



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IFPTE Honors the Life of Congressman John Robert Lewis

WASHINGTON, DC - The IFPTE family was saddened to learn of the passing of one of our nation's most courageous and influential men, Congressman John Robert Lewis. He was an icon of the Civil Rights movement, peacefully marching in the 1960s across the South and in Washington, DC against the racism, bigotry, and hatred that engulfed much of the nation.

On March 7, 1965, Congressman Lewis led 600 peaceful protestors across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, only to be met by such brutal police attacks that he suffered a fractured skull. It was this day, known in our history as 'Bloody Sunday', which served as the tipping point to the ultimate passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

He commonly urged citizens to protest injustices by getting into "good trouble", to challenge any immoral and unjust laws – a fight that he never stopped fighting, as he marched with the Black Lives Matter movement in Washington, DC just a few short weeks ago. Congressman Lewis was as strong a supporter of unions as you will find anywhere because he believed that collective bargaining rights and civil rights go hand-in-hand. Congressman Lewis would step into any fight on the side of workers, as he did for IFPTE members in 2003 when he urged the Boeing Company to stop intimidating their workers during a recertification campaign in Wichita.

IFPTE was honored when the Congressman accepted our invitation to speak at our 2013 legislative conference in which he reminded us all that "our vote is our most sacred right." IFPTE was proud to offer the Congressman an honorary membership in our union at that time.

Congressman Lewis was known as the "conscience of the United States Congress", but IFPTE believes has was the conscious of not only the Congress but the nation. IFPTE mourns his loss and offers condolences to his family, staff, and constituents.

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