



California Federation of Teachers  
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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**EDUCATORS ELECT NEW OFFICERS,  
*Renew Opposition To Iraq War,  
Call For Reform Of No Child Left Behind Act***

LOS ANGELES, CA – Five hundred educators, members of the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), convened at the Wilshire Grand Hotel this weekend, and chose new officers to lead their union. The delegates are the highest-ranking decision-making body of the statewide union. The educators heard from Raquel Cruz Manzano, a leader of the Oaxaca teachers union, who addressed the recent statewide teacher-led popular uprising. The educators also heard from Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa on his plans for LA schools. Senator Gilbert Cedillo addressed the educators regarding the value to Californians of allowing undocumented residents to get a driver's license and receive help in attending college. U.S. Rep. Lynn Woolsey received standing ovations for her pledge to end the Iraq War and bring the troops home, and to redirect funding to education.

The educators adopted policies that endorse single-payer health care (SB 840), providing incentives to retain quality teachers at low-performing schools, improving professional development for preschool teachers, and called for reform of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The delegates elected a new president, Marty Hittelman, a Professor of Mathematics at Los Angeles Valley College. Mr. Hittelman is the first CFT President from a higher education institution since the 1940s. He was formerly CFT's Senior Vice President, and leader of the union's Community College Council for 12 of the last 16 years. He began his teaching career as a high school teacher.

Los Angeles educator Laura Rico was chosen as CFT's Senior Vice President. Ms. Rico, a preschool teacher, is a national AFL-CIO Vice President, a national Vice President of the American Federation of Teachers, and the president of the CFT's K-12 ABC Federation of Teachers in southern California.

Elected Secretary-Treasurer by the delegates was Dennis Smith, an accounting professor at Sacramento City College.

Newly elected President Marty Hittelman said, “I am dedicated to continuing the California Federation of Teachers' strong progressive traditions of advocacy for better working conditions for all of its members, higher quality learning conditions for California's students, and better living conditions for all Californians. I believe that to further those goals, we need to weigh in on the issues of the day—ending the war in Iraq; cleaning up the environment; implementing a single payer universal health care system; protecting people's personal and civil rights; and, having a progressive tax system which adequately invests in education in order to enhance the quality of life for all Californians.”

New CFT Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Smith said, “The floor of our civilization is the educated citizenry and we, the members of CFT, play a critical role in maintaining that civilization. I promise to be a tireless advocate for the core issues of public education, and I am proud to join the newly-elected officers and the CFT professional staff as a steward of my union's records and resources.”

Mr. Hittelman succeeds Mary Bergan, who has led the CFT since 1991. Ms. Bergan, known as an effective educational legislative advocate for more than three decades, received a prolonged standing ovation at the conclusion of the convention for her service on behalf of the union and California public education.

As the statewide affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, the CFT represents teachers and school employees in California from early childhood education through the university level.

***For more information, visit [www.cft.org](http://www.cft.org).***

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