



# Dysfunctional Family Reunion

*The Choice Of Right-To-Work North Carolina Is Making Things A Bit Awkward Between Unions And The Democrats*

## DESPITE OBJECTIONS, DEMOCRATS CHOSE RIGHT-TO-WORK NORTH CAROLINA TO HOST ITS CONVENTION

**The Democrat National Convention Will Be Held At A Nonunion Convention Center In A “Right-To-Work State With The Lowest Rate Of Unionization In The Country.”** “It wasn’t just that North Carolina was a right-to-work state with the lowest rate of unionization in the country, Hill said. Nor was it the fact that delegates, lobbyists, and bigwig Democrats would be hobnobbing at nonunion hotels and listening to speeches at the nonunion Charlotte Convention Center.” (Naureen Khan, “Unions Divert Democratic Convention Money To Rally For Worker Rights,” [National Journal](#), 7/12/12)

**“It Was A Stinging Rebuke To One Of The Democrat Party’s Most Loyal And Influential Constituencies. And Labor Leaders Are Fuming At The Slight.”** (Molly Ball, “Labor Fumes Over Charlotte Pick,” [Politico](#), 2/5/11)

**The Pick Reinforced Labor’s View That Obama Does Not Care About Unions.** “A Democrat familiar with the site selection process said the convention choice reinforced labor’s perception that the Obama administration doesn’t care about union priorities.” (Molly Ball, “Labor Fumes Over Charlotte Pick,” [Politico](#), 2/5/11)

**The Former Political Director Of The United Steelworkers Union Chuck Rocha Said There “Was A General Disappointment In The Selection Because Of The Non-Union Hotels, The Non-Union Accommodations In North Carolina.”** “[T]here was a general disappointment in the selection because of the non-union hotels, the non-union accommodations in North Carolina,” said Chuck Rocha, president of the union consulting firm Solidarity Strategies and former political director of the United Steelworkers union.” (Robin Bravender And Anna Palmer, “Unions Hit Democratic Convention Where It Hurts: In The Wallet,” [Politico](#), 8/9/12)

**International Brotherhood Of Electrical Workers President Ed Hill On Airing Labor’s Grievances With DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz: “It Didn’t Seem To Bother Her Any, Frankly.”** “Had labor’s concerns fallen so far off the radar that they were an afterthought for the party? That was the impression Hill left with after his July 25 meeting with Wasserman Schultz, DNC Executive Director Patrick Gaspard, and aide Jason O’Malley. ‘It didn’t seem to bother her any, frankly,’ Hill said of Wasserman Schultz’s reaction to his grievances. ‘There was no offer of solution; there was no discussion of much of anything else—we said what we were planning to do, and we excused ourselves.’” (Naureen Khan,

"Unions Divert Democratic Convention Money To Rally For Worker Rights," [National Journal](#), 7/12/12)

## UNIONS DECIDED TO TAKE THEIR BALL AND GO HOME

### *Unions Refuse To Help Pay For The Convention*

**Labor Unions Say They Won't Help Pay For The Convention "Partly Because It Is Upset That The Convention Will Be In A State Considered Unfriendly To Unions."** "Democrats are struggling to raise money for the party's national convention this summer in Charlotte, N.C., in part because they've barred corporations and lobbyists from contributing. Now, one set of donors the party was banking on—organized labor—says it won't help pay for the event or will scale back contributions, partly because it is upset that the convention will be in a state considered unfriendly to unions." (Brody Mullins And Peter Nichols, "Democrats In Convention Box," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/3/12)

- **Construction Unions And Unite Here "Plan To Give Nothing" Towards The Convention.** "Labor unions chipped in \$8.6 million of the \$60.5 million the party spent in 2008 in Denver. This year, a number of construction unions, as well as the labor organization Unite Here, plan to give nothing, officials say." (Brody Mullins And Peter Nichols, "Democrats In Convention Box," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/3/12)
- **The International Brotherhood Of Electrical Workers Cited North Carolina's Right To Work Law As Their Reason For Not Donating To The Democrat National Convention.** "The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers gave \$1 million in 2008, but it isn't planning to contribute this year. It cites North Carolina's 'right to work law' that is opposed by unions, as well as labor's need to spend money on grass-roots campaign work. 'Registration drives, get-out-the-vote drives and leafleting—that's where we can make our best contribution,' said spokesman Jim Spellane." (Brody Mullins And Peter Nichols, "Democrats In Convention Box," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/3/12)
- **AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka: "This Year, We Will Not Be Making Major Monetary Contributions To The Convention Or The Host Committee For Events Or Activities Around The Convention."** "Earlier this week, in a memo to member presidents and the executive council, Trumka indicated that the AFL-CIO would proceed in a similar manner. He encouraged them to support the Philadelphia rally and laid out the thinking on Charlotte. 'This year, we will not be making major monetary contributions to the convention or the host committee for events or activities around the convention,' Trumka wrote. 'We won't be buying skyboxes, hosting events other than the labor-delegates meeting, or bringing a big staff contingent to the convention.'" (Naureen Khan, "Unions Divert Democratic Convention Money To Rally For Worker Rights," [National Journal](#), 7/12/12)

### **"Unions Have Been One Of The Most Reliable Givers To Democrat Convention Fundraising."**

"Unions have been one of the most reliable givers to Democratic convention fundraising. But with less than a month to go before the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., many unions that have been steadfast donors are now declining to fork over their cash." (Melanie Mason, "Democrats And Labor Part Ways For Convention," [Los Angeles Times](#), 8/11/12)

**Unions "Poured \$8.5 Million Into The 2008 Democrat Convention In Denver."** "Labor unions poured \$8.5 million into the 2008 Democratic convention in Denver, according to Federal Election Commission filings, much of it in six- and seven-figure increments. In addition to unions, the party also allows unlimited convention donations from other nonprofit groups, such as family foundations. But many labor leaders said they have little desire to cut a big check this year, in part because union coffers have shrunk, but also because North Carolina is the least unionized state in the nation." (Melanie Mason, "Democrats And Labor Part Ways For Convention," [Los Angeles Times](#), 8/11/12)

- **The International Brotherhood Of Electrical Workers Sent \$1.1 Million To The 2008 Convention.** “The AFL-CIO and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which have spearheaded the rally, together gave more than \$1.1 million for the Democrats’ 2008 convention. This year, the AFL-CIO will make no ‘major monetary contributions’ to Charlotte; the IBEW is sending no money at all.” (Melanie Mason, “Democrats And Labor Part Ways For Convention,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 8/11/12)
- **Both The National Education Association And The American Federation Of Teachers Each Donated Over \$1 Million To The Convention In 2008.** “Among those giving \$1 million or more to the Denver Host Committee, according to OpenSecrets.org: the Laborers Union (\$1.5 million); the National Education Association (\$1.18 million); the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (\$1.02 million) and the American Federation of Teachers (\$1 million).” (Tim Funk, “DNC Fundraisers Look For The Union Label,” [WCNC.com](#), 4/26/12)
- **“The Laborers’ International Union Of North America Was The Top Union Donor To The 2008 Convention, Spending \$1.5 million. This Time Around, It’s Not Giving At All.”** (Robin Bravender And Anna Palmer, “Unions Hit Democrat Convention Where It Hurts: In The Wallet,” [Politico](#), 8/9/12)

### ***Some Unions Are Skipping The Convention Altogether***

**More Than A Dozen Trade Unions Will Skip The 2012 Democrat Convention, A “Sign That Key Democrat Allies Are Unhappy With Obama.”** “Casting North Carolina as an anti-union bastion with ‘regressive policies aimed at diluting the power of workers,’ more than a dozen trade unions affiliated with the national AFL-CIO have told the Democrat National Committee that they will sit out the 2012 convention in Charlotte, N.C. Coming on the heels of some liberals’ complaints that President Barack Obama is giving in to Republicans, the unions’ decision is another sign that key Democrat allies are unhappy with Obama and other party leaders as they gear up for a difficult election season.” (Tim Funk and Kirsten Valle Pitman, “Some AFL-CIO-Affiliated Unions Say They’ll Skip 2012 Democrat National Convention,” [Charlotte News Observer](#), 8/12/11)

**The International Association Of Machinists Said It Also Has Decided To Skip The Convention After Participating For Decades.** “The International Association of Machinists, which is not part of the building trades, said it also has decided to skip the convention after participating for decades. ‘This is the union that came up with the idea for Labor Day and this convention starts on Labor Day in a right-to-work state,’ said IAM spokesman Rick Sloan. ‘We see that as an affront to working men and women across this country.’ Monroe said the unions are being careful not to use the term ‘boycott’ because they don’t want to damage Obama’s re-election prospects.” (Tim Funk and Kirsten Valle Pitman, “Some AFL-CIO-Affiliated Unions Say They’ll Skip 2012 Democrat National Convention,” [Charlotte News Observer](#), 8/12/11)

**“Not A Single Union-Sponsored Event Is Listed Among The More Than 120 That Have Been Pulled Together On A Convention Events List.”** “But so far, not a single union-sponsored event is listed among the more than 120 that have been pulled together on a convention events list that is circulating among Washington insiders.” (Robin Bravender And Anna Palmer, “Unions Hit Democrat Convention Where It Hurts: In The Wallet,” [Politico](#), 8/9/12)

## **UNIONS HELD THEIR OWN “SHADOW CONVENTION” OUT OF FRUSTRATION**

**Labor Unions Held Their Own “Shadow Convention” Ahead Of The Democrat National Convention.** “Three weeks before the Democrat national convention this summer, union leaders plan to hold their own ‘shadow convention’ to promote labor issues they believe too many elected officials are ignoring.” (Sam Hananel, “Unions To Hold ‘Shadow Convention’,” [The Associated Press](#), 7/10/12)

- **Unions Emphasized Their “Political Autonomy” From Democrats With A Rally In**

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**Philadelphia In August 2012.** “Unions, meanwhile, are aiming to assert their political autonomy in a rally Saturday in Philadelphia, which organizers say will highlight concerns of working families they believe both parties have not sufficiently addressed.” (Melanie Mason, “Democrats And Labor Part Ways For Convention,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 8/11/12)

**“The Union Gathering In Philadelphia On Aug. 11 Was Inspired By The Anger Many Labor Officials Felt After Democrats Decided To Stage Their Nominating Convention In North Carolina, A Right-To-Work State That Is The Least Unionized In The Country.”** (Sam Hananel, “Unions To Hold ‘Shadow Convention’,” [The Associated Press](#), 7/10/12)

**The Leader Of The International Brotherhood Of Electrical Workers John Dougherty Said It Wants To Be Clear “That Labor Is Feeling Taken For Granted By Traditional Democrat Political Allies.”**

“John Dougherty, leader of Local 98 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, made clear that labor is feeling taken for granted by traditional Democrat political allies but denied that the rally is a ‘shadow convention.’ Unions are furious that the Democratic National Convention will start in union-unfriendly Charlotte, North Carolina on Labor Day.” (Chris Brennan, “Huge Union Rally Saturday To Send Message To Democrats,” [Philadelphia Daily News](#), 8/6/12)

- **Dougherty: “I Want To Thank The DNC For Waking Us Up. The Days Of Taking The Labor Movement For Granted Are Over.”** “‘I want to thank the DNC for waking us up,’ Dougherty said. ‘The days of taking the labor movement for granted are over.’” (Chris Brennan, “Huge Union Rally Saturday To Send Message To Democrats,” [Philadelphia Daily News](#), 8/6/12)