

May 20, 2024
M24-013

TO: SPEEA Council
FROM: SPEEA Council's Legislative & Public Affairs Committee

SUBJECT: **PRESUBMITTED NEW BUSINESS:** Endorsements by Outside Organizations

Background

SPEEA Officials including IFPTE Vice Presidents attend in IFPTE's Political Action Committee (PAC) and Regional Labor Council's Labor Delegates attend Labor Council's COPE (Committee On Political Education) where delegates representing unions from the county or across the state gather to vote on the organization's endorsements for congressional, statewide, state legislative and judicial candidates, in addition to ballot measures.

The Council's Policy and Procedures Section III, Subsection A.3.c and Section V, Subsection A.2 constrain any SPEEA representatives from voting including SPEEA's IFPTE Vice Presidents at IFPTE's Political Action Committee and Regional Council's Labor Delegates from voting in their Labor Council's Committee On Political Education (COPE) until the Legislative and Public Affairs Committee has investigated, presented to the Council and the Council approves with the ballot results published to the membership.

PROBLEM

As we gear up for contract negotiations, SPEEA faces the dual challenge of bolstering member power internally while also fostering a union-friendly bargaining environment. This entails leveraging political, legislative, regulatory, and community pressure on employers to secure a robust contract for our members.

Elected officials establish the laws on collective bargaining. They also hold significant sway over labor negotiations, with their support or opposition directly impacting our bargaining strength. Given the critical nature of our work, state and federal legislators closely monitor our industry and workforce, shaping policies that affect our wages, working conditions, retirement security, education, job security, and collective bargaining rights. Their decisions influence various aspects of our contracts, outsourcing, safety measures, defense, and other public policies crucial to the competitiveness of U.S. aerospace manufacturing.

For instance, some states have adopted policies allowing striking workers to collect unemployment insurance after two weeks—a policy SPEEA has the ability to win in Washington State.

Many unions actively support labor-friendly candidates and encourage union members to seek public office to advocate for worker-friendly policies to ensure fair bargaining processes. When lawmakers impede progress, Labor Councils unite to hold them accountable.

However, SPEEA's current policy restricts members from participating in crucial Labor Council and IFPTE votes, limiting our power, influence, and relevance. This results in diminished power for SPEEA members while employers and other unions expand their sway.

SPEEA Constitution

SPEEA's Constitution requires that a policy or procedure of a Regional or Bargaining Unit Council not conflict with a policy or procedure of the SPEEA Council.

Motion Summary

The proposed motion will allow SPEEA's IFPTE representatives and regional labor council delegates to fully participate in political activities while maintaining a nonpartisan stance, ultimately strengthening the union's political influence and ability to secure strong contracts for its members.

The motion does NOT present an endorsement by SPEEA.

SPEEA Council's Policy and Procedure

2. *SPEEA official (such as Area Representative, Executive Board Member, Council Representative, Tellers Committee Member or Council Committee Member) shall use that position in any manner to endorse or oppose a political candidate, public issue, or item of legislation other than within SPEEA unless this Policy section has been explicitly complied with to obtain authorization for such endorsement or opposition.*

Like many unions, SPEEA represents members across the political spectrum. This policy aims to strengthen this value by giving our members the ability to fully engage in the broader labor movement, and build union POWER, all while ensuring a non-partisan stance by establishing that our positions are not to be based on political party, partisan politics, personal preferences, and non-labor issues outside of SPEEA's policy positions.

ISSUE

County and State Labor Council's Committee on Political Education, interviews and endorses candidates and ballot measures in the Labor Council's COPE meetings in the Labor Council's name. SPEEA Policy & Procedure Section V, Subsection A.2 allows interviewing candidates and investigating ballot measures while preventing SPEEA's officials to the Labor Council from voting.

IFPTE's Executive Council are also members of IFPTE's Political Action Committee which vote to endorse candidates in IFPTE's name, SPEEA Policy & Procedure Section V, Subsection A.2 allows discussing candidates, they restrict SPEEA's Officials from voting.

Motion

It is moved that: **IN ORDER TO ADVANCE THE INTERESTS OF SPEEA MEMBERS WITHIN THE BROADER LABOR MOVEMENT AND TO BUILD THE POLITICAL POWER NECESSARY TO WIN STRONG UNION CONTRACTS, THE SPEEA COUNCIL SUPPORTS LABOR COUNCILS AND IFPTE'S EFFORTS TO RECOMMEND CANDIDATES AND BALLOT ISSUES THAT SUPPORT LABOR AND AMENDS SPEEA POLICY & PROCEDURE SECTION V, SUBSECTION A WITH THE FOLLOWING ADDITION:**

SPEEA'S IFPTE REPRESENTATIVES MAY FULLY PARTICIPATE IN IFPTE'S PAC AND REGIONAL COUNCIL'S LABOR DELEGATES MAY FULLY PARTICIPATE IN THEIR LABOR COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES ON POLITICAL EDUCATION WITH THEIR POSITIONS BASED ON POLICY-MAKING POSITIONS ADOPTED BY THE SPEEA COUNCIL AND THE SPECIFIC REGIONAL COUNCIL, AND THE DIRECTIVE TO BUILD NON-PARTISAN POWER FOR SPEEA MEMBERSHIP.

POLITICAL PARTY, PARTISAN POLITICS, PERSONAL PREFERENCES, AND NON-LABOR ISSUES OUTSIDE OF SPEEA'S POLICY POSITIONS SHOULD NOT BE FACTORS WHEN TAKING A POSITION AS SPEEA'S REPRESENTATIVE TO IFPTE OR REGIONAL LABOR COUNCILS.

POSITIONS TAKEN AS DELEGATES TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED AN ENDORSEMENT BY SPEEA OR ITS REGIONAL COUNCILS AND SHALL NOT BE COMMUNICATED AS SUCH.