

- 1 NORTH CAROLINA STATE AFL-CIO
- 2 63rd ANNUAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS
- 3

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8 NOTE: All resolutions this year are “Submitted by the NC State AFL-CIO Executive Board”
9

RESOLUTION 1:

BUILDING INDEPENDENT, LASTING POLITICAL POWER FOR WORKERS IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19

WHEREAS, working people have the power to change this country by coming together to elect representatives who will rewrite the rules of our economy to raise wages, strengthen our right to organize unions, and ensure working people get our fair share of the wealth we create; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed essential workers to potentially life-threatening working conditions while corporate-backed politicians have opposed legislation to protect those workers; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has also exposed existing structural inequities, including institutional racism and sexism, astounding levels of inequality in income and access to healthcare, and an inadequate social safety net for all workers, especially essential workers and retirees; and

WHEREAS, the current federal administration has blatantly flaunted its disregard for the democratic process with the President suggesting the election be postponed due to the pandemic, a public health crisis that his administration has exacerbated through the lack of a coordinated response and spread of misinformation; and

WHEREAS, the current administration's attack on the US Postal Service is an attempt to suppress the vote and raise doubt about the ability of the USPS to administer the vote by mail system in a timely and reliable fashion; and

WHEREAS, our unions and communities cannot wait another year or two or four for remedies to the current public health crisis and economic downturn; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 census and 2021 redistricting process present a critical opportunity for voters to intervene and ensure a more level playing field at the ballot box for this coming decade; and

WHEREAS, opportunities exist up and down the ballot in North Carolina to re-elect and grow the ranks of labor champions from the White House, to Congress, the Council of State, the court system, and the NC General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the top political goal of the NC State AFL-CIO 2018-2021 Strategic Plan has been to break the anti-worker stranglehold in the NC General Assembly by capturing at least one chamber, if not both chambers, of the state legislature in advance of the 2021 redistricting process; and

WHEREAS, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic the NC State AFL-CIO has heavily invested in strengthening its internal communication systems and local union mobilization structures; and

WHEREAS, union members can collectively exercise our power in the upcoming elections by fighting back against the extremist, anti-worker agenda espoused by many of our current lawmakers and by organizing in our workplaces and our neighborhoods to drive our members and our families to vote and to hold officials accountable to a pro-union, pro-worker agenda; and

WHEREAS, corporations know the power of our solidarity in the workplace and in the ballot box and hence, they and their corporate-backed politicians try to divide us by stoking racism, fear, and xenophobia, including voter intimidation at the polls; and

1 WHEREAS, those same politicians have enacted laws aimed at voter suppression, including limiting early
2 voting sites and hours and making voter registration more difficult, and they have also gerrymandered
3 our state’s congressional and legislative districts in order to subvert the will of voters and stack the deck
4 in favor of anti-worker candidates; now

5
6 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates will reject any and all efforts to
7 divide us by race or immigration status and that we will unite and work together to elect pro-worker
8 candidates to the legislature, the Judiciary, and the Council of State, positioning labor to harness our
9 political power to win better policies for working families; and

10
11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in order to achieve that goal, the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates will
12 recruit volunteers to leaflet at worksites (where permitted), phone bank, and utilize peer to peer
13 texting; that we will encourage voting by mail, recruit poll workers, and strengthen local union
14 mobilization structures in an effort to encourage union members and our families to get out and vote in
15 support of our labor endorsed candidates; and

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates will double down on our
18 commitments to fight voter suppression, recruit union members to run for office, and raise resources
19 for the state federation “Victory Fund” and COPE PAC; and

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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NC State AFL-CIO will use our endorsement process to build power
22 and aggressively foster a new generation of elected officials who share our aspirations for growing the
23 labor movement, creating an economy that works for all, and ensuring shared prosperity for everyone.
24

RESOLUTION 2:
AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR ALL

WHEREAS, by uniting and making our voices heard and our votes count, working people can change our economic policies so that all of us share in our country's wealth; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic and record unemployment have made rewriting the rules of our economy more important than ever, especially as the pandemic has exposed gaping holes in our safety net and the urgent need for policies such as expanded unemployment benefits, universal health care, and paid sick leave; and

WHEREAS, this pandemic has created a workplace safety crisis with essential workers risking exposure to the virus while the federal and state Departments of Labor refuse to issue an emergency infectious disease standard; and

WHEREAS, we have an opportunity this year to elect a pro-worker Labor Commissioner, legislators, and other officials who will step up to protect workers' safety, raise wages, create jobs, and level the playing field for workers; and

WHEREAS, at the 2018 NC State AFL-CIO convention, delegates resolved to fight for a pro-union, pro-worker agenda based on the AFL-CIO Workers' Bill of Rights which states that all working people have the right to:

- A Good Job with Fair Wages;
- Quality Health Care;
- A Safe Job;
- Paid Time Off and Flexible, Predictable Scheduling;
- Freedom from Discrimination;
- Retire with Dignity;
- Education for All;
- Freedom to Join Together in Union;
- A Voice in Democracy; and

WHEREAS, at previous conventions, we committed that the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates will educate NC citizens, our members, allies, and elected officials on the Bill of Rights; we will work to elect officials who support our policy agenda; and we will mobilize NC citizens, our members, and allies to push lawmakers on all levels to pass pro-union, pro-worker policies; and

WHEREAS, because of our efforts and the work of allies and elected officials, we were able to win policy victories including paid leave for state employees, higher wages for city and county workers in several communities, and the introduction of legislation to repeal the ban on public employee collective bargaining and to establish work breaks for all workers—the first time in years that legislation had been introduced on either issue; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates will work to elect labor-endorsed candidates who support our policy agenda and that we will push lawmakers on all levels to pass pro-union, pro-worker policies, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates recommit that we will not stop our efforts until the Workers' Bill of Rights is a reality for all working people and all workers have the right to join together in union and collectively bargain.

RESOLUTION 3:

GROWING A POWERFUL LABOR MOVEMENT WHEN WORKERS NEED IT THE MOST

WHEREAS, the most effective ways for working people to exercise their power on the job and in our society are through union membership and collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has crippled workers, leaving millions jobless and others forced to work in dangerous conditions, exposing the lack of workplace safety enforcement from the Department of Labor; and

WHEREAS, the pandemic has exacerbated racial inequities with workers of color contracting and dying from the virus at higher rates; and

WHEREAS, organized labor has been on the forefront of strengthening workplace safety measures and ensuring workers' access to personal protective equipment, which shows the strength and power of unions to create change in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, too many North Carolinians do not have access to a union and are at the whim of their employer, which during this pandemic, too often puts lives at stake; and

WHEREAS, we have seen a surge across the country of workers who are organizing and engaging in workplace solidarity actions to call to for safer workplaces, better wages, and a voice on the job; and

WHEREAS, in this moment there is a real opportunity to build power and organize workers, with public support of unions continuing to rise and workers organically engaging in actions and rising up against injustice in the workplace and in our society; and

WHEREAS, if we elect labor champions to our state legislature this fall, we can work to repeal our state's unjust ban on public employee collective bargaining and help state, city, and county workers organize and win a collective voice at the negotiating table; and

WHEREAS, building power and making union membership real for more workers can happen only with concerted planning and coordinated activity; and to that end, the state federation can play an important role in supporting working people and our affiliated unions when they organize; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Organizing Committee will work with the NC State AFL-CIO Executive Board to help increase union membership in NC both in existing and in new workplaces and that state federation staff will work with affiliates to support their organizing efforts with research, training, and tools, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that affiliated unions will ask the federation for help with organizing campaigns as needed, will take advantage of training offered by the state fed, participate to the best of their ability in the state federation's Organizing Roundtable, and will continue to ask their national unions for investment in organizing in North Carolina and throughout the South; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that delegates will do their part to grow a bigger, more powerful movement by assisting the federation's efforts to support internal organizing, new external organizing, and the broader worker fight-back including efforts to raise wages, strengthen our freedom to organize and bargain, and increase public support for unions.

RESOLUTION 4:
STANDING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

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4 WHEREAS, we all contribute to America, regardless of our place of birth, race or immigration status.
5 There is no distinction among human beings. An attack against one of us is an attack against all of us;
6 and

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8 WHEREAS, the labor movement gains its strength from our common belief that all people are inherently
9 valuable and have an undeniable right to a fair, just, and dignified life—regardless of race, religion,
10 gender or sexual orientation; and

11
12 WHEREAS, for far too long, Black Americans have struggled to be recognized as full human beings
13 deserving of basic human rights—the rights to live safely and free from harm in their homes, workplaces
14 and in their communities; and

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16 WHEREAS, at a time when the world is struggling through a global pandemic that is exposing the
17 disparities in health, well-being, and economic security, the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery,
18 Breonna Taylor, and too many others further illustrate the devastating impact racism, white supremacy,
19 and violence have on Black people in America; and

20
21 WHEREAS, the tragic, senseless deaths of these Black people and the systemic racism manifested by
22 incidents of police violence and vigilantism have reopened deep wounds across the country and left
23 many wondering if Black lives will ever matter in America; and

24
25 WHEREAS, we must acknowledge that the economic system of this country is rooted in a history of racial
26 violence and the exploitation of enslaved African people and their descendants and that racist
27 oppression has directly and indirectly benefited generations of white people in the accumulation of
28 financial, political, and social capital while perpetuating an “us versus them” social narrative that has
29 been used to divide American workers for decades; and

30
31 WHEREAS, we understand that we must stand together in solidarity on the shop floor against the divide
32 and conquer tactics of the bosses in order to achieve victories in our workplace. We must also stand
33 shoulder to shoulder with our Black brothers and sisters in our unions and in our communities by
34 demanding accountability for Black lives, condemning state-sanctioned violence, white supremacy, and
35 racism, and rejecting the fear and division designed to keep us from uniting and fighting for shared
36 prosperity; and

37
38 WHEREAS, a failure to stand in solidarity for the total equality and safety of all Black Americans at this
39 historical moment would amount to a moral failure of the labor movement as a whole and an abdication
40 of our core principles; and

41
42 WHEREAS, the labor movement has not been immune to the racism that plagues every sector of our
43 American society and to eradicate systemic racism and its onerous effects, we must analyze our internal
44 structures, educate ourselves on how they interact with and reproduce oppressive social systems, and
45 commit our resources and time to creating anti-racist organizations; now

46
47 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in this critical election year, the NC State AFL-CIO and delegates to this
48 convention will continue to vigorously reject race baiting and divisive tactics designed to keep working
49 people from voting in our economic self-interest, and that going forward, the state federation will

1 incorporate questions about racial justice into our endorsement process and will actively educate
2 candidates that workers' rights and civil rights are one and the same; and

3

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NC State AFL-CIO and our affiliates will strongly oppose any policies
5 that increase racial inequities in our society and will diligently support policies at the federal, state, and
6 local levels that promote police reform and increase police accountability, eliminate racial profiling and
7 violence, and fight discrimination in the workplace and beyond, and

8

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the NC State AFL-CIO Executive Board will form a Racial Justice Committee
10 whose focus will be promoting racial justice inside and outside our movement and advancing a full
11 dialogue regarding racial disparities and violence in our communities; this committee will include
12 leaders from local unions, central labor councils, and constituency groups and will be diverse across
13 racial identity, age, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and immigration status;
14 and

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that by the first quarter board meeting in 2021, the Committee will make
17 recommendations to the Executive Board and that the NC State AFL-CIO Executive Board will use those
18 recommendations to develop and implement a plan to foster education, encourage conversation, and
19 offer trainings about racial justice at state federation meetings and to make these resources available
20 for use by central labor councils and affiliated unions; and

21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Committee will make a full report of its work at our 2021 state
23 convention and that we as a federation will continue to fight for racial justice because there can be no
24 economic justice without racial justice. Black Lives Matter.

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