



Report-back on Labor for Our Revolution meeting in Chicago

Representatives from 18 unions met on June 9 at the UE Western Region Hall in Chicago to discuss broadening the Labor for Our Revolution network -- building on the extensive labor support that the Sander's campaign inspired.¹

At the meeting, we briefly discussed what we learned as supporters of the Sanders campaign and the lessons from Labor for Bernie. We also congratulated Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party for its strong showing in the elections in England.²

Our Revolution

Our Revolution Board Chair and past CWA president **Larry Cohen** made a presentation on Our Revolution, what it is doing and where it is heading. Currently there are more than 300 local Our Revolution formations and four State Committees (TX, MA, WI, and MD). Cohen emphasized the importance of unions plugging into local groups or forming ones of their own. He cited the importance of bringing a working class perspective to building Black, brown and white unity. He also said that Our Revolution's priority is to campaign on issues first, candidates second.

Kyle Machado, organizing director for Our Revolution reviewed the dynamic and evolving website tools available for groups to use that make it very easy for local organizations to start their own OR groups or plug in to existing OR organizations.

Labor for Our Revolution

ILWU Local 23 (Tacoma, WA) President **Dean McGrath** made a presentation about Labor for Our Revolution's mission and his union's support for it in the Pacific Northwest.³

APWU's Labor for Our Revolution representative **Melissa Dimondstein** read a statement on her union's support for Labor for Our Revolution which said in part:

"Unions getting involved in Labor for Our Revolution give us the ability to influence Our Revolution so that it has significant focus on the working class...It also gives us the opportunity to organize our own members around broad, working class issues.

"This train is leaving the station with us or without us. If we miss it, we will be more isolated from each other instead of united across union sectors. How do you build a political revolution if you don't get out there and fight? You can't wait for the perfect thing. You get in there and struggle and unite even though there are differences. As Larry Cohen says, "It's messy."

¹ Union representatives at the meeting were from the following organizations: Washington State AFL-CIO, South Carolina AFL-CIO, Chicago Teachers Union AFT, Professional Staff Congress AFT, American Postal Workers Union, Amalgamated Transit Union, BMWED/IBT, CtW, CWA, ILWU, ILWU Inlandboatmen's Union, ILWU Local 23, New York State Nurses Association, National Nurses United, National Union of Healthcare Workers, SEIU Healthcare Illinois & Indiana, UE and the Writers Guild of America, West.

² The group watched "[#WeDemand](#)," an inspiring example of progressive campaign messaging from the Labour Party.

³ Read Labor for Our Revolution's mission statement: <https://tinyurl.com/LFORmission>

"Labor for Our Revolution is an opportunity to help build a movement that crosses all the political persuasions of our members. The issues of the Sanders campaign were put before the people as a referendum -- and the people spoke. So let's go out and build motion and power around these very demands."⁴

Although unable to attend the meeting, **Freddie Simpson**, President of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division sent a strong message of support, "The BMWED will be part of the effort and is happy to work with this group."

Crafting a new platform

Fernando Losada, CNA/NUU director of collective bargaining led a discussion on the possible ways that Labor for Our Revolution could improve the labor rights sections of the Our Revolution platform and other ways that Labor for Our Revolution could contribute to a more progressive labor movement.



Participants in the June 9 Labor for Our Revolution meeting

Next steps

ATU's **Clem Balanoff** led a discussion on using the *Sample Union Resolution in Support of Labor for Our Revolution* as a recruitment tool to build the network.⁵ There was a rich dialogue among participants that included the need to confront institutional racism, the importance of the student debt issue, and the need to build a movement that has a broad vision beyond resistance.

As the meeting wrapped up, coordinator **Rand Wilson** emphasized taking back the resolution to join Labor for Our Revolution to each respective union organization. Those organizations that have expressed interest will be enlisted to help make plans for building the LFOR network.

Afterwards, many of the participants attended a Labor for Our Revolution meeting at the People's Summit attended by about 300 union members and allies.

For more information, contact:

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Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/LaborforOurRevolution/

Photos from the two Labor for Our Revolution meetings are posted on [Flickr](#) and on [Facebook](#).

⁴ The APWU passed two resolutions at its 2016 convention, "New directions for labor in electoral politics" and "Building a movement for economic and social justice," illustrating how APWU built membership support in support of an independent approach to electoral politics. For copies of the APWU's resolutions or the full statement in support of Labor for Our Revolution, contact laborforourrevolution@gmail.com

⁵ Copies of the "Sample Union Resolution to join Labor for Our Revolution" are available [online here](#).