

# **US Trade Union Federation urges change in policy towards Cuba**

From *Trabajadores*, official organ of the Central de Trabajadores Cubanas- Cuban trade union federation  
October 8, 2023. By Yimel Díaz Malmierca <https://www.trabajadores.cu/20231008/federacion-sindical-de-ee-uu-insta-a-cambiar-politica-hacia-cuba/>



The **Los Angeles Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO)** has released a resolution that urges the United States Government to eliminate Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism and to repeal the economic, commercial and financial blockade decreed against the largest of the Antilles for more than six decades.

The document sent to our newsroom by activist *LA Hands Off Cuba Committee* Mark Friedman recognizes that “President (Joe) Biden has the authority to remove Cuba from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism through an executive order,” and “he must recommit to the normalization of relations with Cuba that was initiated by the Obama-Biden administration.”

It admits that “for the last 62 years, the United States has imposed an economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba that prevents most participation and trade with the United States, and punishes other countries that have relations” with the Caribbean nation. .

The text considers that “the embargo continues to inflict daily difficulties and deprivation on the Cuban people, creating shortages of basic needs such as food and medicine, and severely restricting international financial and commercial opportunities.”

That hostile policy is an obstacle to “obtaining vital medical equipment and supplies, and even impedes humanitarian aid responses to catastrophic events such as Hurricane Ian that devastated both Florida and Cuba, thus harming the Cuban people whom President Biden's administration says support.”

The **Los Angeles Federation of Labor** recalls that “the United Nations in 2017 estimated that this embargo had cost the Cuban economy 130 billion dollars, with an average of more than 2 billion dollars each year.” For this reason, among others, the UN General Assembly has voted 30 times in favor of condemning the United States embargo against Cuba. The last vote took place on November 3, 2022, with 185 of 193 nations in favor, and only the United States and Israel against.

In recounting the circumstances that led them to approve the Resolution, they acknowledge having taken into account that President Donald Trump's administration “imposed 243 new sanctions on Cuba, including restrictions on Cuban Americans who send remittances to families and companies in Cuba.” which has contributed to driving the “massive migration of Cubans, creating security concerns on the United States border.”

They also recall that “former President Trump arbitrarily reinstated Cuba's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism less than a week after the January 6 coup attempt,” in complete disregard of the “2015 Obama-Biden administration decision.” to eliminate this status after a thorough review by the United States Department of State. The document emphasizes that “Cuba does not meet any criteria for inclusion on this list.”

The arbitrary designation “has subjected Cuba to new international sanctions and financial restrictions that limit the nation's ability to carry out critical financial transactions, including those necessary to advance efforts to combat the COVID pandemic and improve its economy.”

They review that, in 2021, 117 members of the US Congress requested the elimination of Cuba from that list, and sent a letter where they reiterated that "a policy of commitment to Cuba serves the interests of the United States and the Cuban people." »

For all these reasons, the Los Angeles Federation of Labor “strongly urges President Biden and Congress, and every federal representative in their jurisdiction, to ask the federal government to remove Cuba from the United States list of state sponsors of terrorism. ”.

They also request that Congress approve “legislation that eliminates those aspects of the embargo that have been codified into law; and eliminate all sanctions against Cuba by the United States,” in order to “allow the people of the United States and Cuba to travel and trade freely.”

The Resolution, signed by Yvonne Wheeler and Thom Davis, president and director of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor respectively, communicates that they have received “guarantees from the Cuban Government that it will respect the rights of workers to form democratic and independent unions.”

### **Cuba’s response to above amendment to the resolution**

It is worth remembering that the [Cuban Labor Code \(Law No. 116\)](#) ([Law No. 116 "Labor Code" | Official Gazette \(qob.cu\)](#)), approved in 2013 and updated in February 2020, defines in its article 2 that among “the fundamental principles that govern the right to work” is that of “associating voluntarily and establish union organizations, in accordance with the founding unitary principles, their statutes and regulations that they democratically approve; and they act in accordance with the law.”

This principle is endorsed later, in Chapter II (Trade Union Organizations), in Article 13, which establishes that “Workers have the right to voluntarily associate and establish trade union organizations, in accordance with the founding unitary principles, their statutes and regulations, which are discussed and approved democratically and act in accordance with Cuban law.

The AFL-CIO is a union federation that has a presence throughout the United States. In the case of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor, it represents about three hundred unions and has about eight hundred thousand members.

For more information, to have a speaker at your group or union contact us thru email or phone below. Go to our website for a complete copy of the LA Federation of Labor resolution as passed and other educational materials.

## **U.S. HANDS OFF CUBA COMMITTEE**

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**END THE US EMBARGO OF CUBA. Normalize Relations.**

**Remove Cuba from Washington's list of nations supporting terrorism.**

**End the sanctions, trade & travel bans of Trump/Biden.**