

Thank you for being a leader of our union.

This has been a year like never before, at least in modern history, so it's very important we gather together at AFT's 89th convention this summer, in Washington D.C. The convention represents the highest decision-making and agenda-setting authority of our union, where we set policy and elect the union's leadership. It is union democracy at work. We are looking forward to seeing you and your delegates in Washington.

When we gathered in Houston in July 2024, our final speaker of the convention was the woman we had hoped would be the next president of the United States. Our union worked hard to get out the vote, but the majority of the country voted for President Trump. I think it's been clear how the values and people we hold dear—public education and higher education, the labor movement, our democracy and with it our students, patients, families and communities, indeed the world—have felt the repercussions of that election every day.

The convention is the highest governing body of our union, but listening to the members is a 24/7 job. That's why in the last four months, we have held seven regional meetings attended by over 500 affiliates and thousands of members to chart the union's direction.

And chart they did. If you haven't seen our palm card, I encourage you to take a look now ["Fighting For A Better Life For All"](#). Together, we are continuing the fight for an affordable life not just for ourselves, but for all working people and their families. This should include a living wage, a secure retirement and decent healthcare; safe and welcoming schools and universities that enable the right to learn and to teach; healthcare as a right; a strengthened democracy; and a fair and growing economy. We have fought in the courts, the court of public opinion, the streets and the ballot box. We have joined with communities in big and small ways, including the No Kings movement. And as we just saw in Hungary, the 2026 and 2028 elections are pivotal—getting out the vote and ensuring they are free and fair are crucial.

And most important, we never give up. And we always have each other's backs. Although we do not always win, if we don't fight, we can't win.

At our meeting this past February, the officers and executive council considered the challenges and opportunities faced by the AFT and our state and local affiliates. We thought long and hard about how we can best support and advance our work.

The executive council has put forth a proposal for a modest per capita increase. You can see the actual language in the attached constitutional and bylaws proposals. Given our aggressive agenda—in the courts, the court of public opinion, and at the bargaining table and the ballot box, and faced with the realities of everything costing more—our goal was as minimal an increase as possible while still moving an agenda of building power for our members and their families and communities to secure a better life. We are proposing a 25 cent per month increase in September 2026 and another 25 cent increase in September 2027. Over the course of two years, this is a 2.4 percent increase over our current rate.

We don't make this proposal lightly. For those paying per capita at the full rate, that is \$3 the first year and another \$3 the second year. For our lower-wage members, that means \$1.50 for those at the half per capita level, 75 cents for the quarter per capita level and 37 cents for the eighth per capita level. As leaders in our states and locals, our executive council knows full well this is in addition to any increase that is needed by your local and state organization.

AFT Teachers  
AFT PSRP  
AFT Higher Education  
AFT Public Employees  
AFT Nurses and Health  
Professionals  
AFT Retirees

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## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 2026

The per capita proposal typically allocates portions of that increase to specific funds, and this year is no different. The September 2026 increase allocates 5 cents to the Militancy & Defense Fund and 5 cents to the Solidarity Fund, which finances our political work, leaving 15 cents to the General Fund. The September 2027 increase allocates another 5 cents to the Solidarity Fund, leaving 20 cents to the General Fund.

What are those funds?

The General Fund, which will increase by 40 cents over the course of two years, supports all of our organizing and negotiations support, as well as the professional issues, research, and communications programs and services we provide to affiliates and members. We have organized 163 new units representing 57,000 members since the last convention and are the fastest-growing union in the AFL-CIO. But organizing and achieving a first contract takes time and money. Sixty-eight of those 163 are still working on their first contract. Once chartered though, they will receive all the same services we provide to members in existing locals. Reaching strong union density is a constant battle and getting tougher every year, but it is one of the most important ways our members can see the power of a union.

The Militancy & Defense Fund is used to support our defense of members and their unions. It incorporates our legal defense fund and our strike fund; and it supports our proactive and defense work in the courts, such as our challenge to the administration's attempts to reverse every civil rights law affecting education. Court cases cost more than ever, and more of our locals are forced into strike actions; so, we draw on this fund even more than before.

The Solidarity Fund is the cornerstone of our union's political strength at every level. It supports our work in the field—from engaging members around key issues, to campaign support, to defeating dangerous ballot measures at the state and local levels. For that reason, in each year, 3 cents of the 5 cents will go to the national fund, and 2 cents will go to the state funds.

For the last 12 years, we have tried to hold the line, including no increase in eight of those years, and including no increase to the General Fund in seven of those 12 years. We did more with less. But now, with everything at stake, we must both fight back on all fronts, and fight for the future our members, our families and our communities deserve. Everything is on the line.

You will see some other potential amendments. The Washington Teachers' Union, Local 6, submitted the remainder of the amendments, which seek to change the way business is conducted at our convention.

All of these proposed amendments to the constitution and the bylaws will be the first official business the convention considers. None of it will happen without the vote of the delegates.

We can't wait to see you in Washington, D.C., in July. Thank you for all you do every day for our members, our communities, this union, and the people we serve.

In unity,



Randi Weingarten  
AFT President

## PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

*NOTE: Constitutional amendments must be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast. Bylaws are adopted by a majority vote. Underlined words indicate proposed new language. Lines through words indicate proposed deletions.*

### ARTICLE IX—Revenues (page 14)

1 **Section 1.** ~~Effective September 1, 2021, 95 cents and effective~~  
2 ~~September 1, 2023, \$1.00 of each member's per capita~~ Effective  
3 September 1, 2026 \$1.05 of each member's per capita shall be set aside  
4 for a joint AFT Militancy/Defense Fund. The executive council shall  
5 establish clear guidelines and procedures that guarantee that the benefits  
6 available through the fund shall be distributed on an equitable basis. Strike  
7 benefits shall not be provided unless the strike action is in conformity with  
8 the AFT strike policy. An annual financial report of the Militancy/Defense  
9 Fund shall be made to the AFT executive council and to the convention,  
10 the purpose of which shall be in part to ensure that there is an adequate  
11 reserve to pay anticipated strike benefits.

*Submitted by: AFT Executive Council*

## PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

### ARTICLE I—Special Rules of Order for Conventions (page 17)

1 **Section 3.** Limitations of speeches in debate shall be three minutes  
2 instead of 10 minutes as provided in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly*  
3 *Revised* unless time is extended by majority vote of the convention. The  
4 order of speeches, nor use of the mic, will be controlled by ushers nor the  
5 sergeant at arms, allowing the first person to get to the mic on the motion  
6 the opportunity to speak in compliance with the established rules. When  
7 applicable, an equal number of pro-con speakers shall be allowed.

*Submitted by: Washington Teachers Union, Local 6*

### ARTICLE V—Convention Committees (page 20)

1 **Section 6.** Credentialed members of the convention committee shall not  
2 be denied access while the committee is in session.

*Submitted by: Washington Teachers Union, Local 6*

## ARTICLE VIII—Per Capita, Budget and Audits (pages 21-22)

1 **Section 1.** (a) ~~Effective September 1, 2023, each local shall pay a per~~  
2 ~~capita tax of \$20.18 per month of which \$1.25 shall be dedicated to a~~  
3 ~~special AFT fund to engage members and to assist locals in crisis.~~  
4 ~~Effective September 1, 2025, each local shall pay a per capita tax of~~  
5 ~~\$20.43, of which \$1.25 shall be dedicated to a special AFT fund to engage~~  
6 ~~members and to assist locals in crisis. Effective September 1, 2026, each~~  
7 ~~local shall pay a per capita tax of \$20.68 of which \$1.25 shall be dedicated~~  
8 ~~to a special AFT fund to engage members and to assist locals in crisis.~~  
9 ~~Effective September 1, 2027, each local shall pay a per capita tax of~~  
10 ~~\$20.93, of which \$1.25 shall be dedicated to a special AFT fund to engage~~  
11 ~~members and to assist locals in crisis.~~ The national office shall pay back  
12 to the office of each state federation for each member of the state a per  
13 capita of 20 cents per month.

14 **Section 7.** ~~Effective September 1, 2023, \$2.80 and effective September 1,~~  
15 ~~2025, \$2.90 Effective September 1, 2026 \$2.95 and effective September~~  
16 ~~1, 2027 \$3.00~~ of each member's per capita tax shall be set aside each  
17 month in a special fund that will function to assist the AFT and its affiliates  
18 in participating in legislative and political activities with significant potential  
19 impact on members of the AFT and the institutions where they work. Such  
20 assistance shall be collected and utilized in accordance with the  
21 provisions of applicable state and federal law. The executive council will  
22 adopt guidelines to implement this provision, including the development of  
23 criteria and an application for assistance. Where a state affiliate has a  
24 fund that is approved by the AFT and similar to the Solidarity Fund, in that  
25 it functions to assist the affiliate in participating in legislative and political  
26 activities with significant potential impact on the members and the  
27 institutions where they work, then the AFT will pay effective ~~September 1,~~  
28 ~~2023, \$1.06 per member per month to be deposited in such similar state~~  
29 ~~fund. Effective September 1, 2025, \$1.09 September 1, 2026 \$1.11 per~~  
30 ~~member per month to be deposited in such similar state fund. Effective~~  
31 ~~September 1, 2027, \$1.13 per member per month to be deposited in such~~  
32 ~~similar state fund.~~

*Submitted by: AFT Executive Council*