact their lives. The Florida AFL-CIO is re-structuring its legislative program with a new emphasis on mobilizing the grass-roots through increased education, outreach, field mobilization in the districts and dramatically increasing the presence of rank and file members in the halls of Florida's Capitol. An important part of this effort involves a reorganization of the Florida AFL-CIO's leadership staff in Tallahassee under the direction of President Mike Williams. **These changes will impact the ways in which members of the press connect with the Florida AFL-CIO to report on Labor's efforts to shape public policy to advance the needs and interests of our state's working families.** These staffing changes are as follows:

Rich Templin - Legislative and Political Director: Dr. Rich Templin has served as the Florida AFL-CIO's Communications Director for the past eight years. Templin has served as the primary press contact for the organization, managed the Florida AFL-CIO's internal communications systems connecting the over 500,000 union members in the state and served as one of the Florida AFL-CIO's lobbyists at the Capitol. Rich will now serve as the organization's point person for Labor's legislative and political programs, chief lobbyist and primary spokesperson.

Joshua Anijar – Communications Director: Josh has served as a field mobilization coordinator for the Florida AFL-CIO for the past four years. He started as the coordinator for the Tampa area before relocating to Orlando two years ago to oversee field operations for Central Florida. He holds a Master's in Labor Studies. Anijar will direct the state federation's internal and external communications programs and will be charged with handling all of the organization's media outreach. He will also assist with legislative lobbying as needed.

Phyllis Garrett – Legislative and Political Coordinator: Phyllis Garrett has worked with major affiliated unions representing public sector workers for the past eight years as the Florida AFL-CIO's Public Employee Division Director. A former classroom teacher, Garrett has worked as a lobbyist and policy analyst on budget and policy issues impacting the public sector workforce. In her new role as the Legislative and Political Coordinator, Garrett will oversee critical components of Labor's new grassroots lobbying program, manage legislative tracking for the organization and serve as a member of the lobbying team.

The Florida AFL-CIO has also created the new position of Political Field Director. This position will oversee a state wide field mobilization program that will connect union activists in every political district with the state federation's legislative program in Tallahassee. The Florida AFL-CIO's leadership is currently interviewing candidates for this position.

The Florida AFL-CIO is the state federation of over 550 local unions representing 500,000 workers and retirees from a wide range of trades and professions across the state.

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