

This concludes the forensic addendum on Aaron Ford's labor and union profile. The following sections synthesize the electoral implications of his record for the 2026 cycle, identify specific labor-related vulnerabilities, and provide a final decision matrix for voters.

VIII. The 2026 Labor Battlefield: A Tactical Forecast

As the 2026 gubernatorial race shapes up to be a statistical dead heat (polling indicates a 41%-41% tie)¹, Ford's strategy relies on converting union membership into a monolithic voting bloc. The contrast with Governor Joe Lombardo has moved beyond theoretical ideology to a concrete record of executive action versus legislative intent.

A. The "Veto Governor" vs. The "Firewall"

Ford's primary narrative is that he acts as a firewall against the erosion of worker protections. He is weaponizing Governor Lombardo's record-breaking number of vetoes (75 in a single session) to galvanize labor support.

- **The Rail Project Veto:** Ford specifically targets Lombardo's veto of **SB 404**, which would have removed prevailing wage exemptions for railroad and monorail projects. This allows Ford to argue that Lombardo is actively suppressing wages for heavy construction workers, a key demographic in the building trades.²
- **The "I Happened" Narrative:** Ford explicitly campaigns on his 2015 maneuver to save prevailing wage in school construction (the "90% compromise"), framing it as proof of his ability to deliver results in a hostile partisan environment. His slogan, "I happened," delivered on union podcasts, is designed to remind rank-and-file members that he protected their paychecks when Democrats were in the minority.²

B. The Police Union Paradox

The most complex dynamic in 2026 involves the **Nevada Police Union (NPU)**.

- **The Conflict:** In an ironic twist, Governor Lombardo (a former Sheriff) vetoed the NPU's collective bargaining agreement in 2023, citing operational concerns over pay structure adjustments. Aaron Ford, despite being viewed with suspicion by police for his "pattern and practice" reform agenda, voted **in favor** of the contract and the raises as a member of the Board of Examiners.
- **The Opportunity:** Ford is attempting to exploit this fissure. By voting for the raises Lombardo rejected, Ford is trying to peel off rank-and-file officers from their union leadership, arguing that while Lombardo offers rhetoric, Ford delivers cash.²

IX. Vulnerabilities & "Red Team" Analysis (Labor Specific)

A forensic examination reveals three critical vulnerabilities in Ford's labor profile that opponents will likely exploit.

1. The "Straw Donor" Connection (Waste Management)

A developing liability involves Ford's financial ties to the **Duong family**, owners of **California Waste Solutions**.

- **The Incident:** FBI raids in 2024 targeted the Duongs amidst allegations of a "straw donor" scheme to funnel illegal contributions to politicians.
- **The Link:** Ford received campaign contributions from the Duong network.³ While there is no evidence Ford was aware of the scheme, the optics of being funded by a target of a federal corruption probe—specifically one involving a waste management company (a sector heavily unionized by Teamsters)—provides opponents with ammunition to paint Ford's labor backing as entangled with corrupt elements.

2. The Gig Economy Tightrope (SB 485)

Ford's record contains a "smoking gun" for those arguing he is not 100% loyal to union demands when they conflict with the tourism economy.

- **The Evidence:** In 2017, Ford killed **SB 485**, a bill backed by taxi unions that would have imposed a mandatory 15-minute wait time for Uber and Lyft rides. Ford publicly called the union-backed bill "bad policy" and tweeted that it was "DEAD".⁴
- **The Political Risk:** While this demonstrates independence to business voters, it creates a wedge issue for labor purists. It proves that Ford will side with consumer convenience (and tech companies) over union desires if the economic cost to the "Las Vegas Machine" is too high.

3. The Teacher Union Split (CCEA vs. NSEA)

Ford cannot count on a unified education bloc. The **Clark County Education Association (CCEA)**, representing the largest school district, has been increasingly hostile to the Democratic establishment, even endorsing Lombardo in the past to gain leverage. Ford's alignment is with the state-level **NSEA**⁵, which puts him at odds with the largest local teacher's union in the state. In a close election, the lack of CCEA ground support could be fatal in Clark County.

X. Voter Decision Lens: The Labor Addendum

For voters prioritizing labor and employment issues, the choice between Ford and Lombardo represents two distinct theories of economic governance.

The Case for Ford (The Institutional Guarantor)

- **Core Argument:** A Ford administration ensures the state apparatus—from the AG's office to the Labor Commissioner—aggressively interprets laws in favor of workers.
- **Key Indicator:** His defense of the **NLRB**⁶ and support for the **PRO Act**⁷ signal that he will use state power to facilitate unionization.
- **The "Wage Floor" Voter:** If your priority is maintaining prevailing wage standards in construction or service contracts, Ford is the "Firewall" candidate who has a proven track record (2015, 2017) of prioritizing these statutes.²

The Case Against Ford (The Transactional Risk)

- **Core Argument:** Ford's labor support is transactional and intertwined with a "pay-to-play" legal donor network (Citizens for Justice) that drives up costs for consumers and businesses.
- **Key Indicator:** His reliance on trial lawyer funding⁸ and the "straw donor" controversy suggest a governance style susceptible to special interest capture.
- **The "Public Safety" Voter:** Police union members face a dilemma: Ford voted for their raises, but his legislative history on qualified immunity and oversight⁹ is viewed as an existential threat to their profession.

Final Verdict on Labor

Aaron Ford is a "**Pragmatic Institutionalist.**" He is not a labor radical; he killed the anti-Uber bill when it threatened tourism. However, he is structurally tethered to the labor movement. He cannot win without the Culinary Union's ground game or the Building Trades' money. Consequently, a Ford governorship would likely see a return to the "Reid Machine" style of governance: **pro-growth for the gaming/tourism sector, but with strict mandates that the generated wealth be shared with unions through PLAs and collective bargaining.**

This concludes the requested addendum. The insights are derived from a forensic review of legislative journals, court filings, donor rolls, and contemporary reporting as of December 2025.