

Approving a Permanent Charter for Working America**August 09, 2006****Chicago, IL**

Three years ago, the Executive Council approved and embraced the creation of Working America, a community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, in order to provide a vehicle for workers who do not enjoy the benefits of union representation at work to join the AFL-CIO as associate members and participate in the labor movement's policy and electoral advocacy on behalf of working families.

Since Working America's creation, this new directly affiliated local union has exceeded all expectations in terms of membership recruitment and mobilization on vitally important policy and electoral debates.

- ▶ More than 1.5 million members will have been recruited by Labor Day 2006. Two out of three people who are approached about membership choose to join.
- ▶ People who join Working America take action on issues. Working America action has been a decisive factor in fights to increase the minimum wage in Pennsylvania, protect Family and Medical Leave and pass a hospital levy in Washington State, protect tipped workers' pay in Oregon, preserve prevailing wage and union rights in Kentucky, qualify a minimum wage petition in Ohio, protect Social Security and much more.
- ▶ In some areas, Working America's concentration is substantial. For example, one out of ten voters in Ohio this year will be from a Working America household.
- ▶ Working America's communications program has a measurable impact on members' priorities. In elections in 2004 and 2005, nearly all undecided Working America members voted in favor of Working America's endorsed candidates, and members who were drop-off voters were more likely to vote by 20 points.
- ▶ Working America is able to support organizing efforts by the AFL-CIO's affiliates, and has worked with several affiliates in experimental programs.

The need to promote and build Working America is clear. Working families need a strong collective voice to fight for good jobs, health care, pension security, and the right to organize. Working America gives voice to millions of hard-working Americans who want to participate in these public debates, and the addition of these members strengthens the labor movement's ability to wage effective and successful campaigns on working family issues and candidates.

In view of Working America's remarkable achievements and Working America's importance to the labor movement, the Executive Council enthusiastically supports the establishment of Working America's charter on a permanent basis, in accordance with Article III, Section 4 of the AFL-CIO Constitution. Working America shall continue to follow appropriate protocols to protect against recruitment at homes of affiliates' members, and to ensure that independent unions are not permitted to join the organization or to affiliate their members with it. The President shall continue to have the authority to issue such rules governing Working America, its dues structure, and its per capita tax to the AFL-CIO as the President deems appropriate. In recognition of the fact that Working America is comprised solely of associate members who do not receive workplace representation by Working America, per capita tax to the AFL-CIO need not conform to the

amounts applicable to regular DALU members under Article XVI of the Constitution.

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