

August 19, 2019
NW19-024

TO: Northwest Regional Council

FROM: Northwest Legislative & Public Affairs Committee

SUBJECT: **PRESUBMITTED NEW BUSINESS:** WTO 20th Anniversary Celebration

In 1999, labor unions were instrumental in organizing protests at the WTO ministerial meeting in Seattle. In October that year, the SPEEA Council endorsed participation by our members in the labor rally and other protests of trade policies that would move manufacturing jobs out of the country. Many SPEEA members marched with labor and other groups in the protests.

The WTO protests and two other events that year forever changed the SPEEA membership. In October, we joined IFPTE and assumed a much more active role in defending the rights of workers. In December, we rejected Boeing's take away contract offer, which led to the successful 40-day strike in February. These events raised the awareness of our members of the enduring link between labor, and social and economic justice. We want to help keep that memory and activism alive.

Right now, the Washington Fair Trade Coalition (WFTC) and community partners are planning several events to mark the 20th anniversary of the WTO, ending with a keynote address from Nobel Prize laureate Joseph Stiglitz. Mike Dolan from the Teamsters will speak at the rally, and the Washington State Labor Council along with central labor councils in Washington and Oregon are inviting leaders of the AFL-CIO.

The basic message of the 1999 protests was true then, and remains relevant today. The principles of the WTO have had the effect of merging our economy into the global economy, encouraging employers to move manufacturing work out of our domestic economy, and de-industrializing our manufacturing base.

The events being planned for the 20th anniversary of the WTO meeting include a movie night and art builds in the late Fall. Then, on Saturday December 7:

- A morning rally in Occidental Park
- Interactive breakout sessions in the afternoon
- Evening keynote address by Joseph Stiglitz

The organizing team has a fund-raising goal of \$50,000, which would cover expenses for speakers, venue rental, sound and staging, art builds, promotion and advertising for turnout, travel for outreach, and expenses for planning and running the events.

L&PA Committee position – Support the WTO 20th Anniversary Rally and encourage members to attend.

Pro – Supports labor issues

Con – Voluntary admission contribution

MOTION: The Northwest Council endorses events planned by the Washington Fair Trade Coalition and community partners to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle, and encourages SPEEA activists to participate using SPEEA banners and signs. The NW Council requests the Executive Board to make a one-time contribution of \$5,000 to support the event.

Passage or adoption of any legislative or public issues proposal shall be by published ballot and require: Total affirmative vote must be a majority of all Council Representatives including those not present or not voting, excluding Council Representatives working in excess of 50 statute air miles from the meeting and are unable to attend.

Prior to council action (voting) on any legislative proposal, the Legislative & Public Affairs Committee shall investigate and produce both pro and con statements and a majority committee recommendation.