

## Resolution #79A-23-09

### CWA Resolution on Mutual Respect

To overcome the great challenges we face in building better workplaces and putting an end to the class war that threatens our families and communities, CWA members and leaders must uphold the principle of mutual respect.

There is no unity without mutual respect. Uniting across our many differences is the source of our power. We do not have to look alike or think alike to take on the shared fights in our workplace and beyond, but we do need to build power together and that requires mutual respect.

When we fail to uphold mutual respect, our Union suffers. Members of our own Union family who experience fear of harassment or discrimination inside our Union will be less likely to be active. A divided, inactive Union membership would make us weaker and means we would pose no real threat to corporate greed. ***For that reason, bosses have always used our differences to divide us.***

Mutual respect ensures an engaged membership and a member-led Union. Mutual respect ensures Union democracy and encourages the participation of all members. Active members are the base of our power. A culture of mutual respect gives members and leaders the courage to honestly face the mistakes of the past and learn from them while keeping the best of our proud traditions.

The reality is that people serving in Union offices tend to follow the rules, cultural norms and practices of the system they inherit. Many of those rules, norms and practices are good and should be maintained. Others must be changed. CWA members must have the courage to make the changes needed in our own house.

Dissent, along with mutual respect, is a pillar of Union democracy. Strong and principled disagreements are both inevitable and necessary to our Union. We can passionately disagree and still maintain mutual respect. We can fight internally and object strenuously while still treating each other as equals in our Union.

Mutual respect supports a strong Union with competent and accountable leaders and an active membership with real unity of all workers. Union leaders have extra authority and with that comes extra responsibility. Our current Union structure does not provide a meaningful and

effective mechanism to address allegations of violations of the policy outside of the Local Union process. A downside of this is to shield top leaders from accountability to *all* the members they represent.

The highest authority in CWA lies in our membership and the CWA convention is the highest governing body of our Union. Therefore, our convention delegates must take up the task of ensuring mutual respect.

**Resolved:** We commit and recommit to ensuring mutual respect in CWA and affirm that mutual respect must be a foundation and guiding principle of our Union.

**Resolved:** We affirm the principle that no individual member is of more value than another and recognize that mutual respect is a key tool in building a member-led Union.

**Resolved:** We reject a culture of secrecy and support a balanced system of appropriate confidentiality for the parties involved in mutual respect issues, while keeping the membership broadly informed of actions taken on complaints.

**Resolved:** Greater transparency will enable members to fully participate in our Union and promote inclusion.

**Resolved:** We call for strengthened protections for those who report, in good faith, violations of mutual respect.

**Resolved:** We champion that upholding mutual respect is a job for everyone in our Union. That means *all* of us.

**Resolved:** The Executive Board shall establish a diverse temporary committee composed of national leaders, local leaders, and other active members assigned to analyze the CWA constitution, internal structures, rules, policies, trainings and practices and make recommendations of any needed changes to the Executive Board, at any point. The committee shall issue a final report including recommendations prior to the next Convention to ensure we are upholding our principle of mutual respect.

**Resolved:** The temporary committee shall also be assigned to consider offering a Constitutional Amendment incorporating the recommendations and if so, to provide language for that amendment to the constitutional committee prior to the next convention.