

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



815 Spessart Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-5000
<http://www.aflcio.org>

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Principal Officers of State Federations and Central Labor Councils
Trade and Industrial Departments

FROM: John J. Sweeney

DATE: April 19, 2001

RE: Carpenters' Disaffiliation With Trade and Industrial Departments
and State and Local Central Bodies

Following the announcement of United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America President Doug McCarron of the Carpenters' decision to disaffiliate from the AFL-CIO, I sent you a memo, dated April 4, 2001, describing the consequences of the Carpenters' disaffiliation as provided under the AFL-CIO Constitution.

Specifically, I notified you that, under our Constitution, the Carpenters' disaffiliation with the National Federation resulted in its disaffiliation with any and all subordinate bodies of the Federation, including trade and industrial departments and their councils, state federations, and central labor councils.

I am aware that questions have arisen as to whether there are particular steps, such as a vote of some kind, that a subordinate body needs to take to effectuate the disaffiliation of its Carpenter affiliates.

So that there is no confusion, I am writing to clarify this matter.

Article III, Section 6, of the AFL-CIO Constitution provides that no organization, while unaffiliated with the Federation, shall be "allowed representation or recognition in . . . any subordinate body of the AFL-CIO." Indeed, the section goes on to state that any affiliate violating this section is subject to suspension from the AFL-CIO. Furthermore, Article XII,

Section 2, reiterates that only unions who "remain in affiliation to the Federation" are entitled to representation in a trade or industrial department; Article XII, Section 3, extends the same provision to local councils of trade and industrial departments; and Article XIV, Section 1, extends the provision to state and local central bodies.

Thus, by virtue of the Carpenters' decision to disaffiliate from the National AFL-CIO, their disaffiliation from trade and industrial departments and their councils, state federations, and central labor councils, is automatic. Therefore, no elections or votes on the question of disaffiliation are necessary or appropriate.

Once again, I wish to stress how disappointed we are with the Carpenters' decision to disaffiliate. We would like nothing more than to work with President McCarron to explore ways to address his concerns, and bring the union back into the Federation at every level.

In the meantime, however, as officers of the Federation and its subordinate bodies, we have no choice but to enforce the AFL-CIO Constitution as it stands.

If you have any questions concerning these matters, please contact Mike Cavanaugh in the AFL-CIO Field Mobilization Department at 202-637-5370.

JJS/JPH:ls

cc: *AFL-CIO Executive Council Members*
Presidents of National and International Unions