

Working America

Working America is an organization designed to be a powerful voice for people who do not have the benefit of a union on the job. Created by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in August 2003, Working America has been successful in recruiting nearly 1 million members. As a community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, Working America works with the 13 million men and women who are members of unions to fight in communities and states and nationally for such working families' issues as good jobs, affordable health care, secure retirements and more.

Working America uses door-to-door canvassing, its website (www.workingamerica.org) and regular outreach e-mails to recruit, educate and activate its members. Through Working America, members put pressure on elected and corporate leaders to address the priorities that matter most to working people.

As part of Working America's issues outreach during the 2004 electoral campaign, Working America members received a combination of mail, house visits, phone calls and e-mails describing candidates' position on working-family issues. Working family members (70 percent who are self-described as moderate or conservative) voted for Sen. John Kerry over President George W. Bush, 68 percent to 30 percent.

Other projects have included:

- Job Tracker, an online, interactive database with information on more than 200,000 U.S. corporations reported to have moved jobs overseas.
- Ask a Lawyer website enabling visitors to ask a lawyer whether their overtime pay was at risk under the Bush assault on overtime pay. Thousands of Working America members and others sent faxes and e-mails to their elected representatives demanding that they protect overtime pay.
- Engaging thousands of Oregon members in a major local letter writing campaign to stop the rollback of Oregon's minimum wage laws; contacting 5,000 households to pass a hospital bond in Seattle; and in Missouri, Working America members mobilized and helped defeat the right-to-work (*for less*) bill.
- Generating 75,000 handwritten letters to key senators against the privatization of Social Security.

Working America will build on its initial success by expanding into five new states by the end of 2005, running full-scale campaigns in a dozen states and increasing its membership to 2 million by the end of 2006. Working America members will continue to play active roles in local legislative, corporate accountability and election fights, as well as important national battles over Social Security and fair trade.