



# The Western Kentucky Worker

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Prepared by Berry Craig, AFT Local 1360 and KEA-NEA

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## In Kentucky, we call it 'whistling past the graveyard'

By **BERRY CRAIG**  
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Jeff Wiggins says David Williams is making his job a lot easier.

"He just keeps on proving the point that I'm trying to get across to our members," said Wiggins, president of Steelworkers Local 9447 in Calvert City, Ky. "David Williams hates us."

Williams is the Republican candidate for Kentucky governor. He hopes to unseat Gov. Steve Beshear, right, a Democrat, on Nov. 8.

Polls show Beshear, who earned the Kentucky State AFL-CIO endorsement, way ahead of Williams, the state senate president – more than 28 points in a recent survey.

Hoping to boost his obviously stalled campaign, Williams recently sought help from Scott Walker, Wisconsin's public employee union-busting Republican governor.

Williams and Walker appeared together in Lexington, Covington and Edgewood.

Dairy State polls show Walker is one of Wisconsin's most unpopular governors. He faces a likely recall election next year.

So Wiggins doesn't get why Williams summoned him.

"All I can say is birds of a feather flock together," added Wiggins, who is also president of the Paducah-based Western Kentucky AFL-CIO Area Council and sits on the state AFL-CIO Executive Board.

Walker said Williams' plan for Kentucky is "parallel almost identically to what we did earlier this year in Wisconsin," according to the Cincinnati *Enquirer*.

Walker and his Republican-majority legislature gutted public employee unions, triggering historic protests which led to the recall of two of his most ardent state senate supporters.

He's for repealing our prevailing wage law, too. "Williams has always been against us," Wiggins said.



In 2009, Williams kept the Kentucky legislature from endorsing a USW buy-American resolution, according to Wiggins.

The proposal said federal economic stimulus dollars “should be spent to maximize the creation of American jobs and restoring the economic vitality of our communities.”

The Kentucky House of Representatives unanimously passed the resolution, Wiggins said. “Williams had it killed in a senate committee because he said it smelled like labor.”

Meanwhile, Wiggins is traveling the state as part of the Steelworkers’ 2011 voter education program.

“I never tell anybody whom to vote for. I just point out where David Williams and Gov. Beshear stand on our issues. Gov. Beshear opposes right to work and supports the prevailing wage.”

Wiggins added that Williams is all but doing his job for him. “Bringing Walker to Kentucky – what more do I need to say except what I’ve been saying all along. David Williams would be Kentucky’s version of Scott Walker.”

Not surprisingly, Williams claimed Walker’s appearance helped him. But the *Enquirer* reported that only “about 30 people” showed up for their rally in Edgewood, in heavily Republican northern Kentucky. They also were in tandem in nearby Covington, but at a private fundraiser.

The Lexington *Herald-Leader* said the Williams-Walker Lexington rally attracted about 70 protestors.

“That’s what’s great about America,” the *Enquirer* quoted Walker. “People can come out and be heard.”

Walker wasn’t so gratuitous toward the thousands of union members and their supporters who rallied against him in Madison, the Wisconsin capital. Hence, Wiggins suspects Walker’s sop to free speech in Kentucky was calculated to make him look like a reasonable guy.

But given his bare-knucks brand of union-busting, Walker (and Williams) probably pines for bygone days when governors routinely used state militia soldiers to crack the heads of union members if company thugs, local cops and sheriff’s deputies couldn’t shut them up.

Of course, Walker implied that the Lexington naysayers represent only a tiny minority of Bluegrass State opinion. In Kentucky, maybe in Wisconsin, too, that’s called whistling past the graveyard.

No matter, Wiggins will keep barnstorming the Bluegrass State in his UAW-made Ford SUV right up to election day. “Labor is not taking anything for granted. The only poll that counts is on Nov. 8.”

## **Minutes of the Sept. 1, 2011 Area Council Meeting**

**Prepared by Berry Craig, recording secretary**

Because there was no quorum, there was no executive board meeting.

President Jeff Wiggins gavelled the regular meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer, Wiggins reviewed the correspondence he had received since the August meeting.

Financial Secretary-Treasurer Brandon Duncan read the financial report and also reported on the Labor Day program.

City Commissioner Gerald Watkins spoke to the delegates. He pledged his continuing support for organized labor and promised to keep working toward a contract for AFSCME city employees. He also announced that Mayor Bill Paxton was expected to endorse Gov. Steve Beshear for reelection. Watkins also said Robert Coleman was expected to run for mayor next year. He said other possible candidates include Gail Kaler and Doug Harnice.

In addition, Watkins discussed the proposed merger of city-county governments that will be on the ballot in November, 2012. He said such a merger would be unique because McCracken County has a larger population than the city of Paducah.

In other business:

Ron Spann thanked the delegates for naming him the 2011 W.C. Young Award recipient.

Wiggins announced that he will be part of the Steelworkers program to help elect Beshear and the other union-endorsed candidates in the November 8 election. He said that while Republican David Williams is far behind in the polls, unions must work hard for Beshear and the other union-endorsed candidates up to election day.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

## ***Resolution Designates October 30 as Day of Remembrance for Hundreds of Thousands Who Have Served As Nuclear Weapons Program Workers***

**WASHINGTON** - U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), Mark Udall (D-Colo.), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) today announced Senate passage of S. Res. 275, a Senate resolution designating October 30, 2011, as a national day of remembrance for nuclear weapons program workers. The Day of Remembrance honors the thousands of men and women who supported the nation's nuclear efforts during the Cold War.

The bipartisan resolution unanimously passed the Senate.

## RESOLUTION

Designating October 30, 2011, as a national day of remembrance for nuclear weapons program workers.

Whereas, since World War II, hundreds of thousands of men and women, including uranium miners, millers, and haulers, have served the United States by building the nuclear defense weapons of the United States;

Whereas these dedicated workers paid a high price for their service to develop a nuclear weapons program for the benefit of the United States, including having developed disabling or fatal illnesses;

Whereas the Senate recognized the contribution, service, and sacrifice these patriotic men and women made for the defense of the United States in Senate Resolution 151, 111th Congress, agreed to May 20, 2009, and Senate Resolution 653, 111th Congress, agreed to September 28, 2010;

Whereas a national day of remembrance time capsule has been crossing the United States, collecting artifacts and the stories of the nuclear workers relating to the nuclear defense era of the United States;

Whereas these stories and artifacts reinforce the importance of recognizing these nuclear workers; and

Whereas these patriotic men and women deserve to be recognized for the contribution, service, and sacrifice they have made for the defense of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate--

- (1) designates October 30, 2011, as a national day of remembrance for nuclear weapons program workers, including uranium miners, millers, and haulers, of the United States; and
- (2) encourages the people of the United States to support and participate in appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities to commemorate October 30, 2011, as a national day of remembrance for past and present workers in the nuclear weapons program of the United States.

**Gov. Steve Beshear was the honorary grand marshal at the 2011 Labor Day parade in Paducah. His driver was longtime labor leader Larry Sanderson of Paducah. (See Sanderson's speech at the 2011 UA Convention online at <http://www.uagetinvolved.org/page.cfm?pageid=2>). Beshear received the unanimous endorsement of the Kentucky State AFL-CIO, which also endorsed his election in 2007. Beshear's opponent is fiercely anti-union Republican David Williams, the state senate president. Polls show Williams trailing Beshear by as many as 27 percentage points. The Labor Day parade and picnic are sponsored by the non-profit Western Kentucky Labor Day Committee Inc.**



# Interpretation of Ethical Practices Code Sections 1, 2 and 3 By the Ethical Practices Committee of the AFL-CIO Adopted August 4, 2011

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Questions have arisen whether an executive officer or managerial employee of the AFL-CIO or its related central bodies can receive compensation for service on an outside board of directors. Although it has no complaint before it, the Ethical Practices Committee has determined that it would be useful to provide the following guidance concerning Rules 1, 2 and 3 of the AFL-CIO's Ethical Practices Code. The Ethical Practices Code applies to all executive officers, regardless of whether they are full-time, part-time, paid only a stipend for their service or are unpaid, and to managerial employees, such as executive directors.<sup>1</sup>

Ethical Practice Code Rule 1 states that officers and managerial employees of the AFL-CIO, state federation or area and local central body have a "high fiduciary duty and sacred trust to serve the best interests of the members honestly and faithfully."<sup>2</sup>

Ethical Practices Code Rule 2 states in relevant part:

No AFL-CIO officer or managerial employee should own or have a personal financial interest which conflicts with the full performance of his/her fiduciary duties. In particular:

(b) No AFL-CIO officer or managerial employee shall own or have a substantial financial interest in any firm which does business or seeks to do business with the AFL-CIO or any DALU.

(c) For purposes of these rules a "substantial interest" is one which either contributes significantly to the individual's financial well-being or which enables the individual to affect or influence the course of corporate decision making. A substantial interest does not include stock in a purchase plan, profit sharing plan or ESOP.

Ethical Practices Code Rule 3 states:

No AFL-CIO officer or managerial employee shall accept any non-de *minimis* personal payment of any kind from an employer which bargains collectively with the AFL-CIO or any DALU, or from a business or professional enterprise which does business or seeks to do business with the AFL-CIO or any DALU, other than regular pay and benefits for work performed.

Service by an executive officer or managerial employee on a for-profit or

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<sup>1</sup> This interpretation is not intended to address service on public boards or as an elected official.

<sup>2</sup> The Ethical Practices Code is made applicable to the officers and managerial employees of state federations, area labor federations and local central bodies by Rule 10 of the Ethical Practices Code. The Code does not address the dealings and conduct of state, area or local labor council officers or managerial employees in their other capacities as officers, representatives, employees or members of separate labor organizations.

nonprofit employer's board of directors can be beneficial to the labor movement, depending on the specific circumstances leading to participation and the business interests of that employer. However, where more than minimal payments are made by the employer to its directors and the employer is doing or seeks to do business with the AFL-CIO, or state federations, or area and local central councils, such payments must not be accepted by the officer or managerial employee of the AFL-CIO, state federation or area and local central council. The acceptance of these payments is a violation of Rule 3.

Regardless of whether the employer is a vendor or seeks to do business with the executive officer's or managerial employee's organization, the receipt of payments that are more than minimal in amount by the officer or managerial employee for service on a board of directors, also violates Rule 2 of the Ethical Practices Code. For example, the receipt of payments that significantly increase an officer's or managerial employee's income is prohibited by Rule 2 (b). In all circumstances, the executive officer or managerial employee's current and future participation on an employers' board of directors should be made known by the executive officer or managerial employee to and authorized by the state or local central body's governing body by motion made and properly adopted, and reflected in the minutes of the meeting at which it was adopted. Any remuneration received should be disclosed by the executive officer or managerial employee to the governing body of the state or local central body and such payments, if they are not or can not be discontinued by the outside entity, should be turned over to the central body.

Payments to an executive officer or managerial employee from an employer or vendor also create an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of an improper relationship between the outside entity and the officer or managerial employee, in violation of Rule 1 of the Ethical Practices Code. Such payments jeopardize the officer's ability to effectively serve the interests of only his or her state or local central body, as required by Rule 1. Accordingly, payments for service on outside boards of directors should be completely avoided. Payments for reimbursement of actual reasonable expenses incurred for attendance at boards of directors meeting is permissible, so long as the executive officer or managerial employee is not being reimbursed by both the employer and the AFL-CIO or the central body.

Unpaid service on an outside for profit or non-profit boards can also at times create an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. For example, an executive officer or managerial employee may be serving on a board that adopts policy positions that are inconsistent with the AFL-CIO's positions on key issues to the labor movement, such as positions taken concerning, but not limited to, health legislation and regulations, financial markets regulation, mortgage foreclosures, the Employee Free Choice Act or local "save our secret ballot" initiatives. In these circumstances, the officer should actively oppose the adoption and implementation of the policy. Failing at that, even though the executive officer or managerial employee may have been authorized to sit on the board by the central body, the executive officer at a minimum should thereafter recuse him/herself from all board activities and correspondence related to the issue. In extreme circumstances, and depending on the seriousness of the conflict, the executive officer or managerial employee should consider resignation from the board; consultation with the other officers of the central body, with its executive board and with the AFL-CIO's Office of the General Counsel is recommended in deciding whether resignation is warranted. In addition, service on the board of a local chapter of a national organization with substantial labor participation, such as the Red Cross or the United Way,

can present special issues. Consultation with the National AFL-CIO on potential conflict situations with these organizations is strongly encouraged.

An actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in violation of Rule 1 could also arise where an executive officer or managerial employee lobbies elected officials on an issue where it is not clear if the executive officer or managerial employee is representing the outside entity or the central body. This might be the case in matters involving, for example, health care legislation and regulation. In these circumstances, even though the executive officer or managerial employee may have been authorized to sit on the board by the central body, the officer should at a minimum recuse him/herself from all board activities and correspondence related to the issue. In extreme circumstances, and depending on the seriousness of the conflict, the executive officer or managerial employee should consider resignation from the board; consultation with the other officers of the central body, with its executive and with the AFL-CIO's Office of the General Counsel is recommended in deciding whether resignation is warranted.

Questions about this interpretation or the application of these or other sections of the Ethical Practices Code should be directed in writing to the Ethical Practices Committee or the General Counsel of the AFL-CIO.

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