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BCTGM *News*

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UNION WAVE
mobilize, organize!

Special
POST-CONVENTION ISSUE



PRESIDENT ANTHONY SHELTON

Addresses Delegates to the 42ND Constitutional Convention

BCTGM International President Anthony Shelton delivered numerous speeches and remarks that brought laughter, cheers and thunderous applause throughout the BCTGM's 42nd Constitutional Convention. Here are some excerpts:

"The reasons workers organized more than a century ago are the **very same reasons they organize today**: to have a voice at work, to earn fair wages and benefits, to be treated with dignity and respect and to work in safe conditions... They see companies posting **record profits** from their labor while **wages fail to keep pace** with the cost of living. They have watched failed trade policies send good-paying jobs out of North America as companies have closed plants and shifted production to Mexico."

"Throughout our history, this International Union has negotiated **outstanding contracts** through times of prosperity and times of hardship. Many of the agreements we administer today have been **built by generations**. With each round of bargaining, they have come together stronger, more comprehensive and **more valuable** to our members and their families."

"Working people are tired of watching corporate power grow while they struggle to get ahead."

"It is time for us to look at our history and **learn** from the things we did right.

It's time for us to **hit the streets**.

It's time to **shake up** the political system.

It's time to **come together** for a common goal.

It is time for organized labor to **take back what is rightfully ours**: a life of hard work, but in a safe workplace with good pay and benefits and dignity and respect.

...the history of our union shows **that we will prevail."**



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Aaron Graves • Paul LaBuda • Earl Lublow
Letitia Malone • Gary Oskoian • Cameron Taylor
Doyle Townson • Jeff Webb • Donald Woods



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Delegates **Re-Elect Shelton, Woods** to Lead the BCTGM

On Wednesday, July 29, delegates unanimously re-elected Anthony Shelton as International President and David Woods as International Secretary-Treasurer.

Following the Convention Call to Order by International President Shelton, the Standing Committee presented the final report on credentials. The Convention was attended by 267 local union delegates, representing 86 local unions, and 30 International Union delegates. The final combined International delegate and local union delegate vote count was 2,164.

For the election of the International

President, Shelton called upon retired Southern Region Vice President James Rivers to serve as the temporary chair of the Convention.

"It is a personal privilege and a distinct honor for me to participate in this Convention," Rivers stated. "In accordance with Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution of this International Union, entitled 'Nominations', I hereby declare nominations for the office of President in order."

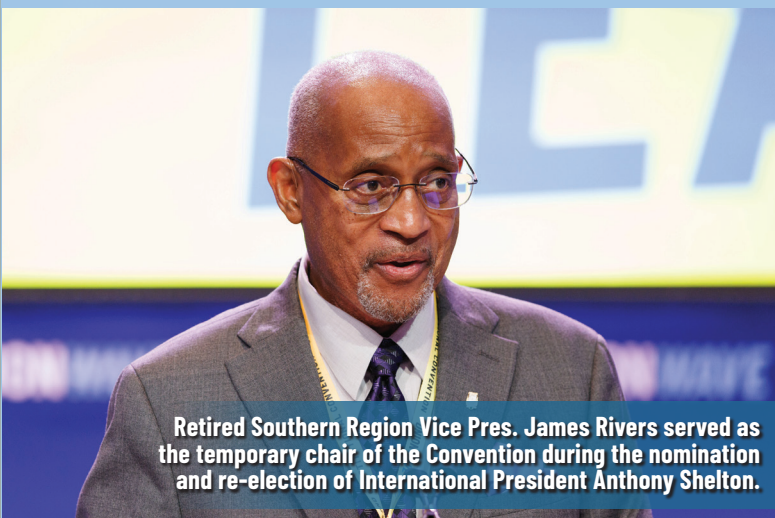
BCTGM Local 25 (Chattanooga, Tenn.) Financial Secretary/Business Agent and General Executive Board member Jeff Webb nominated Anthony Shelton for International President.

Delegates unanimously elected Shelton as International President, followed by a rousing standing ovation.

"Thank you for placing your faith in me for four more years," President Shelton said in a brief acceptance speech. "With your help we will make the next four years even better than the last!"

Local 26 (Denver, Colo.) President Clifton Horton nominated David Woods for the office of International Secretary-Treasurer. Delegates unanimously elected Woods and gave him a standing ovation.

Woods gave an impassioned acceptance speech about what a great honor it is for him to serve this Union. "I believe in this Union more than anything," he proudly said.



Retired Southern Region Vice Pres. James Rivers served as the temporary chair of the Convention during the nomination and re-election of International President Anthony Shelton.



International Vice Presidents Elected

The delegates to the BCTGM 42nd Constitutional Convention unanimously elected five Regional International Vice Presidents to lead the BCTGM's regions for the ensuing four years.

Canadian Region: Sylvain Gagné
East-Central Region: Roger Miller
Midwest Region: Jason Davis
Western Region: Karrie Setters
Southern Region: Zach Townsend

Setters Elected to Lead the Western Region

Following a nomination by International Secretary-Treasurer David Woods, Karrie Setters was unanimously elected as Vice President of the Western Region for the first time,

receiving an enthusiastic standing ovation from the Western Region and convention delegates.

Prior to her election as Western Region Vice President, Setters was appointed to serve as a Western Region International Representative



by President Anthony Shelton on January 1, 2021, and served in that position for over five years.

Setters previously served as the Financial Secretary-Treasurer of BCTGM Local 83 in Buena Park, Calif., and became the Local 83 Financial Secretary Treasurer in April of 2008.

"Karrie has proven her leadership over her 26+ years in this Union," President Shelton said in congratulating Setters. "I have every confidence in her readiness to step into this role in continued service of our members in the Western Region."



International General Executive Board Re-Elected

In addition to the International Executive Officers and five Regional Vice Presidents, the International General Executive Board consists of two elected members from each geographic region and one from the Tobacco Sector. Delegates to the 42nd Constitutional Convention elected the following BCTGM Local Union Officers to serve a four-year term on the BCTGM International General Executive Board:

East-Central Region

Paul LaBuda, President, Local 19

Gary Oskoian, Fin. Secy./Bus. Agt, Local 68

Midwest Region

Wally Borgan, President, Local 22

Donald Woods, President, Local 1

Canadian Region

Earl Lublow, Financial Secretary
Treasurer, Local 468

Pierre Luc Doucet, President, Local 261T

Western Region

Cameron Taylor, Business Agent, Local 364

Doyle Townson, Financial Secretary, Local 31

Southern Region

Letitia Malone, President/Business
Agent, Local 149

Jeff Webb, Financial Secretary/
Business Agent, Local 25

Tobacco Sector

Aaron Graves, President, Local 176T

BCTGM International Executive Officers, Regional Vice Presidents and Field and Headquarters Staff



Back Row: BCTGM International Finance Manager Kurt Yeager, Asst. Controller Camden LaMarsh, Intl. Rep. Jared Cummings (East-Central), Int'l Rep. Ryan Hocke (Midwest), Int'l Rep. Alejandro Ahumada (West), Int'l Rep. Derrick Byrd (South/Tobacco), Int'l Rep. Jason Thomas (South), Int'l Rep. Lisa Gregory (East-Central), Int'l Rep. Darrell Copeland (South), Int'l Rep. Veronica Hopkins (Midwest), Int'l Rep. Andrew Gutierrez (West), Communications Director Michelle Ellis and Special Asst. to the Secy. Treas. Colin Durkee. **Front Row:** Int'l Rep. Jean-Francois Gaudreau (Canada), Int'l Rep. Shane Sweeney (Midwest), Int'l Vice Pres. Jason Davis (Midwest), Int'l Vice Pres. Karrie Setters (West), Pres. Shelton, Secy. Treas. Woods, Int'l Vice Pres. Sylvain Gagné (Canada), Int'l Vice Pres. Roger Miller (East-Central), Int'l Vice Pres. Zach Townsend (South), Int'l Rep. Chuck Reeves (East-Central) and Exec. Asst. to the Intl. Pres. Matthew Clark.

140-Year History Series

The Journeymen Bakers' (earliest formation of the BCTGM) founding convention was held January 13, 1886 in Pittsburgh, Pa. One hundred and forty years later, delegates gathered to celebrate that remarkable legacy—and to reflect on the generations of union members who built it.

Throughout the three days of the 2026 Constitutional Convention, BCTGM history came to life through a special six-part video series exploring defining moments and themes from our Union's past. BCTGM members then took the stage to share the stories behind that history, connecting the struggles, victories and lessons of earlier generations to the work of our Union today.

Together, the presentations told the story of 140 years of solidarity, progress and collective action—and reminded delegates that BCTGM members today are carrying that history forward.



Re-watch videos from the 140-Year history series:

bctgm2026convention.org/videos

Download/print posters that were on display at the Convention:

bctgm2026convention.org/downloads



Journeymen Bakers' & Confectioners' Union

BCTGM Local 111 (Dallas, Texas) Financial Secretary/Business Agent **David Menefee** took the stage to talk about how the BCTGM improved the lives of baking industry workers over the last century.

Local 464 (Hershey, Pa.) Financial Secretary/Treasurer **Diane Carroll** and Local 464 Business Agent **Sharon Sheets** delivered remarks about the rise of unions in the candy industry, and the historic and violent six-day sit-down strike at Hershey in 1937.

History of the Tobacco Workers Union (TWIU)

BCTGM Local 261T (Québec City, Québec) President and General Executive Board Member **Pierre Luc Doucet** spoke to the Convention delegates about the historic Montréal Imperial Tobacco Strike of 1942.

Southern/Tobacco Sector International Representative **Derrick Byrd** delivered remarks about the BCTGM's effort to protect tobacco industry jobs through various government public health interventions over the decades.





Grain Millers (AFGM) Founding & Merger

BCTGM Local 103G (Decatur, Ill.) Office Manager/ Business Agent **Nicole May** spoke to delegates about the historic fight for health and safety in the grain milling sector.

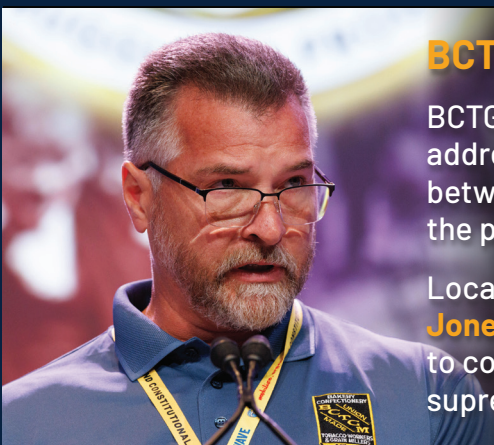
Local 283G (Twin Falls, Idaho) President **Brendan Van Sickle** talked about the unique bargaining demands of the sugar beet processing industry.



140 Years of Political Action

BCTGM Local 1 (Chicago) President and General Executive Board Member **Donald Woods** took the stage to talk about the historic fight for Pension Reform, finally won in 2021.

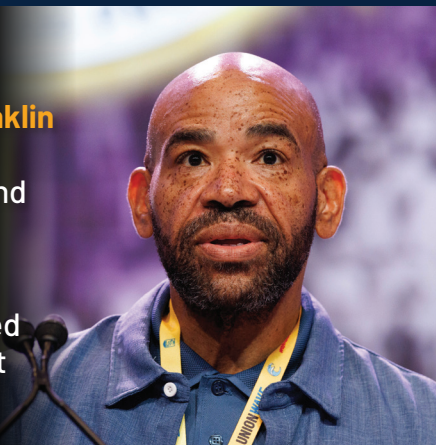
Local 114 (Portland, Ore.) Business Agent **Taylor Almond** delivered remarks about labor's recent legislative wins in her home state of Oregon.



BCTGM Organizing Through the Years

BCTGM Local 19 (Cleveland, Ohio) Treasurer **Jim Franklin** addressed the delegates, discussing the strong link between the monopolies of the early 20th century and the private equity struggles workers face today.

Local 118 (Washington, D.C.) Financial Secretary **Les Jones** spoke about the ways union organizing evolved to counter ever-changing corporate tactics aimed at suppressing wages and weakening worker power.



FIGHTING BACK with our Cues from the Past

BCTGM Local 372A (Indianapolis, Ind.) Business Agent **Clint Lathrop** took the stage to compare these times to the past and energize delegates into action.

Pointing to her involvement with the AFL-CIO Immigration Fellowship, Local 83 (Buena Park, Calif.) Financial Secretary/Business Agent **Cindy Marques** demanded, "No employer should be allowed to use immigration status as a weapon to silence workers or undermine union standards!"



BCTGM Delegates Set Agen

The 42nd Constitutional Convention of the BCTGM was called to order on Tuesday, July 28 and concluded on Thursday, July 30. The theme of the BCTGM's 2026 Convention was **"UNION WAVE: Mobilize, Organize!"**

A secondary theme of the week celebrated the **140th Anniversary** of the Union's founding convention in 1886.

In addition to speeches by International Executive Officers and Staff, delegates heard from AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, and Québec Federation of Labour (FTQ) President Magali Picard.

BCTGM delegates elected International



da for the Next Four Years

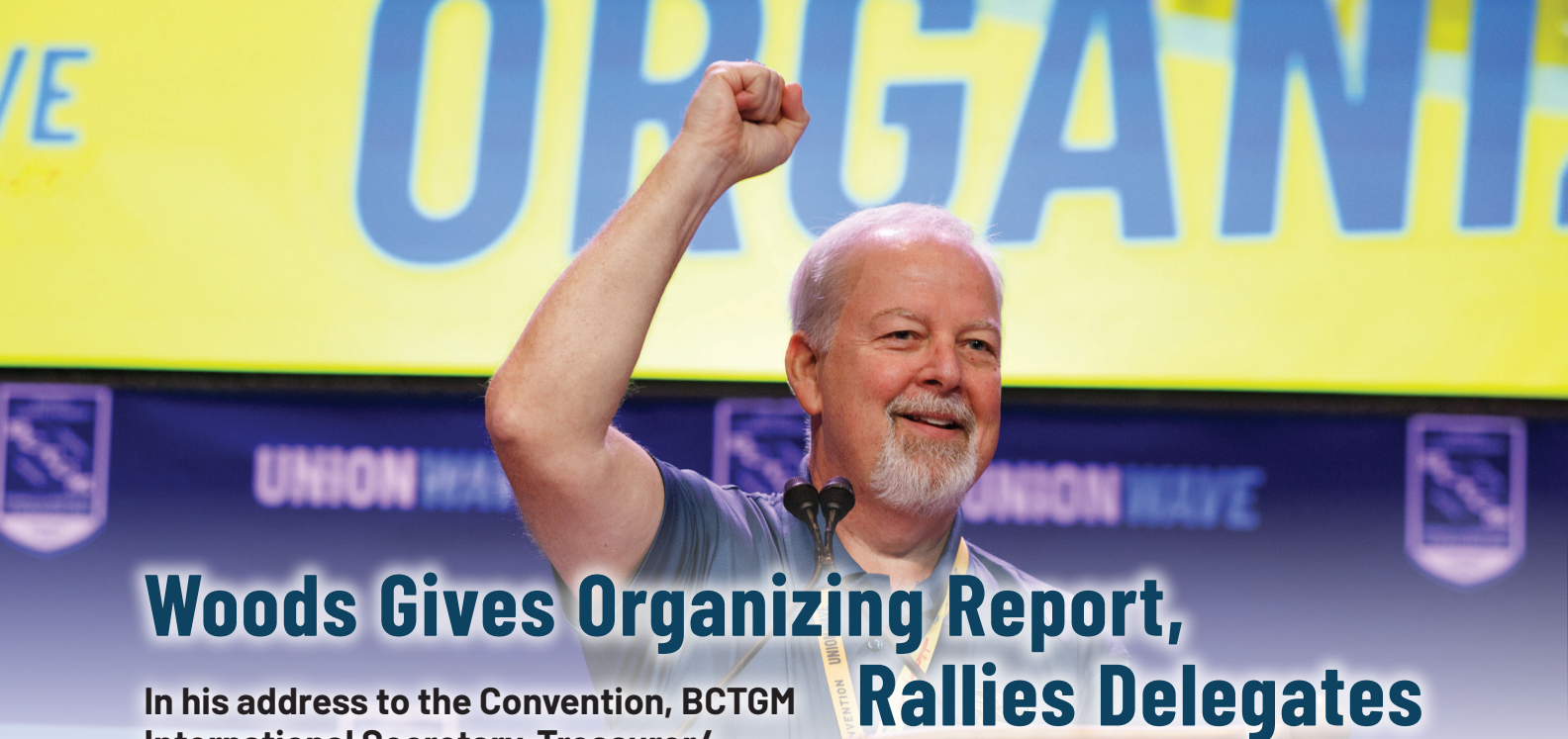
Union Officers to lead the BCTGM for the next four years, approved Constitutional amendments and resolutions shaping the Union's future and attended numerous special events and committee meetings.

The 2026 Convention included a number of local union delegates and activists who helped introduce special video features from the Convention stage.

Those features included videos and topics surrounding the 140th Anniversary of the Union, the importance and value of affiliating with State and Central Labor Councils, and tips and secrets for internal organizing in Right-to-Work states.

Convention videos, free print downloads, special features and more can be found at BCTGM2026Convention.org.



A photograph of David Woods, BCTGM International Secretary-Treasurer, speaking at a podium. He is a man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a blue shirt. He has his right arm raised in a fist. Behind him is a large yellow banner with the word "ORGANIZE" in blue letters. There are also smaller banners with the "UNION WAVE" logo.

Woods Gives Organizing Report, Rallies Delegates

In his address to the Convention, BCTGM International Secretary-Treasurer/Director of Organization David Woods presented the wins and challenges of the last four years, and stressed the importance of internal organizing to strengthen our union density.

"The evidence is overwhelming," he began. "If workers were given a free and fair choice, most would choose union representation."

Woods went on to explain that position using evidence from the last four years of

BCTGM organizing campaigns. He celebrated the wins at Bay State Milling (Local 232, Phoenix, Ariz.), Bimbo QSR (Local 26, Denver, Colo.) and UNFI (Local 1, Chicago), and recounted the fight that continues for workers at Maker's Pride (formerly Hearthside Food Solutions).

Woods encouraged the delegation, asserting, "everyone in this room is an Organizer." He then led the Convention hall in a rallying chant, proclaiming, **"When we FIGHT, we WIN!"**

Local 26: "We Fought and WON at Bimbo QSR!"

Following his Organizing Report, Secretary-Treasurer Woods called organizers from BCTGM Local 26 (Denver, Colo.) to the stage to describe their big win at Bimbo QSR last year.

Local 26 President Clifton Horton: "We overcame so much adversity. Language barriers, management stupidity, subzero temps in January followed by 100-degree heat in August. **It was all worth it.**"

Local 26 Financial Secretary Drew Buchholz: "We have to learn how to truly listen, recognizing that different cultures may face highly specific challenges that traditional organizing doesn't always cover."



Local 26 Business Agent Chris Vargas: "I learned that the most powerful organizers are the workers themselves."

Local 26 Member Mohammad Jafari: "Our job was listening to their concerns and providing them with correct information."



Clark Delivers Four-Year Political Report

BCTGM International Executive Assistant to the President Matthew Clark delivered the four-year Political Report to the Convention, reminding delegates to pay attention to the politicians who support workers in the coming November midterms.

"When we met in Las Vegas four years ago, there was real momentum for working people," Clark said, recalling the progress of the pro-union Biden administration.

Calling on workers to get more involved, he pointed out that more must be done to overhaul a system that increasingly favors capital and corporate CEO's. "Even with those [Biden-era]

accomplishments, the rigged economic system that grew and flourished in the 1980's never fundamentally changed," he said. "Free trade, corporate consolidation, weak enforcement of labor laws and tax policies that favor the wealthy and corporations continue to put pressure on workers."

Clark laid out labor's challenges in the next four years, recalled state-level wins that workers have been a part of and motivated delegates to get involved.

In closing, he said "We won't all agree on every issue, and that's okay. But we should all agree on one thing: At every level of government, we need leaders who will fight for working families."

Top 5 BCTGM-PAC Contributors

- 5th:** Local 325G (Gibson City, Ill.)
- 4th:** Local 342 (Bloomington, Ill.)
- 3rd:** Local 369G (Renville, Minn.)
- 2nd:** Local 31 (Long Beach, Calif.)
- 1st Place:** Local 13G (Hastings, Minn.)



2026 Political Action Awards

For the first time at the 2026 Convention, awards were given to one local union in each BCTGM Region that was active in local, state and provincial politics during the last four years.

Regional winners were:

- Midwest:** Local 1 (Chicago, Ill.)
- Southern:** Local 252G (Memphis, Tenn.)
- East-Central:** Local 19 (Cleveland, Ohio)
- Western:** Local 114 (Portland, Ore.)
- Canadian:** Local 406 (Moncton, N.B.)



Shuler Energizes Delegates

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler delivered a powerful address on the first day of the Convention. Shuler began by thanking the delegates and recognizing the importance of BCTGM jobs in the baking, confectionery, tobacco and grain milling industries.

She also discussed income inequality, corporate greed and the importance of organizing. Addressing the threat of A.I. on the way we work, she told the crowd, "We're not anti-technology. We're not anti-innovation. What we are ... is anti-GREED."

Shuler wrapped her address by urging delegates not to be afraid of the fight. "EVERYTHING we've won as working people in this country ... we won because we fought for it," she said.

Picard Calls for International Solidarity

Québec Federation of Labor (FTQ) President Magali Picard addressed delegates on the second day of the Convention.

Alternating between English and French, Picard spoke of the importance of International Solidarity to the rights of all workers and energized delegates to get out and represent their members well.



LOCAL 22 (Minneapolis, Minn.)

Excellence in Member Education

The 2026 Ray Scannell Excellence in Education Award was presented to BCTGM Local 22 (Minneapolis, Minn.).



Upon calling Local 22 Vice President Renee Almberg to the stage to accept the award, President Shelton explained all the ways the local has educated their members and kept them engaged over the last four years, stating, "Local 22 represents everything this award is about."

Local Leaders Address Right-to-Work Laws, Discuss Internal Organizing Strategies



During the Organizing portion of the proceedings, Secretary-Treasurer Woods called to the stage BCTGM Local 81 (Traverse City, Mich.) President **Coty Ryder** and Local 267G (Grand Forks, N.D.) Vice President **Jared Tozer** to talk about their work to organize internally for their local unions.

Tozer: "Internal organizing is not about collecting cards. It's about relationships. It's about earning trust. It's about showing people you care. People don't join unions because of paperwork. They join because they believe in the people standing beside them."



Ryder: "Don't wait for a law to tell you it's time to organize your members. Do it because that's what strong unions do."

Engaging with Central Labor Bodies

President Shelton called upon BCTGM Local 372A (Indianapolis, Ind.) Financial Secretary **Jake Watkins**, Local 406 (Moncton, N.B.) Business Agent **George Leaman** and Local 358 (Richmond, Va.) President **Keith Bragg** to talk about the value in affiliating with their Central Labor Bodies.



Watkins: "I'm fortunate to fight alongside and learn from so many talented leaders across numerous fields, and that benefits me immensely when it comes to serving the BCTGM."

Leaman: "When politicians know that labour is organized, engaged and working together, they pay attention."

Bragg: "Our committee is working to educate members, build stronger relationships among unions and prepare activists for the challenges and opportunities ahead."

2026 BCTGM CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Delegates attending the 42nd Constitutional Convention, the union's highest decision-making body, helped plan the BCTGM's next four years.

Each of the 86 Local Unions represented at the Convention, as well as the International General Executive Board, was given an opportunity to submit resolutions to the Convention for consideration.

Throughout the course of the Convention, delegates considered 22 resolutions. Prior to the Convention,



the Standing Committee assigned each resolution to a specific Convention Committee. In addition to the Standing Committee, other Convention Committees included: **Constitution, Finance, Organizing, Political Action, and Resolutions.**

The Committees are made up of local union delegates and advised by an International Vice President.

Committee meetings were held throughout the week while the Convention was in recess. During these working sessions, each resolution was





RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

thoroughly discussed and debated. Once each group reached a consensus on its assigned resolutions, a report was submitted to the Convention body, with a recommendation for action.

Delegates were then given the opportunity to debate the committee recommendation and vote for or against the adoption of each resolution.

In addition to setting the agenda for the next four years, this procedure provides the membership with a voice in the policy-making process of the International Union.



FINANCE COMMITTEE

Resolutions presented to the delegates were first approved by the International General Executive Board, covering such topics as fair trade, organizing, political action, education, preserving jobs, health & safety, collective bargaining, and engaging with state and provincial labor federations.

In addition, there were 8 resolutions amending the BCTGM International Union Constitution.

Resolutions passed by the Convention can be reviewed at bctgm2026convention.org/resolutions.



ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Relive the 2026 Convention Online!

Convention Website



Daily blog posts, photo galleries, a listing of resolutions passed by delegates and more are available on the Convention website.

Go to
bctgm2026convention.org
or scan the QR code
below to access.



Convention Videos



History, In Memoriam videos and a handful of speeches and featured segments are available on YouTube.

Check out the BCTGM
Convention Playlist here!



Download/Print Official Convention Panoramic Photo!

