

California AFL CIO convention: Major Solidarity for Cuba. Union Organizing Efforts.

By Mark Friedman, International Association of Machinists Local 1484, LA Hands-Off Cuba Committee,

International coverage of CA AFL-CIO RESOLUTION against Cuba on SSOT. <https://www.prensa-latina.cu/2024/07/18/exigen-sindicatos-en-california-retirar-a-cuba-de-lista-terrorista/>

With more than 700 delegates, attending and representing 2.3 million workers in nearly 2,000 different union locals throughout the state of California, the convention unanimously passed a resolution demanding that Washington remove Cuba from its notorious list of terrorist nations (SSOT).

The team working on getting this resolution passed included, Tom Brandon, leader of the California Conference of Machinists, Bill Camp of *Building Relations with Cuban Labor*, leadership of IAM local 1484 and activists in the *LA Hands-off Cuba committee*

The resolution comes after an important similar resolution was passed by the recent international convention of the International Longshoreman and Warehouseman's Union (ILWU) which also donated \$10,000 to the **Global Health Partners** campaign for pacemakers for Cuba.

This convention was preceded by the California Conference of Machinists, representing 17,000 machinists, which passed a similar resolution.

The concluding part of the significant California Labor Federation AFL-CIO resolution said:

“We strongly urge the international executive board of the national AFL-CIO to state their opposition to the inclusion of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism and, be it further resolved that the executive board of the national AFL-CIO forward a copy of this resolution to president Joe Biden and inform president Biden of the AFL-CIO's opposition to the inclusion of Cuba on the list of States Sponsors of Terrorism.”

The convention also reflected the changes taking place within the US Labor movement with the larger numbers of youth and diversity that represented many lower-paid workers now being organized throughout the state. A new wave of union organizing, not since seen since the end of World War II, is taking place throughout the United States.

One of the key speakers at the meeting was Shawn Fain, national president of the United Auto Workers (UAW) that recently won a successful nationwide strike. In his remarks he said:

“Our mission is to transform the UAW from a company union to a fighting union; the successes that we accomplished were a combination of the work of thousands and a labor movement that goes from the defense to the offense... what we need and the way to do this is through democratic unions. Our strike was about the frustration of working people on wages, healthcare, retirement insecurity and an effort to add dignity to our lives. We hit the corporate class and won, because we put union members in the driver's seat.”

A rousing speech was given by Sara Nelson representing the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) who reported on their central campaign to organize Delta Airlines. “When we use our power, we will take back our lives.” She reviewed the history of AFA fighting all discriminatory laws adding “today we are fighting for our planet... the attacks on women's rights are an attack on workers' rights.”

“We live in a system of capitalism does not give us shit about workers and if we don't take on the capitalists there will not be a world at all.”

“The overturning of Roe V. Wade which guaranteed abortion rights was political violence... the capitalists will find a way to fight us, to divide, distract, delay and demoralize. We should have gone out on a general strike when the railroad workers were ordered not to strike by the government. We need to help organize contract workers who are mostly immigrants and women. The labor movement is everyone with or without a union card and when we use our power everything changes.”

She then led a spirited march of more than 500 to the San Diego Airport to support the organizing efforts of 28,000 flight attendants and 20,000 ramp workers at Delta Airlines and contract talks by other airline workers.

RESOLUTION OF THE CALIFORNIA AFL-CIO TO WITHDRAW CUBA FROM THE WASHINGTON SSOT. It represents more than 2.3 million workers, and continues to grow.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:40ce74a9-7085-4388-a3e0-d7a0bd52fd08>