

Prepared Remarks for
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AFSCME International President
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Washington, D.C.

Good afternoon and welcome. Thank you for joining us.

I'm proud to be here on behalf of the 1.6 million active and retired members of AFSCME.

Each and every day, our members provide the vital services that make America happen.

We believe in the greatness of America. An America where everyone shares in its prosperity. An America where everyone has a chance to achieve the American Dream.

The 2008 election is about the America we want to be. It's about rebuilding the middle-class at home and rebuilding our respect abroad. It's about looking forward instead of looking backward. And it's about leadership that's proven and vision that's inspired.

Today, AFSCME has endorsed a proven leader with a vision for a better America – today we announce our support for Senator Hillary Clinton for President of the United States.

We all know why this is such an important election. For the past seven years, George Bush and his allies have abandoned the middle class, cut taxes for the very wealthy and neglected the vital public services that America needs to prosper and endure.

They've given us a mismanaged war with no end in Iraq. Incompetence and neglect in New Orleans.

Our President has vetoed expanding health care for children at the same time he's found billions in tax cuts for the super-rich.

Meanwhile, health care costs are skyrocketing and the number of people without health care is on the rise. Poverty is on the rise. Gas prices are up. College tuition is up. Pensions are under attack.

America's working families need a break. We need an ally in the White House. Someone who will fight for us not against us.

This is no time to take chances. We need someone who knows how to fight and knows how to win. Sisters and Brothers, Senator Clinton is a seasoned fighter. Believe me, she knows how to fight and she knows how to win.

This is our year. We're tired of close elections. Hillary's got it right – we're in it to win it, and we're going to win this election with a big enough margin that even George Bush's Supreme Court can't take our victory away.

We're going to activate a 40,000-member volunteer army to mobilize our members and our neighbors – and we're going to do it the old-fashioned way, worksite-by-worksite, block-by-block.

And we're going to start with an unprecedented GOTV effort in Iowa where we represent 30,000 workers who are ready to turn their country around.

We can count on Hillary Clinton to stand with us and to stand with all of America's working families.

With Hillary Clinton as our President, we'll have a better America that guarantees that everyone has the high quality health care they need.

With Hillary Clinton as our President, we'll have a better America with our Social Security intact and our pensions untouched.

With Hillary Clinton, college tuition will be affordable so that every student who wants an education gets one.

With Hillary Clinton, we'll strengthen the public services that keep our families safe and our communities strong, and our country and its leaders will support the local, state and federal employees that make America work.

And with Hillary Clinton as our President, we'll restore workers' freedom to choose a union without employer threats and intimidation.

Let's be clear here – America's workers built this country and keep it moving. America's unions built the middle class. America's workers should be able to chose a union and bargain for a better life if that's what they decide.

When Hillary Clinton is our President, we will build a better America. We will create an America that lives up to its ideals. Together, we'll make history.

Sisters and Brothers, please join me in welcoming the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.