



# Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO

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***"AMERICA'S FIGHTING DEMOCRATIC UNION"***

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March 6, 2024

## **RE: AFL-CIO Scorecard Versus TWU Scorecards**

Dear Local Presidents, Executive Council Members and Executive Board Members,

I have received several inquiries about the recently published national AFL-CIO's ratings scorecard, which gives several of our solid allies in the U.S. Congress low marks, and its effect on the TWU's endorsement process.

Do not be fooled.

In brief, the AFL-CIO scorecard has ZERO effect on our decision-making process and generally should be ignored. In fact, the AFL-CIO should be using the TWU's scoring metrics as part of their process for evaluating pro-worker candidates, not the other way around.

To be blunt, the AFL-CIO's process for scoring members of the U.S. Congress is deliberately biased towards Democrats. This is unfortunate and potentially damaging because it disincentivizes pro-trade union Republicans (and, honestly, there ain't a whole lot of them as it is) from continuing to work in support of trade union issues. The national Republican Party is generally very damaging to the trade union movement. So when individual Republicans step up to support workers and our trade unions those individuals must be applauded - not abandoned.

The AFL-CIO only scores votes of the full chamber in the House and Senate (not votes in Committee and not co-sponsorships or other varieties of public support for workers). The AFL-CIO doesn't score many issues if even one affiliate objects. This is exactly what happened in last year's FAA reauthorization vote, a bill which is tremendously beneficial to transport sector workers and which the TWU strongly supports. However, the AFL-CIO failed to include it in its scorecard. This is incredibly deceptive and fails to paint an accurate picture of

the tangible breadth of bipartisan worker support that exists on the bill. When such support exists, it should be fairly acknowledged.

Distressingly, not a single issue on the TWU's scorecard in the House of Representatives this year is on the AFL-CIO's scorecard. The AFL-CIO's scorecard does not even include the PRO Act – supposedly the labor movement's top federal legislative issue. This "scoring" inadequacy would become even more magnified if we looked beyond transportation.

The result of this terribly flawed process is a rigged result in favor of Democrats, even when the underlying facts point towards a Republican. This is especially true in this particular Congress, where the narrow Republican majority in the House means that very few bills are being brought to the floor at all. Our Republican congressional supporters have demonstrated their pro-worker credentials several times by blocking many anti-trade union, worker-damaging bills put forth by the horrific right wing of the Republican Party. Our supporters are stopping bad legislation before it can reach the floor for a vote – providing the best outcome for working people. Paradoxically, this becomes a negative on the AFL-CIO's scorecard.

The AFL-CIO's process is terribly bad for pro-trade union Democrats as well. Henry Cuellar (D-TX), the only Democrat to vote against the PRO Act, the trade union movement's number one priority last year, has a 90% mark for this Congress according to the AFL-CIO. This means there is absolutely no incentive for even pro-trade union Democrats to stand up for working people when the best they can possibly expect to be scored is only 10% better than the worst Democrat in the House of Representatives.

That's warped.

Some of the TWU's strongest supporters – including Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA; 91% lifetime score on TWU issues), Marc Molinaro (R-NY; 80% lifetime score), and Don Bacon (R-NE; 77% lifetime score) – are showing up on the AFL-CIO's scorecard as having only “one vote for working people.” That rhetoric is untrue and SIMPLY RECKLESS. Further, it encourages our members in districts represented by these steadfast allies to do exactly the worst thing for their economic well-being: vote for an inferior candidate because of deliberately deceptive messaging from the AFL-CIO. We should NOT depend on a process which is NOT designed to identify the best possible pro-worker candidates on the ballot.

Our TWU family has heard me say this many times before, and it remains true: the institutions of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party are NOT friends of America's working families. There are absolutely incredible elected Democrats supporting the TWU and leading on our issues; I consider dozens of them to be the closest of friends. But institutionally, both parties have proven again and again that they serve corporate interests or political philosophies that do not prioritize putting shoes on our children's feet and sending them to college. The TWU and the broader trade union movement have been badly burned in the past by blindly supporting political parties at all levels of government. Instead, today, we are cultivating trade union allies from across the political spectrum to join us in the fight to advance workers in our industries.

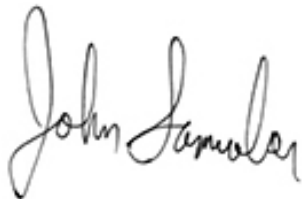
When an incumbent from either party stands up for our members, we are going to recognize that support and help to re-elect them. I strongly encourage you to make this clear to your state and local arms of the AFL-CIO, just as I have made it clear to the National AFL-CIO.

Again, as the political endorsement process begins in earnest for federal elections in November, I urge you to completely ignore, as I am, the AFL-CIO's scorecard in your internal deliberations of U.S. House candidates. It is not a relevant metric for TWU members, nor is it an accurate reflection of which candidates are championing our issues.

So instead, I encourage you to reach out to our TWU Government Affairs and COPE departments for background information on candidates that have stood side by side with transport workers, as well as to engage directly with these candidates locally before making decisions on who will best represent your interests in Washington, DC.

**DON'T BE FOOLED.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Samuelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Samuelson  
International President