



A Union of Professionals

AFT and POLITICS

An Overview

2009 Higher Education Conference

March 4, 2009

Miami Beach, Florida





AFT's Political Action Decision-making Process

- Based on membership input through representational structure
- Policies and Procedures are set by:
 - Biennial Convention
 - AFT Executive Council
 - Program and Policy Councils



AFT's Political Action Decision-making Process

Endorsement considerations:

- Extensive polling of the membership
- The candidates' voting records on our issues
- The candidates' voting records on AFL-CIO and the labor movement
- Discussions with state and local leaders
- AFT issue questionnaire
- Face-to-face interviews or meetings with AFT leadership



AFT's Political Action Decision-making Process

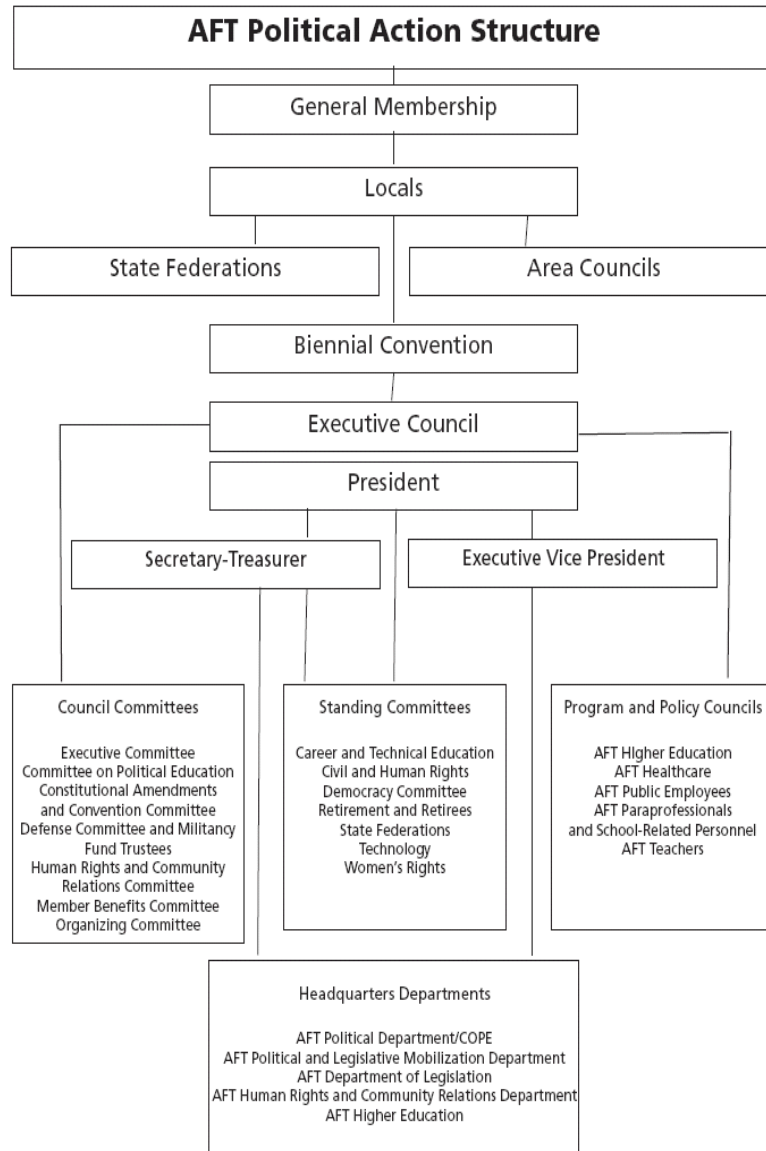
Local Endorsements (for money)

- Recommendations from state federations and locals
- Based on state/local endorsement process
- Authorizes AFT to make PAC contributions and educate members



AFT's Political Action Decision-making Process

- The AFT endorsement is a **recommendation** only, not a mandate.
- Members are free to support the candidate of their choice.





AFT Political and Legislative Mobilization Department

- Assists state federation/locals with
 - state political issues
 - state legislative action
 - redistricting concerns
 - political grassroots mobilization
- Assist in COPE fundraising.
- Assist in GOTV efforts for AFT endorsed candidates, legislative and ballot initiatives.



AFT Political and Legislative Mobilization Department

- Prepares talking points and briefing papers for AFT endorsed candidates and AFT officers.
- Assists state and local affiliates with political convention delegate selection



AFT Department of Legislation

- Represents AFT and its members on Capitol Hill.
- Lobbies Congress and the White House
- Educates and communicates with AFT leaders and members regarding federal legislation and the federal budget.



AFT Human Rights and Community Relations

- Serves as liaison to groups that are allies at the national and state level.
- Provides disaster relief.
- Assists in international human rights efforts.



At the State Level

- Research and recommend candidates for endorsement for federal office to the national AFT; join in endorsing selected candidates
- Run state federation political action committees, use funds to support candidates in state races
- Serve as a resource for local COPE/political action programs
- Coordinate local and state involvement in campaigns



At the State Level

- Serve as liaisons and coordinators to the labor community
- Lobby for members' issues and priorities in the state legislature and gubernatorial administrations.
- Educate elected officials and policymakers on the union's positions and key issues.
- Monitor politicians' performance and records on union issues.



At the Local Level

- Establish and raise COPE funds through voluntary checkoff.
- Use PIPE grants to endorse candidates in state and local races or for other political, legislative, or union activity.
- Mobilize members around elections, legislation, initiatives
- Educate and lobby local and state legislators and other officials on the union's goals, priorities and issues.



The AFT and the AFL-CIO

- **AFT Mission**

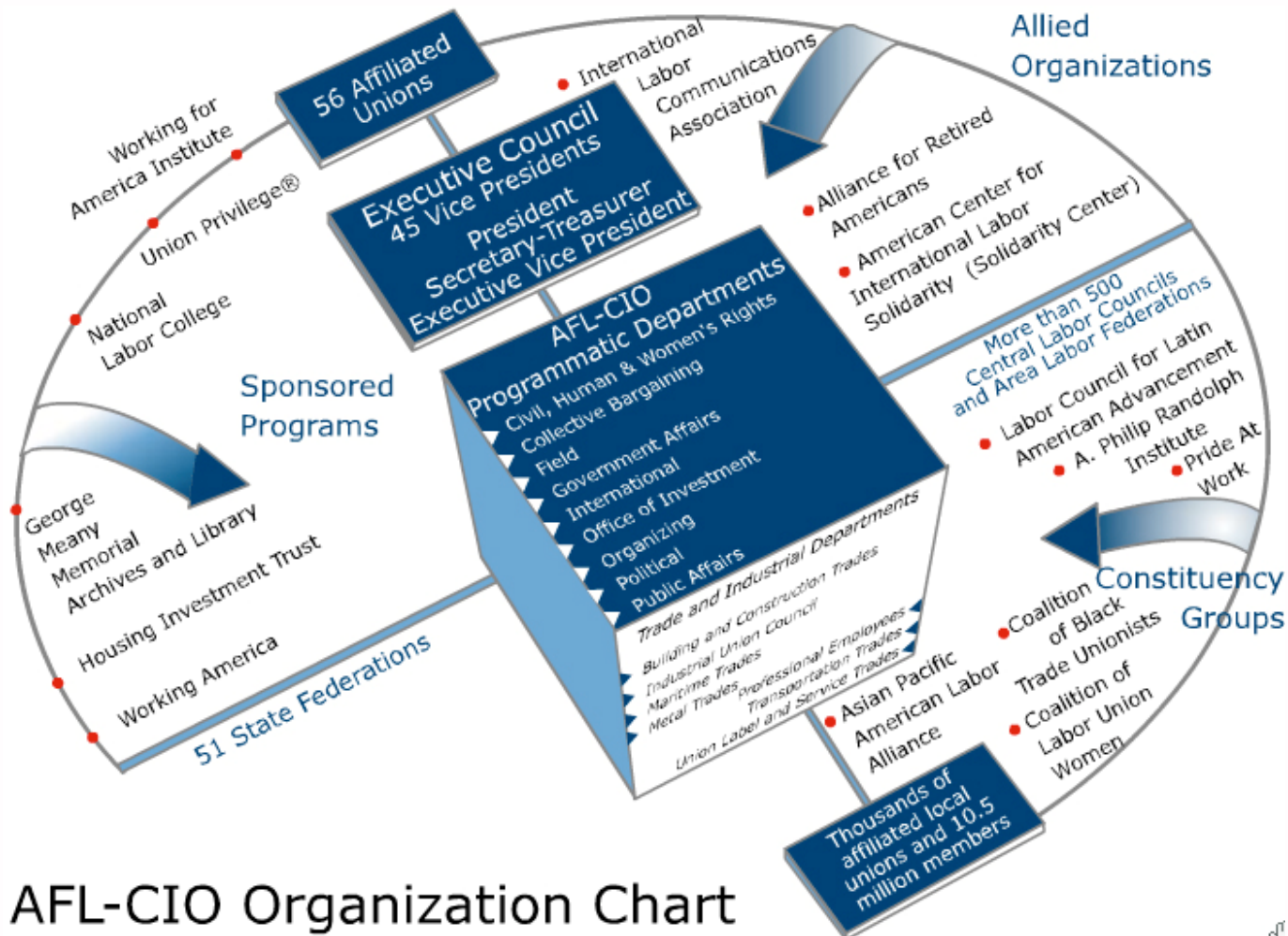
- Improve the lives of our members and families
- Give voice to our professional, economic and social aspirations
- Strengthen the institutions where we work
- Assist and support one another
- Promote democracy human rights and freedom

- **AFL-CIO Mission**

- To improve the lives of working families
- To bring economic justice to the workplace
- To bring social justice to our nation



AFL-CIO Organization Chart



AFL-CIO Organization Chart



QUESTIONS?