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Enjoy the Fruits of Your Labor This Labor Day!

A call for an 'independent labor movement' goes out at Washington conclave

By DAVID GROVES

WENATCHEE, Wash. — AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker brought her contagious enthusiasm and optimism to the Washington State Labor Council 2012 Convention Aug. 7. She also brought what's become a familiar message from the AFL-CIO this year: the need to build an independent labor movement that supports only its true champions.

"It is important to put our resources into our own PACs (political action committees) and programs instead of any political party," she said. "It's been a long time coming, but we finally get it. Only with an independent labor movement can we campaign day-in and day-out for working people."

That doesn't mean withdrawing from the political process, Holt Baker

said. On the contrary, it means targeting labor's efforts — and making them even more intense — on behalf of those individual elected officials who have demonstrated their support for strengthening the middle class, protecting the right to have a voice at work, and opposing right-wing efforts to suppress the vote among minorities and low-income Americans.

"This political season we have every reason to go the extra mile," she said. "We're building a grassroots movement like America hasn't seen in generations. We'll struggle to keep democracy strong in America so every one that has a right to cast a vote can cast that vote and have it counted."

(Editor's Note: David Groves is communications director of the Washington State Labor Council.)

ATPA

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**Wishing all our
Friends in the
Labor Community
a Safe and Happy
Labor Day**

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