



International Union of Operating Engineers

AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

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February 12, 2007

Dear Sir and Brother:

In recent years, candidates for Local Union office and their supporters have taken advantage of the ease of communication over the Internet to establish websites to promote their candidacies. These campaign websites offer an inexpensive means to promote the candidacies of both challengers and incumbents, and have become a common feature of contests for Local Union office. Given the free flow of debate in such campaigns, campaign websites frequently feature sensitive—and not always entirely accurate—information about Local Union affairs. Unfortunately, unprotected websites are open to anyone with access to a computer and the Internet, and allow non-members, including employers, access to such sensitive information. As a consequence, employers with interests contrary to Local Unions have used information obtained from campaign websites to harm Local Unions in collective bargaining negotiations and organizing campaigns.

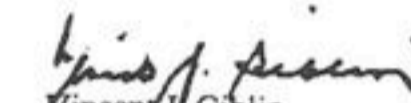
In light of its authority under Article XXIV, Subdivision 1, Section (e) of the International Constitution to promulgate rules and regulations concerning adequate safeguards to insure fair Local Union elections, the General Executive Board took up the question of campaign websites at its most recent meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. The Board recognized the value of such websites to promote candidacies and the free flow of information among members. However, the Board was also concerned about the ability of unscrupulous non-members to take advantage of website-generated information to harm Locals in negotiations and organizing, as well as the potential for such non-members to intervene improperly in the elections themselves. In order to assure the fullest expression of views by members while limiting the opportunity for unscrupulous non-members to take advantage of sensitive information, the Board adopted a resolution (copy attached) directing Local Unions and their Election Committees, starting with Local Union elections to be held in 2007, to require all candidates and their supporters who have set up or wish to set up campaign websites to include a password protection function using members' register numbers or another appropriate mechanism to identify membership status.



Requiring campaign websites to have a membership-related password protection function will not in any way limit the content of what is said on such websites; it will merely attempt to assure that sensitive information concerning Local Union affairs is shared among members, and is not available to employers and others with interests contrary to those of the Local Unions as institutions. In passing the resolution, the General Executive Board recognized that some candidates and their supporters may have gotten an early start on the upcoming 2007 election and have campaign websites up and running already. The Board decided that these members should be granted a reasonable amount of time—sixty days—to bring their websites into compliance with the resolution. Therefore, existing websites have until April 15, 2007 to comply or be faced with internal union disciplinary sanctions.

Finally, Local Unions have official websites, as does the International Union. In the spirit of the General Executive Board's resolution, Local Unions should review their official websites (and I am directing a review of the International Union's own site) to assure that any sensitive information on these sites is also password protected.

Fraternally,


Vincent J. Giblin
General President

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Attachment

Campaign Website Resolution

WHEREAS, in recent years, candidates for office in IUOE Local Union elections have increasingly used Internet websites to promote their candidacies; and

WHEREAS, these campaign websites offer an inexpensive means to communicate the candidates' positions; and

WHEREAS, these websites also allow non-members, including employers, access to frequently sensitive information about the Local Unions; and

WHEREAS, there have been instances where employers have misused information obtained from candidates' websites to the detriment of IUOE Local Unions in organizing campaigns and contract negotiations; and

WHEREAS, IUOE members' protected free speech rights are subject to reasonable rules as to the responsibility of members toward the Local Union as an institution; and

WHEREAS, Article XXIV, Subdivision 1, Section (e) of the International Constitution authorizes the General Executive Board to promulgate rules and regulations concerning adequate safeguards to insure fair Local Union elections;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the General Executive Board, in order to assure the fullest expression of free speech by candidates in Local Union elections while protecting the Local Unions from adverse actions by employers, directs that, starting with Local Union elections to be held in 2007, Local Unions and their election committees shall require all candidates and their supporters who have set up or wish to set up campaign websites to include a password protection function; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the International Union shall work with the Local Unions and their election committees to establish appropriate password protection mechanisms using members' register numbers or another appropriate mechanism to identify membership status.