



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

501 3rd Street, NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20001
202-239-4880 • FAX 202-239-4881 • www.ifpte.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Candace Rhett
(202) 239-4880

IFPTE Mourns the Loss of Byron Charlton

Longtime trade unionist and IFPTE friend was a "labor icon"

WASHINGTON, DC – The International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE) is sad to report the passing AFL-CIO legislative representative Byron Charlton. The following IFPTE officers and members commented on the loss of Brother Charlton.

IFPTE President Paul Shearon:

"Byron Charlton was an extraordinary trade unionist who spent half a century fighting on behalf of working families. We here at IFPTE considered him a part of our own union family and will not soon forget all of his contributions for our members, particularly his years long, critical role in helping to save collective bargaining rights for DOD workers. IFPTE extends our deepest condolences to his family, friends and AFL-CIO coworkers."

IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer Matt Biggs:

"The labor movement lost on incredible trade unionist whose contributions to the betterment of working people across the globe will live on long after his passing. He had an extraordinary labor career, including promoting unionism as a part of the AFL-CIO's African American Labor Center across Southern and Eastern Africa throughout the eighties and nineties. I will personally never forget his work here in Washington from 2003 through 2010 leading the United DOD Workers Coalition, as IFPTE and over thirty other unions worked in tandem over more than eight years to beat back the union busting National Security Personnel System. There is no doubt that without Bryon's steady and strong leadership of our union coalition that collective bargaining at the Department of Defense would be a shell of what it is today. Byron was a dear friend to IFPTE, spoke at countless IFPTE conventions and legislative conferences, and was a labor trailblazer. IFPTE will never forget his invaluable contributions to our union and our members."

Former Local 3 President and current member John Garrity:

"As the Local 3 president during the NSPS days, I came to know Byron through our struggles to beat back NSPS. I also got to know him at IFPTE conventions and legislative conferences where he spoke to all of us not only about the major labor issues impacting us in the present, but also about building off of our labor history in combatting the attacks of today. Along with the late, great, Representative John Lewis, Byron's talks to us were the most inspirational of any speaker we have ever had at IFPTE events. My deepest condolences to his family."

Former IFPTE Western Federal Area Vice President/current Local 121 treasurer Ben Toyama:

“I came to know and work closely with Bryon back in 2003 through his leadership of our union coalition and quickly learned that he was the exact right person to lead us through the dark days of NSPS, eventually getting to a point where we got the whole thing repealed. I think Byron can best be described as a great and unapologetic fighter for union members. In fact, I think he was most happy when he was in the middle of a new fight. As I read his work history, I have come to understand the World and labor movement have lost a wise, compassionate and incredible trade unionist.”

Byron Charlton began his labor career over 50 years ago as a member of the United Steelworkers (USW) Local 2969 in Southwestern Virginia, where he was the chairman of his local’s negotiating and grievance committee. Among his many roles over 50 years in labor, Byron served as a staff representative for USW Local 8888, was an adviser to the International Labor Organization (ILO) committee on Apartheid, implemented AFL-CIO programs in Southern and Eastern Africa, and served as an AFL-CIO legislative representative.

Details of his service can be found [here](#).

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