

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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Statement by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney On John Kerry Selection of John Edwards as Running Mate July 6, 2004

John Edwards will be a great vice president. He is a truth-teller who will bring integrity and working family values to the second highest position in America.

Like John Kerry, Edwards has championed the interests of working men and women in the U.S. Senate and is a staunch supporter of workers' rights, earning a 96 percent AFL-CIO voting record during his Senate career.

This is a team that will generate a lot of excitement and draw a sharp contrast with the failed policies and leadership record of George Bush and Dick Cheney.

Edwards has strong working class and union roots. His father was a mill worker. His mother was a member of the Letter Carriers and his brother, a member of the Electrical Workers. In 2003, he wrote in an AFL-CIO candidate questionnaire: "I know from my own life how important unions are. The only reason my brother's family has had health care is because of the union. We have a lot of work to do to protect workers' rights in America."

It is a mark of John Kerry that he had narrowed his selection of a running mate to a small pool of individuals who are all strong, outspoken advocates for working people. Dick Gephardt, who had been endorsed for president by a number of AFL-CIO affiliated unions, deserves special thanks for all he has done to make the presidential contest a referendum on good jobs for America's workers, and for his unfailing service to our country. Dick is a lifetime friend of working men and women, and he will undoubtedly continue to play a strong role in the campaign to take back America and in our nation's leadership.

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A full copy of John Edwards' responses to the AFL-CIO candidate questionnaire and information about his voting record can be found at www.aflcio.org.