

For Immediate Release, July 29, 2005

UFCW 951 SUPPORTS UFCW INTERNATIONAL DISAFFILIATION FROM AFL-CIO

Today at 1:00 PM (EDT), the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, a founding member of the Change to Win Coalition representing seven million workers, disaffiliated from the AFL-CIO.

The Executive Board of UFCW 951—headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan—endorsed the action of the UFCW International Union. UFCW 951 President and UFCW International Vice President Bob Potter was involved in the UFCW decision to withdraw.

UFCW 951 looks forward to working with its Coalition partners in building a new, vibrant labor movement in the United States and in Michigan.

The Coalition believes in the vital importance of organizing non-union workers, “coordinated, strategic bargaining,” and a “political program connected to the needs, concerns, and goals of workers, irrespective of political parties and labels,” according to UFCW International President Joe Hansen’s letter today to AFL-CIO President John Sweeny.

The full text of President Hansen’s letter to President Sweeny is available on the Change to Win Coalition’s website (www.ChangeToWin.org) and the UFCW International website (www.UFCW.org). Below are a few excerpts:

“The UFCW, in order to pursue the most effective course of action for its members and all workers in its core industries, is terminating its affiliation with the AFL-CIO effective immediately.

“While our affiliation ends, our commitment to work with the AFL-CIO...on issues and programs where we share common goals remains unchanged. I believe our movement is united in our basic principles and values, even if we pursue different strategies.”

“I ask you and other AFL-CIO unions...to work in cooperation with the Change to Win Coalition unions in the myriad [of] areas where we share common goals. We can build our movement, and again change the world to bring prosperity and well-being to workers here and around the world.”

UFCW 951 is one of Michigan’s largest unions with 33,000 members working at Meijer, Dowagiac Nursing Home, Fry Krisp, Kroger, Kessel, Knouse Foods, Plumb’s, Polly’s, and Rite-Aid.

Media Contact: Mike Potter, UFCW 951 Director of Communications
Office: 800.999.0951

www.UFCW.org
www.ChangeToWin.org
www.UFCW951.com