

- 1 **NORTH CAROLINA STATE AFL-CIO**
- 2 54TH ANNUAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
- 3 SEPTEMBER 2011

NORTH CAROLINA STATE AFL-CIO 54TH ANNUAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
SEPTEMBER 2011

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1 AFFILIATION Committee

2

3

Resolution #1
STRENGTH IN UNITY

4

5

6 WHEREAS, the basic principle of the labor movement has been and will remain that strength is best found in unity; and

7

8 WHEREAS, the North Carolina State AFL-CIO can be strong only through the participation of its member unions and their
9 families; and

10

11 WHEREAS, great political, legislative, organizing, and other challenges face North Carolina workers in the years ahead as
12 they attempt to demand a better quality of representation in Washington, Raleigh and local government, and fairness in
13 the workplace; and

14

15 WHEREAS, through the leadership of Affiliation Committee Chair Will Cashion, the following local unions have affiliated
16 with the North Carolina State AFL-CIO: CWA 3601, CWA 3603, USW 1089, USW 1821, USW 1947, USW 9-429, USW 9-853,
17 NC AFSCME Retirees; and

18

19 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO, its officers, its vice-presidents, its staff and its member
20 locals work actively to encourage affiliation by all AFL-CIO local unions who are currently unaffiliated; and

21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the vice presidents personally contact unaffiliated local unions in their international unions
23 so that these brothers and sisters feel welcome to be a part of the state federation and central labor councils which strive
24 to serve North Carolina's working men and women.

25

26 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

27

28 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

NORTH CAROLINA STATE AFL-CIO 54TH ANNUAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
SEPTEMBER 2011

1 COPE Committee

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Resolution #2

4

SUPPORT FOR COPE PROGRAM

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6 WHEREAS, 2012 will see elections in North Carolina for U.S. President, the U.S. House, N.C. Governor, the Council of State,
7 the state legislature, the state judiciary, and others; and

8

9 WHEREAS, the North Carolina State AFL-CIO is chartered in part to organize labor's political effort; and

10

11 WHEREAS, we believe strongly in Sam Gompers' admonition to "reward our friends and defeat our enemies"; and

12

13 WHEREAS, candidates for public office hold in their hands the hopes and dreams of a more equitable future for working
14 people in North Carolina; now

15

16 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the N.C. State AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education endorses candidates for
17 legislative and local office who have been recommended by a COPE Committee of the appropriate central labor council or
18 the State AFL-CIO Executive Committee; and

19

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that every local be urged to participate in the Labor 2012 Political Program and make a one-time
21 \$1.00 per member [or \$.10 per month for ten months] financial contribution to the Victory Fund to assist with membership
22 education and mobilization in the 2012 elections; and

23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each delegate to this convention be urged to make a voluntary contribution to the North
25 Carolina State AFL-CIO COPE PAC fund to be used for contributions to worker-friendly local and state candidates.

26

27 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

28

29 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 LEGISLATIVE Committee

2

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Resolution #3

4

PUBLIC SECTOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

5

6 WHEREAS, North Carolina's General Statute 95-98 prohibits collective bargaining agreements by state and local government
7 employees, denying the right to collective bargaining to some 650,000 employees; and

8

9 WHEREAS, denial of the right to collective bargaining agreements is a violation of labor protections guaranteed by the
10 North American Agreement for Labor Cooperation (NAALC) and by conventions of the International Labor Organization
11 (ILO); and

12

13 WHEREAS, the NAALC and other international agreements also require standards of due process for workers, protection of
14 health and safety on the job and protection against employment discrimination, and the state weakens these protections
15 by denying its workers the right to negotiate contracts; and

16

17 WHEREAS, the North Carolina Hear our Public Employees (HOPE) Coalition, the North Carolina NAACP State Conference of
18 Branches, the North Carolina Association of Educators and many elected officials support the repeal of GS 95-98; and

19

20 WHEREAS, affiliates of the North Carolina State AFL-CIO are organizing firefighters, police officers, school employees and
21 other public workers; and

22

23 WHEREAS, bills which would repeal General Statute 95-98 and allow public sector collective bargaining agreements have
24 failed in recent sessions of the North Carolina General Assembly; now

25

26 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the delegates to this convention call on public sector workers to organize and demand
27 the right to collective bargaining agreements; and

28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all affiliates of the North Carolina State AFL-CIO educate the public and their members
30 about the importance of public sector collective bargaining and urge their legislators to repeal the ban on public sector
31 collective bargaining agreements.

32

33 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

34

35 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

NORTH CAROLINA STATE AFL-CIO 54TH ANNUAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
SEPTEMBER 2011

1 LEGISLATIVE Committee

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Resolution #4
STATE LEGISLATION

4

5

6 WHEREAS, legislation enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly is of critical importance to workers and the labor
7 movement in North Carolina; and

8

9 WHEREAS, the North Carolina State AFL-CIO is the primary advocate for workers' interests in the North Carolina General
10 Assembly; and

11

12 WHEREAS, for more than a quarter decade the North Carolina State AFL-CIO has as effectively as possible represented the
13 interests of working families at the General Assembly in areas including workers' compensation, unemployment benefits,
14 wage garnishment, workplace health and safety, wage and hour issues, public employee concerns, consumer protection,
15 migrant worker protection, access to voting, drug testing, health care, and many others, as well as on issues of importance
16 to particular affiliates; and

17

18 WHEREAS, the 2011 long legislative session presented a whole new set of challenges, as reflected in the Legislative Report
19 presented to this Convention; and

20

21 WHEREAS, our voice in the General Assembly is needed now more than ever, and

22

23 WHEREAS, the 2012 short session will present many significant new challenges; now

24

25 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO, central labor councils, and affiliated locals work during
26 the coming session for continued legislation beneficial to union members and all working families in North Carolina.

27

28 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

29

30 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 LEGISLATIVE Committee

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Resolution #5
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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5

6 WHEREAS, the United States Congress enacts laws that have a direct effect on the quality of life of workers and their
7 families; and

8

9 WHEREAS, many issues affecting the workplace can only be resolved by federal legislation; and

10

11 WHEREAS, our local union affiliates and central labor councils play a major role in electing most of our North Carolina
12 Congressional delegation; and

13

14 WHEREAS, more action is needed from the federal government to help the 15 million unemployed, to boost economic
15 growth and jobs, and invest in America's future; and

16

17 WHEREAS, Congress needs to renegotiate NAFTA, CAFTA, and all unfair trade agreements which result in exporting
18 American jobs and undermining U.S. manufacturing; and

19

20 WHEREAS, Congress must enact comprehensive immigration reform that would fully protect U.S. workers, reduce the
21 exploitation of immigrant workers and eliminate employers' incentive to hire undocumented workers; and

22

23 WHEREAS, a worker's fundamental right to choose a union and bargain collectively is a public issue that requires public
24 policy solutions like the Employee Free Choice Act and the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act; now

25

26 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO, central labor councils, and affiliated locals call upon our
27 Congressional delegation to support labor's position on the following:

28

- 29 ○ Support for the Employee Free Choice Act
- 30 ○ Support for job creation programs and assistance for the unemployed
- 31 ○ Support for the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act
- 32 ○ Support for meaningful immigration reform that meets AFL-CIO standards
- 33 ○ Support for protection of Social Security
- 34 ○ Oppose efforts to re-segregate public schools.
- 35 ○ Oppose school voucher programs
- 36 ○ Oppose contracting-out and privatization
- 37 ○ Oppose relaxation of overtime laws
- 38 ○ Oppose trade agreements that destroy American jobs

38

39 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

40

41 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 LEGISLATIVE Committee

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Resolution #6

4

SUPPORT PRUDENT BANKING

5

6 WHEREAS, in response to the collapse of the United States banking system, the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 was enacted to
7 regulate the system to prevent commercial banks from engaging in financial speculation and the creation of financial
8 bubbles; and

9

10 WHEREAS, until its repeal in 1999, the Glass-Steagall Act erected a firewall separating investment banking, insurance, and
11 brokerage firms from traditional commercial banking – by law commercial banks were prohibited from co-mingling funds
12 from other enterprises or speculating in such exotic instruments as derivatives; and

13

14 WHEREAS, the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act under the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Financial Modernization Act of 1999 allowed
15 commercial banks to move into investment banking, insurance and other enterprises, which led to the creation of "banks"
16 considered "too big to fail"; and

17

18 WHEREAS, banking institutions, foreign and domestic, have been bailed out by the American taxpayers at a cost of over \$25
19 trillion and they have also participated in the creation of hundreds of trillions of dollars in derivatives contracts and other
20 toxic "investments" which are bankrupting the United States economy; and

21

22 WHEREAS, on 4-12-2011, Representative Kaptur Marcy (D-OH) introduced H.R. 1489, the "Return to Prudent Banking Act of
23 2011" seeking to reestablish the critical protections of the Glass-Steagall Act; now

24

25 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO urge each member of Congress representing the state of
26 North Carolina to support H.R. 1489.

27

28 Submitted by: North Carolina Machinists Council

29

30 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 ORGANIZING Committee

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Resolution #7

4

SUPPORT OF FLOC AND JUSTICE FOR TOBACCO HARVESTERS

5

6 WHEREAS, Reynolds Tobacco Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Reynolds American Inc. based in Winston Salem, NC,
7 is the second largest tobacco company in the United States; and

8

9 WHEREAS, the farm workers harvesting tobacco utilized by Reynolds Tobacco suffer hardships such as long hours of stoop
10 labor in the fields, harassment in their work, abject poverty, miserable housing in their labor camps and the denial of basic
11 labor and human rights protections; and

12

13 WHEREAS, each year countless numbers of tobacco farm workers are affected by green tobacco sickness, caused by an
14 overexposure to nicotine and other chemicals found in tobacco leaves. Many of these workers receive little or no medical
15 attention. The vast majority of tobacco farm workers in North Carolina and the South harvesting tobacco are not covered
16 under workers compensation insurance; and

17

18 WHEREAS, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, which already represents thousands of migrant workers
19 employed by growers of the North Carolina Growers Association, has launched a campaign to gain dignity, respect and safe
20 working conditions for tens of thousands of tobacco farm workers in North Carolina harvesting tobacco for Reynolds
21 American, Inc; and

22

23 WHEREAS, FLOC wants Reynolds to honor its responsibility for the conditions and compensation of the workers in the fields
24 that produce their tobacco. Reynolds has a fundamental responsibility for how tobacco farm workers are paid and how
25 they are treated; and

26

27 WHEREAS, the CEO of Reynolds American, Inc., has repeatedly refused to meet with FLOC to discuss the conditions of the
28 farm workers harvesting tobacco used by Reynolds; now

29

30 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO calls on the new Reynolds American CEO to meet with
31 FLOC to discuss conditions in the tobacco fields as soon as possible; and

32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO and its affiliates will communicate directly with CEO Daniel
34 Delen by letter and other means calling on him to meet with FLOC, and continue these activities until FLOC is satisfied with
35 the company's response; and

36

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO commits itself and its affiliates to bring justice to tobacco
38 farm workers in the South and to engage in activities to support FLOC until FLOC informs the North Carolina AFL-CIO that its
39 goals have been achieved; and

40

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that before FLOC targets any other tobacco manufacturer whose employees are represented by
42 a NC AFL-CIO affiliated union, FLOC leadership will meet with that local union's leadership to discuss strategy around any
43 campaign targeting that company.

44

45 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

46

47 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | **Amended**

1 RESOLUTIONS Committee

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Resolution #8

4

DEFENSE OF THE POSTAL SERVICE

5

6 WHEREAS, the Postal Service, our national treasure enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, serves 150 million households and
7 businesses and provides the people of the country, regardless of nationality, age or economic status, universal and uniform
8 service; and

9

10 WHEREAS, through years of struggle, over 500,000 postal workers have gained good community building jobs with decent
11 wages and benefits and fundamental rights; and

12

13 WHEREAS, postal workers and the postal service itself are facing unprecedented attack (much like public sector workers
14 throughout the country) with the Postmaster General leading the charge to eliminate six day delivery, reduce hours of
15 operation for the public, close almost 4000 post offices in mostly rural and poor urban communities and eliminate over
16 200,000 decent union jobs; and

17

18 WHEREAS, the Postmaster General is calling on Congress to abrogate the recently negotiated Collective Bargaining
19 Agreement between the USPS and the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO and limit collective bargaining for all the
20 postal unions precisely at the time that the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO and Mailhandlers Union are
21 commencing negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement with the USPS; and

22

23 WHEREAS, not a dime of tax payer money funds the postal service; and

24

25 WHEREAS, the financial "crisis" facing the postal service is manufactured by Congress which mandates the USPS to pay \$5.5
26 billion per year toward future retiree health benefits, a crushing burden that no other government agency or private
27 business is saddled with, and in addition, refuses to release to the USPS some \$70 billion in over-funding of postal pension;
28 and

29

30 WHEREAS, NALC President Rolando said, "We do not need to destroy the Postal Service to save it"; now

31

32 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NC AFL-CIO Convention convened in Charlotte, NC on September 8, 2011 vehemently
33 condemns and actively opposes any efforts to dismantle, privatize, reduce postal services and attack workers rights to
34 collective bargaining; and

35

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be sent to every N.C. Congressional Representative urging support for HR Bill
37 1351, which would eliminate the milking of Postal Service revenues to fill government coffers while starving the Postal
38 Service, and allow the Postal Service to continue to fully carry out its mission to the U.S. public; and

39

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Convention promulgates this resolution among its affiliates and encourage its members
41 to actively stand together with neighbors, families, friends, the public at large and the postal workers and their unions -
42 including at the September 27th countrywide local rallies, and through petitions, lobbying etc., to defend the public postal
43 service, good jobs and strong communities.

44

45 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

46

47 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | **Amended**

1 RESOLUTIONS Committee

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Resolution #9

4

OPPOSE UNFAIR TRADE DEALS

5

6 WHEREAS, American manufacturing industries have lost tens of millions of jobs since various trade agreements have been
7 passed over the last three decades by various presidents of both parties; and

8

9 WHEREAS, the U.S. economy runs a chronic trade deficit of more than a half-trillion dollars a year and has lost more than
10 50,000 manufacturing plants in the last 10 years, and

11

12 WHEREAS, North Carolina has lost 381,351 manufacturing jobs (or 46.8 percent) since NAFTA was signed in 1994 and
13 202,293 North Carolinians have been certified as having lost their job due to imports or off-shoring under the Trade
14 Adjustment Assistance program; and

15

16 WHEREAS, despite promises about how good these agreements would be for the country economically, these unfair trade
17 deals have led to continued loss of good-paying jobs and resulted in a decreased standard of living for many hard-working
18 Americans; and

19

20 WHEREAS, our country is now becoming a largely "service economy" with low-wage jobs that threaten the existence of our
21 middle class; and

22

23 WHEREAS, our country cannot survive without having a strong manufacturing base and an expanding middle class; now

24

25 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO strongly urge that North Carolina's congressional
26 representatives to:

27

1). reform our tax code to end incentives for off-shoring jobs; and

28

2). oppose new trade agreements with South Korea, Columbia, and Panama; and

29

3). support renegotiation of all the previous unfair trade agreements which have contributed to the destruction of the
30 manufacturing sector throughout this great country.

31

32 Submitted by: North Carolina Machinists Council

33

34 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 COPE Committee

2

3

Resolution #10

4

OPPOSE VOTER SUPPRESSION EFFORTS

5

6 WHEREAS, in the U.S. the right to vote and the free and fair exercise of voting rights by all eligible voters are fundamental
7 principles of our democracy; and

8

9 WHEREAS, in the past year, over 30 state legislatures including the North Carolina General Assembly have introduced
10 legislation to require photo IDs when voting; and

11

12 WHEREAS, research shows that over 500,000 eligible voters in our state do not have a government ID; and

13

14 WHEREAS, such requirements would have a disparate impact on people of color, the elderly, young adults and the poor;
15 and

16

17 WHEREAS, there is no evidence that ID requirements provide solutions to problems that threaten voting integrity; and

18

19 WHEREAS, there is evidence that these requirements create a financial burden for states already in financial crisis; and

20

21 WHEREAS, such legislation is an assault on voting rights and is a coordinated effort to attack working people; now

22

23 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that North Carolina State AFL-CIO opposes voter ID legislation and other measures that
24 restrict voting rights; and

25

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO and its affiliates commit to educating and mobilizing our
27 members to regain, maintain, and advance voting rights in this country and join with our coalition partners to fight back
28 against these efforts to disenfranchise voters.

29

30 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

31

32 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 RESOLUTIONS Committee

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Resolution #11

4

SUPPORT FOR THE CAROLINA LABOR SCHOOL

5

6 WHEREAS, for over 30 years, the Carolina Labor School has provided an opportunity for union leaders and stewards to gain
7 information and skills to better serve their members; and

8

9 WHEREAS, union members from around the state share experiences with each other and develop a stronger sense of
10 solidarity and of their place in a larger labor movement at the Carolina Labor School; and

11

12 WHEREAS, students have been able to receive academic instruction from experts in the fields of labor law, workers'
13 compensation, grievance procedure and dispute resolution, labor history and economics, political economy, media and
14 communications strategy, member-to-member mobilization, legislative and policy analysis, and more at the Carolina Labor
15 School; and

16

17 WHEREAS, Mike Okun has taught labor law at the Carolina Labor School since its beginning; and

18

19 WHEREAS, Mike Okun's course on labor law has consistently been evaluated by students as 'excellent' and as the most
20 important class to take at the Carolina Labor School; and

21

22 WHEREAS, the Carolina Labor School would not be the same without Mike and his know-it-all friend, Pee Wee; now

23

24 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the affiliates of the North Carolina State AFL-CIO re-commit to supporting the Carolina
25 Labor School; and

26

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO and its affiliates extend their appreciation to Mike Okun
28 for his long years of service to Carolina Labor School and to North Carolina's Labor Movement.

29

30 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

31

32 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 RESOLUTIONS Committee

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Resolution #12

4

THANKING HANK PATTERSON

5

6 WHEREAS, Hank Patterson has proven again and again that he is a true friend of unions, union members, and working men
7 and women in North Carolina; and

8

9 WHEREAS, Hank has helped unions in organizing campaigns, strikes, labor board proceedings, arbitrations, and other
10 matters dating back to the J. P. Stevens campaigns; and

11

12 WHEREAS, Hank has also become perhaps the single most respected workers' compensation lawyer in our state, as well as
13 the one who has demonstrated an unsurpassed commitment to injured workers; and

14

15 WHEREAS, during the first great attack on the workers' compensation system in the early 1990's, Hank volunteered literally
16 hundreds of hours of his time to represent the interests of the North Carolina State AFL-CIO in negotiations at the
17 legislature, for which the North Carolina State AFL-CIO awarded him with the Coy Vance award at the September 1994
18 convention; and

19

20 WHEREAS, on each occasion over the years that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO has been called upon to respond to issues
21 involving worker' compensation at the legislature, Hank has stepped up and volunteered his time to help the organization
22 in its efforts to look out for the interests of injured workers, for which, in part, the North Carolina State AFL-CIO awarded
23 him with a Special Award for Protecting Injured Workers in North Carolina at the Sept. 2002 convention; and

24

25 WHEREAS, this year during the most recent, and perhaps most serious, attack on the state's workers' compensation system,
26 Hank stepped forward yet again, under very trying circumstances, to volunteer literally hundreds of hours, day and night, to
27 represent the interests of the North Carolina State AFL-CIO in negotiations at the legislature; and

28

29 WHEREAS, it is no exaggeration to say that every union member and indeed, every working man and woman injured on the
30 job in our state is better off, and our workers' compensation system is better, because of the intelligence, dedication and
31 passion of Hank Patterson; now

32

33 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO offers its deepest thanks to Hank Patterson for his
34 unique, unparalleled, and critical commitment to the labor movement and the workers of our state.

35

36 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board

37

38 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended

1 RESOLUTIONS Committee

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Resolution #13

4

HONORING THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE IMPERIAL FOOD PRODUCTS FIRE

5

6 WHEREAS, September 3 of this year marked the 20th anniversary of the horrendous fire at the Imperial Food Products plant
7 in Hamlet, North Carolina, that led to the death of 26 workers and injuries to 56 others; and

8

9 WHEREAS, on that date 20 years ago an overhead hydraulic line at the plant ruptured, spilling its volatile liquid onto the
10 floor, whose vapors were ignited by gas burners under the fryers, turning the facility into an inferno of flames and thick
11 yellow smoke; and

12

13 WHEREAS, panicked employees rushed for the emergency exits attempting to escape, only to find many of the emergency
14 exits locked; and

15

16 WHEREAS, bodies were found around the locked emergency exit doors and in the freezer where workers had fled in a futile
17 effort to escape the heat and smoke; and

18

19 WHEREAS, the victims of the plant fire were: David Michael Albright, Peggy Jean Anderson, Margaret Teresa Banks, Fred
20 Ernest Barrington, Josephine Barrington, Elizabeth Ann Bellamy, Gail V. Campbell, Rosie Ann Chambers, Josie M. Coulter,
21 John R. Gagnon, Bertha C. Jarrell, Brenda Gail Kelly, Janice Marie Lynch, Michael Morrison, Rosie Marie Peele, Mary Alice
22 Quick, Cynthia Marie Ratcliff, Martha E. Ratcliff, Donald Bruce Rich, Minnie Mae Thompson, Cynthia CS. Wall, Mary Lillian
23 Wall, Jeffrey Antonio Webb, Rose Lynette Wilkins; and

24

25 WHEREAS, Philip Ray Dawkins, a delivery worker, also died in the fire, and Patricia Hatcher who received serious injuries in
26 the fire, also died a few years later; and

27

28 WHEREAS, the fire caused not only the loss of life and serious injury but also resulted in the closing of the plant and the loss
29 of 200 jobs; and

30

31 WHEREAS, the Imperial Food Products plant had never been inspected by state OSHA due in part to the grave shortage of
32 OSHA health and safety inspectors; and

33

34 WHEREAS, the fire helped bring to light the mostly invisible body count of workers needlessly killed in the service of their
35 employers; and

36

37 WHEREAS, stricter workplace safety laws were enacted after the fire, largely at the urging of the North Carolina State AFL-
38 CIO, that included an appropriation to hire 61 new health and safety inspectors and necessary support staff to bring the
39 OSHA program to benchmark levels and give our state the second largest number of inspectors of any state-run program;
40 new "whistleblower" protection for employees who are retaliated against for filing or being involved in health and safety
41 complaints, including treble damages; legislation requiring all employers with a workers' compensation experience rate
42 modifier of 1.5 or more to establish safety programs to improve workplace safety, and those with 11 or more employees to
43 create safety and health committees made up of an equal number of employer and employee representatives; legislation
44 extending OSHA penalties to state agencies and local governments; an increase in OSHA penalties generally; creation of a
45 special-emphasis program authorizing the state DOL to target for more frequent inspections those employers with a high
46 frequency of OSHA violations or work-related injuries; establishment of a task force to study how the organizational
47 structure of the state fire safety and occupational health and safety functions could be reorganized to be more efficient and
48 responsive; legislation requiring employers to make annual reports on work-related deaths, injuries or illnesses and
49 providing the N.C. DOL with access to certain information from the Industrial Commission, the Rate Bureau, and the
50 Commissioner of Insurance; and legislation requiring the State Building Commission to study ways to make State
51 construction project sites safer for employees and requiring that contractors on such projects designate safety officers for
52 each project; now

53

NORTH CAROLINA STATE AFL-CIO 54TH ANNUAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
SEPTEMBER 2011

1 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the delegates to the North Carolina State AFL-CIO convention observe a moment of
2 silence upon the passage of this Resolution to honor the memory of the victims of the Imperial Food Product Fire and all
3 those in our state who have gone to work and needlessly never returned to their families and loved ones; and
4

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina State AFL-CIO continue its efforts to speak out for and otherwise strive
6 to help create safe and healthy workplaces.
7

8 Submitted by: North Carolina State AFL-CIO Executive Board
9

10 Date: 9/9/2011 **Adopted** | Rejected | Withdrawn | Amended