

# **2023 RESOLUTIONS** of the **Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO**

*As approved by delegates at the 2023 WSLC Convention on July 18-20*

## **LEVEL THE MEDICARE PLAYING FIELD TO SAVE OUR MEDICARE FROM TOTAL PRIVATIZATION**

Resolution #2023.01

*Submitted by APALA, Pride at Work, Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action, Retired Public Employees Council, AFSCME Council 28/WFSE, and the Washington State Alliance for Retired Americans*

WHEREAS, traditional Medicare was created in 1965 as a public good to provide a national health care system for seniors and the disabled in the United States and has proven to be our most efficient and effective public health care program with administrative costs accounting for only 2-3% of Medicare spending; and

WHEREAS, since the federal government has created various for-profit privatized health care programs within Medicare including Medicare Part D (prescription drugs), MediGap (supplemental plans to cover Medicare's 20% copays), and Medicare Advantage which is permitted to take up to 15% of every Medicare dollar for administration and profits for managing Medicare claims; and

WHEREAS, the Trump administration doubled down on privatizing Medicare through the Direct Contracting Pilot, rebranded under the Biden Administration as ACO-REACH, which allows private equity firms and Wall Street companies to take up to 25% or more of every Medicare dollar for administration and profits for managing Medicare claims; and

WHEREAS, recent reports by the HHS Inspector General, academic researchers, and investigative journalists have uncovered wide-ranging fraudulent practices, confirming that. upcoding, delaying medically necessary care, and the denial of claims by insurers and other private businesses managing Medicare claims, together account for defrauding the Medicare Trust Fund and Medicare beneficiaries of many billions of dollars annually\*\*; and

WHEREAS, insurers and Wall Street are fiercely lobbying to gain a larger share of the soon-to-be \$1.6 trillion of annual Medicare spending by further privatizing Medicare turning it into a profit center, thus hastening the depletion of the Medicare Trust Fund at a time when Medicare beneficiaries are among the most vulnerable populations served in health care, and need more, not fewer benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO at its 2022 Constitutional Convention unanimously resolved to urge our federal legislators to strengthen traditional Medicare and protect it from any and all efforts to privatize Medicare, and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO and the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO have repeatedly confirmed their support for defending Medicare, expanding its benefits, and making quality healthcare a basic right in the United States by means of a single-payer system like Medicare for All; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO reaffirm its opposition to Medicare privatization and urge our federal legislators and the Biden Administration to LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD as a first step towards increasing healthcare equity by (1) adding benefits to traditional Medicare now only offered in private Medicare Advantage plans (adding vision, dental and hearing, eliminating the 20% Medicare co-pays and setting an out-of-pocket cap), (2) eliminating the excessive administrative costs and profits in the Medicare Advantage and ACO-REACH programs, and (3) recouping funds for the Medicare Trust Fund from fraud and abuse by Medicare Advantage plans and ACO-REACH contractors, as confirmed by the Department of Health & Human Services or Congressional investigations, in order to use the money thus saved to support a robust Traditional Medicare system that will lower costs and improve benefits, access and equity in Traditional Medicare for all seniors and disabled beneficiaries; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will send a copy of this Resolution to our two U.S. Senators and Congressional House members in their jurisdiction, as well as to President Biden and Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will encourage its affiliates and Washington's Central Labor Councils to bring this resolution to their members for discussion and action.

\*\* References – [U.S. House analysis](#) (2023); [U.S. Senate report](#) (2022); [HHS OIG report](#) (2022); [New York Times](#) (10/22); [Common Dreams](#) (2/23); [The Lever](#) (5/23)

## **RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LEGISLATION AMENDING VOTING RIGHTS OF LABOR REPRESENTATIVES ON A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT AREA GOVERNING BODY**

Resolution #2023.02

*Submitted by ATU Legislative Conference of Washington*

WHEREAS, current labor representation on a public transportation benefit area governing body does not enjoy voting privileges; and

WHEREAS, the absence of a voting labor member on a public transportation benefit area governing body leads to a lack of comprehensive understanding of the impact of the policies enacted; and

WHEREAS, labor representatives offer valuable experience and knowledge germane to the decision making of a public transportation benefit area governing body; and

WHEREAS, the WSLC and its affiliates continue to support equitable, safe, and reliable public transportation alternatives that support Washington communities; and

WHEREAS, a labor representative vote represents these WSLC values within a public transportation benefit area governing body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the WSLC urges the Washington State Legislature to enact proposed legislation amending Revised Code of Washington Chapter 36.57A to establish the labor representative on the public transportation benefit areas governing body as a voting member; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC hereby determines that the passage of legislation to enact such an amendment shall be a priority of its 2024 legislative agenda.

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF A JOINT LEGISLATIVE TASK  
FORCE ON WASHINGTON'S UNDERGROUND ECONOMY IN THE  
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

Resolution #2023.03

*Submitted by IUPAT District Council 5*

WHEREAS, the underground economy includes construction companies that do not register or do not report a significant part of their business activities with authorities as required by law; and

WHEREAS, when unlicensed and unregistered contractors fail to pay their fair share of unemployment insurance contributions, taxes, and workers' compensation premiums, they gain an unfair advantage over competitors; and

WHEREAS, the underground economy in the construction industry leaves workers without protection in the event of injury, illness or lost wages; and

WHEREAS, the misclassification of employees as independent contractors has been a method of skirting standard worker protections in the construction industry; and

WHEREAS, consumers are unprotected in the underground economy in the construction industry and have little recourse when work is poorly or unsafely done; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Revenue, the Employment Security Department and Labor and Industries have recently assessed over \$57.4 million in taxes and penalties due from unregistered contractors, it is believed that there is much more going uncollected in the underground economy in the construction industry; and

WHEREAS, Washington's previous joint legislative task force on the underground economy in the construction, industry created in 2007, brought forward successful enforcement strategies, and recommended legislation to address areas of mutual concern, and that their efforts be continued; and

WHEREAS, the underground economy is costly to Washington state in lost revenue and unfair to law-abiding businesses and workers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will work with affiliates and other stakeholders to develop legislation that establishes a Joint Legislative Task Force on the Underground Economy in the Construction industry; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will support introduction of this legislation and prioritize it for the 2024 legislative session.

## **DEFENDING CONTINGENT FACULTY'S RIGHT TO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

Resolution #2023.04

*Submitted by AFT Washington*

WHEREAS, many contingent and part-time faculty lack job security and therefore must rely on social services, including unemployment in order to make ends meet; and

WHEREAS, AFT Washington and its allies have spent decades educating contingent and part-time faculty about their eligibility for unemployment, but many faculty are still not aware of their eligibility; and

WHEREAS, the state legislature itself recognized the reality of job insecurity and necessity of reliance on unemployment for contingent and part-time faculty in [RCW 50.44.055](#); and

WHEREAS, many community and technical colleges waste money on services provided by out-of-state companies to contest rightful unemployment claims of contingent and part-time faculty; and

WHEREAS, these companies lack knowledge of state law and have in some instances made false claims about contingent faculty applications; and

WHEREAS, the process of applying for unemployment is opaque by design, leading to delays and denials of receiving benefits that cause further economic instability for contingent and part-time faculty; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will add strengthening the unemployment insurance program for contingent faculty to its policy work and legislative agenda.

## **IMPROVING WASHINGTON’S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROMOTING ASSOCIATED BENEFITS**

Resolution #2023.05

*Submitted by Washington State Association of the UA*

WHEREAS, the health and safety of all Washingtonians is impacted by the aging water infrastructure in Washington state which we rely on to pump, divert, transport, store and deliver safe drinking water to all Washingtonians; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers’ Infrastructure Report Card from 2019, Washington’s drinking water infrastructure received a “C-” rating and needs an estimated \$11.7 billion dollars over the next two decades in order “to keep up

with the growing demand and aging transmission, distribution, treatment, storage, source and other related infrastructure;” and

WHEREAS, according to that same report, Washington’s wastewater infrastructure received a “C-” rating, due to the fact that Washington’s wastewater utilities “project an increase of 40% in population served by treatment works by the year 2032” and that the “state’s wastewater systems are beyond the design life and....in poor condition;” and

WHEREAS, as a result of the passage of the Investments Infrastructure and Jobs Act of 2021 (also referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law), Washington state was allocated a total of \$128,639,000 dollars in FY 2022 for programs that fund water infrastructure projects, with similar amounts expected to be allocated in each of the next four years; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that this money towards projects that improve the health and well-being of Washington residents; to insure that the infrastructure is designed to meet the current and future needs of Washington in a manner that will adequately address the supply and distribution of water to meet the needs of all citizens and mitigate pollution to our natural waterways and reduce harm to native species like salmon and other fish; and as a result would create good union jobs in the trades that perform work related to water infrastructure; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will advocate that the state of Washington act swiftly and in a coordinated manner to fully leverage federal and state funding opportunities to update, improve and expand our state’s water infrastructure wherever it is outdated, unsafe or insufficient; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will be a partner to other organizations advocating for the health and safety of Washington’s residents, lands, waters and for the improvement of our water infrastructure and for the growth and promotion of union jobs in this advocacy; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will make an effort to fully inform and encourage affiliated unions to support and endorse these efforts.

# RECOMMITMENT TO CONTINGENT AND PART-TIME FACULTY PAY EQUITY

Resolution #2023.06

*Submitted by AFT Washington*

WHEREAS, the thirty-four community and technical colleges (CTCs) of Washington serve nearly every family in our state, providing adult basic education, English Language Learner programs, professional and technical programs, supplemental instruction for state-certified apprenticeship programs, correctional facilities inmate education, associate degrees, academic transfer degree programs, Running Start programs, and Bachelor of Applied Science degrees; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown consistently that our state's economy benefits significantly from the CTC system, due to alumni higher earnings, increased productivity and tax revenue, reductions in crime, lower unemployment, and better health and well-being across the state; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO and its affiliates throughout the state recognize the role of the CTC workforce in ensuring working families have access to living wage jobs and a pathway to economic security; and

WHEREAS, the CTC system has been chronically underfunded for decades and has over-relied on low paid, precariously employed part-time and adjunct faculty, many of whom rely on public services such as food assistance and healthcare subsidies and/or take on second and third jobs to make ends meet; and

WHEREAS, part-time and adjunct faculty in the CTCs earn as little as half of what a full-time faculty member earns for teaching the same class; and

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers Washington and allies won legislation in the 2023 session defining pay equity as 85% of full-time pay and requiring the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to develop a plan for achieving pay equity for part-time and adjunct faculty by the 2026-2027 school year; now, therefore be it



RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) prioritize fulfillment of this legislative intent to achieve pay equity for the part-time and adjunct CTC faculty workforce in its 2024 and 2025 legislative agenda.

## **RESOLUTION FOR EQUITABLE SANITARY PROTECTIONS FOR WORKERS IN CONSTRUCTION**

Resolution #2023.07

*Submitted by Washington and Northern Idaho District Council of Laborers*

WHEREAS, that in addition to the primary safety and health hazards faced by all construction workers, there are safety and health issues specific to construction workers who menstruate and/or express milk. These safety and health hazards in construction create barriers for underrepresented workers entering and remaining in this field; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to increase equitable recruitment and retention in the construction industry the additional health and safety issues must be addressed; and

WHEREAS, that workers who menstruate are in need of externally and internally locking bathrooms specifically designated for them to be accessible on jobsites; and

WHEREAS, that these workers need additional space and time to take off multiple layers to use the restroom, which may lead to additional time needed to dedicate to using the restroom; and

WHEREAS, that workers experiencing a menstrual cycle experience additional barriers when working on construction sites; and

WHEREAS, that the event of menstruating creates a need for access to menstrual products on construction sites without having to leave the job site; and

WHEREAS, the need to leave the job site to access menstrual products is a barrier for these workers to have the ability to continue to complete the work day; and

WHEREAS, post-partum workers need reasonable accommodation regarding the expression of milk; and

WHEREAS, that flexible work scheduling, including scheduling breaks and permitting work patterns that provide time for the expression of milk is needed; and

WHEREAS, the act of expressing milk will require a convenient, sanitary, safe, locking and private location that is not a restroom; and

WHEREAS, that a convenient, clean and safe water source with facilities for hand washing and the sanitation of expression equipment near the milk expression location will be needed; and

WHEREAS, the act of expressing milk requires a convenient hygienic refrigerator at the job site for the safe storage of breast milk; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will request legislation for sanitary protections for workers in construction to be introduced in the 2023-2024 legislative session.

## **RESOLUTION ON MONOPOLISTIC BARGAINING PRACTICE**

Resolution #2023.08

*Submitted by ATU Local 1765*

WHEREAS, most public transit agencies in the State of Washington are using outside negotiating and labor relations firms for representation during the collective bargaining process; and

WHEREAS, as a result, these firms reap profits at the expense of transit agencies and limit their service to the public; and

WHEREAS, this has created a bargaining dynamic for transit agencies that limit options for contract resolutions to which employers might otherwise be agreeable; and

WHEREAS, in practice, this strips from transit boards and their management a willingness to meet their employees on equal terms, thereby ignoring the welfare of their workers; and

WHEREAS, because of this relationship with public transit agencies, these consulting firms can promote aggressive use of arbitration processes to the detriment of fair bargaining for employee compensation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council condemns the practice of transit authority boards relying on outside negotiating and labor relations firms with the sole goal of minimizing labor standards; and

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will convene a working table to establish the facts and develop a strategy to address the use of aggressive, anti-union consultancies in public sector collective bargaining; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will partner with interested affiliates in the transportation space to consider policy solutions to the unfair approach to collective bargaining that some transit employers utilize to suppress wages and working conditions for their employees.

## **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF AIRPORT SERVICE WORKERS AND GOOD JOBS FOR GOOD AIRPORTS ACT**

Resolution #2023.09

*Submitted by SEIU 6*

WHEREAS, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac) is a critical publicly-funded infrastructure that is essential for driving the economy of our state and region. And where Sea-Tac airport service workers help people connect and power our global economy; and

WHEREAS, Sea-Tac airport service workers — a largely Black, brown, multiracial and immigrant workforce — serve on the frontlines of our national aviation system. These

workers including cleaners, wheelchair agents, baggage handlers, concessionaires, and security personnel keep airports safe and running smoothly even through a global pandemic, climate disasters, and busy travel seasons. Yet are underpaid and under-protected; and

WHEREAS, baggage handlers, fuelers, cabin cleaners, passenger assistants, food service and other service workers who support airlines and airports no longer enjoy the historically set standard of family wage jobs that allowed workers to raise families, live comfortably and retire with dignity, due in large part to airline corporations undermining working people of all races and suppressing wages while prioritizing enormous profits for shareholders; and

WHEREAS, nationally airports receive billions in federal funding every year to operate and Sea-Tac airport service workers believe that airlines have a responsibility to use public resources to serve the public good, which means ensuring good jobs and benefits for every worker; and

WHEREAS, Preparedness for another inevitable emergency impacting air travel and airports is necessary and begins with building a highly trained workforce with good wages and benefits to protect airport workers, the traveling public and our economy; and

WHEREAS, while a growing number of states, localities, and airport authorities have adopted wage and benefits standards applicable to airport service workers, there are a number of major airports for which there is no minimum standard other than the federal minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, Sea-Tac airport service workers are joining together to demand every airport worker has a voice on the job through a union, wages that let them support their families, critical support like paid leave and affordable healthcare, and manageable schedules. All of this is vital to balance the air travel industry and make it work better for everyone— passengers and workers alike; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Good Jobs for Good Airports Act (S. 4419 / H.R. 8105) will set national wage and benefits levels for airport service workers at major airports that receive federal funding, ensuring every airport job is a good job that aims to put workers on a path to a livable wage; and

WHEREAS, the airport service workers at Sea-Tac and King County would benefit from the adoption of a national minimum wage and benefit standards; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO urges Washington congressional delegation to support the Good Jobs for Good Airports Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO proudly stand with airport service workers calling for passage of the Good Jobs Good Airports Act and quality, affordable healthcare for all airport workers; and be it finally

RESOLVED, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will forward this resolution to the AFL-CIO for adoption.

## **RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE CALL FOR AN EMERGENCY NATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE IN DEFENSE OF REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE**

Resolution #2023.10

*Submitted by Washington State Federation of State Employees Local 304*

WHEREAS, reproductive health, including safe and legal abortion, is an inseparable component of healthcare, which is a fundamental right and subject to collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS, all people should have control over their own bodies and the ability to make their own healthcare decisions – including decisions over their personal reproductive health. The choice of whether or not to become a parent has a critical effect on the well-being of women and people who can become pregnant – not only affecting their physical health, but also their educational opportunities, job security, and union participation. Those who choose to bear and raise children need support to raise their children in safe and sustainable communities; and

WHEREAS, women and LGBTQIA+ people have always played a crucial role in the union movement, and as of January 2020, women were 50.4% of the US workforce – yet

attacks on abortion and birth control, lack of affordable childcare, and continued incidents of forced sterilization threaten to set gender equality back decades; and

WHEREAS, since Roe v. Wade was overturned, attacks on abortion access and bodily autonomy have increased exponentially. Established laws on contraception and same-sex marriage have been reversed or threatened. These attacks exacerbate financial insecurity, and especially hurt low-income women, people of color, people with disabilities, trans and non-binary people; and

WHEREAS, state lawmakers have passed total abortion bans, undermined portions of the federal Affordable Care Act, and created a hostile medical care environment that forces providers to relocate to other states and leaves many working people and whole populations without primary care providers. In addition, a federal judge is attempting to block access to the abortion pill, which would cause injury to working families nationwide; and

WHEREAS, many labor organizations issued statements in defense of reproductive justice on the heels of the U.S. Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade and have shown up in the streets to stand up for reproductive rights; and

WHEREAS, a national labor conference can help unite leadership and rank-and-file members across different unions, states, and industries, and empower working people to take an active part in building a new movement for reproductive justice, with labor in the forefront; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Washington State Labor Council will:

- Support the call for an emergency national labor conference in defense of reproductive justice; and
- Sign the open letter to AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler ([tinyurl.com/Letter2AFLCIO](https://tinyurl.com/Letter2AFLCIO) or see letter below); and be it further

RESOLVED that the Washington State Labor Council will consider additional forms of support such as:

- Encouraging other labor organizations to sign the open letter,
- Educating members about abortion and reproductive justice,
- Encouraging contract proposals which protect access to abortion, reproductive rights, and gender-affirming healthcare.

\* Open Letter to AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler:

We, the undersigned unions, labor leaders and activists, **urge the AFL-CIO to call an emergency labor conference in support of reproductive justice.** Nationally, reproductive rights are in a desperate condition. It is imperative that we never return to the days of back-alley abortions, and organized labor has a unique and critical role to play in preventing this.

In the short time between the Texas ban implementation (September 2021) and when the U.S. Supreme Court abolished the right for people who can become pregnant to control their bodies (June 2022), Planned Parenthood health centers in states surrounding Texas saw a 550% spike in patients from Texas compared to the previous year.

The inability to control whether or not to bear children impacts all working people. The same forces attacking reproductive rights are also seeking to destroy our unions. **Numerous labor bodies have passed resolutions and issued statements pledging to defend these basic rights.**

The U.S. Supreme Court's attacks on abortion, bodily autonomy, and LGBTQIA+ access to health care impact the majority of young workers and the 50.04% of the workforce that is female (Time Magazine, 1/16/2020), with the heaviest burden falling on workers of color. These are the very workers who are waging militant strikes as nurses and educators and union drives at Starbucks, Amazon, and in the fast food industry.

A national labor conference can help unite us in the struggle for social and economic justice. It can bring together union activists in a concerted effort to discuss and plan for action to fight for reproductive justice and bodily autonomy. The AFL-CIO has the influence to encourage organized labor to take a stand on this urgent issue and the resources to educate labor colleagues on how to join with our communities to build a movement.

We suggest holding this conference in a state where abortion has been banned or is facing threatening legislation. This would send a message to these communities that labor will stand with them.

Labor is in the most powerful position to mobilize thousands of workers in defense of this fundamental right. We look forward to hearing from you and planning next steps.

## **RESOLUTION REGARDING WASHINGTON STATE APPRENTICESHIP**

Resolution #2023.11

*Submitted by IAM District 751*

WHEREAS, an apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with related classroom instruction, all under the supervision of a journey-level professional and is one of the best ways to start a career and earn a living wage; and

WHEREAS, there are over 22,000 registered apprentices in Washington State; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and Legislators have committed to expansion and support of registered apprenticeship and apprentices through funding and legislation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will convene affiliates to strategize options for funding for registered apprenticeships at a level to support existing and future programs; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will promote the need for additional dedicated funding for registered apprenticeship as a vital part of infrastructure in the state of Washington to the Governor, the Washington State Legislature and Congressional Delegation, statewide elected officials, and relevant government agencies.

## **RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PROTECTION AND GROWTH OF WASHINGTON MANUFACTURING**

Resolution #2023.12

*Submitted by Machinists District 751 and Teamsters Local 117*

WHEREAS, Washington's manufacturing industry spans a wide range of sectors - including aerospace, food processing, forest products, metals, refining and shipbuilding, among many others – and every region of the state; and



WHEREAS, jobs in manufacturing have historically offered a high standard of wages, benefits and economic mobility because of high levels of union density within the industry; and

WHEREAS, Washington's union manufacturing jobs have been an economic bedrock for local communities, including by establishing a sustainable tax base, and for Washington families for generations; and

WHEREAS, the current transition to clean energy provides unprecedented opportunity for Washington manufacturers to leverage state and federal funds to modernize and decarbonize facilities, products and operations, and for the state to capture a vast range of new and emerging manufacturing sectors that aid in the production, storage, transmission and use of clean energy; and

WHEREAS, the present and significant opportunities to preserve and grow Washington manufacturing only equally benefit Washington workers and communities when there are guarantees that the jobs protected and created are good jobs and the workers have voice and agency; and

WHEREAS, recognizing state government plays a key role in identifying and steering manufacturing investments to Washington and that the state currently has limited capacity to do so, the legislature enacted the Washington Clean Manufacturing Leadership Act (SB 5269) in the 2023 legislative session; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Clean Manufacturing Leadership Act requires the Washington State Department of Commerce to oversee an independent assessment of opportunities to capture new and emerging manufacturing sectors and strengthen Washington's existing manufacturing base; to develop a state industrial strategy; and to appoint, with newly appropriated funds, an industrial policy advisor to ensure that Washington fully leverages available federal funding for manufacturing; and

WHEREAS, it is now incumbent upon labor to hold the state accountable for developing a meaningful industrial strategy; acting upon the strategy; and ensuring investments in, and growth of, manufacturing provide unequivocal benefit to Washington workers and communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, in coordination with the Washington State Labor Council Manufacturing Labor Roundtable, will call on the state to implement an industrial strategy that ensures the competitiveness of, and continued investment in, existing Washington manufacturing and maximizes the state's production of materials and products used in a clean economy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will call for the state industrial strategy to center around the protection and growth of high-quality and union-represented manufacturing jobs, including by prioritizing the use of union-sponsored and joint labor-management administered training and registered apprenticeship programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will request appropriate staff and/or leaders within the Washington Department of Commerce meet regularly with labor representatives from the manufacturing industry regarding the state's implementation of the Washington Clean Manufacturing Leadership Act; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will continue to convene tables for manufacturing unions that foster collaboration and strategic partnerships for the benefit of Washington's manufacturing workforce.

## **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FAIR TRADE**

Resolution #2023.13

*Submitted by ILWU Local 23*

WHEREAS, the Pacific Northwest has a long and strong history of resistance to corporate-centered "free trade," including the 1999 Battle of Seattle WTO protests; and

WHEREAS, over 150,000 jobs have been lost in Washington and Oregon combined since NAFTA, many of these being union jobs in manufacturing, agriculture, and increasingly, service sector industries; and

WHEREAS, in Washington State, there has been a net job loss of over 34,000 manufacturing jobs, which amounts to at least 10% of the industry; and

WHEREAS, these outsourced jobs are being moved to low-wage nations with abysmal records on human and labor rights; and

WHEREAS, labor has been a strong supporter of the fair trade movement, and union support has been crucial in countering corporate-driven trade; and

WHEREAS, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) is currently being negotiated by the US, which will impact the economic rules of 14 countries, accounting for 40% of the global GDP, impacting jobs, wages, labor rights, consumer privacy, environmental policy, “digital trade” and more; and

WHEREAS, these negotiations have been kept from the public, with extreme secrecy pacts preventing public scrutiny and accountability; and

WHEREAS, IPEF will be negotiated adjacent to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings; and

WHEREAS, a key series of APEC meetings will be hosted in Seattle in August 2023, explicitly because Washington is critical for US trade and engagement in the Asia-Pacific region; and

WHEREAS, working people are on the frontlines of being impacted by trade, especially in such a trade-dependent region, it is crucial that they are part of these discussion and decisions that will affect their lives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the Washington State Labor Council will communicate with the AFL-CIO this resolution and ensure that labor voices are heard in IPEF negotiations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council will encourage labor federations to organize direct actions in support of the AFL-CIO’s position on IPEF;

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council endorses the Washington Fair Trade Coalition's APEC events and activities, the APEC demonstration in July, and the Women in the Economy Counterforum, among other events; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council encourages members to attend the events by the Washington Fair Trade Coalition and others in the leadup and during the APEC Ministerial meeting in Seattle, WA in August.

## **SUPPORT CHILD WELFARE WORKERS**

Resolution #2023.14

*Submitted by WFSE Local 889*

WHEREAS, the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) was created in 2017 to restructure how at-risk children are served and to prevent harm; and

WHEREAS, it was determined in 2007 via a workload study that statewide child welfare operations were nearly 1000 case-carrying FTE's short of fulfilling its mission, and this shortage has never been fully addressed; and

WHEREAS, DCYF has been awarded 120 additional case-carrying positions in 2021 by the Legislature that remain unfilled; and

WHEREAS, DCYF case-carrying staff are supposed to maintain active caseloads of 1-8 or 1-18, yet staff hold caseloads anywhere between 1-40 and 1-70 with no signs of reduction; and

WHEREAS, DCYF has seen an increase in serious staff assaults, turnover, and harm to children due to negligence of management; and

WHEREAS, DCYF has decreased communication with staff including failing to hold and delaying Union Management Communication Committees resulting in the failure to provide staff with the necessary resources to prevent and respond to harm to children and for staff to keep themselves safe; and

WHEREAS, DCYF's critical lack of investment in its Juvenile Rehabilitation department has led to a failure so severe, events like the Echo Glen break out that resulted in assaults on staff and an overburdened system that didn't support the youth housed within; and

WHEREAS, DCYF's 2023-2025 Agency Requested Legislation, Strategic Priorities, and Decision Packages not only lack requests for adequate case-carrying FTE funding to support the requests, but additionally request no support for case-carrying agency staff internally, showcasing a lack of concern for safety and retention needs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington Federation of State Employees is calling upon the Washington State Labor Council and all its affiliated members to help put the weight of the labor movement behind securing safety and support for Washington's child welfare workers by demanding DCYF work collaboratively with their employees to improve conditions for their workforce and improve outcomes for vulnerable children; and be it further

RESOLVED, that WFSE respectfully requests all willing affiliates to contact Secretary Hunter and demand the agency do more to support its workers.

## **RESOLUTION ON LANGUAGE ACCESS AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT**

Resolution #2023.15

*Submitted by the WSLC Executive Board*

WHEREAS, immigrants and refugees have enriched the fabric of our communities, our workforce and our labor movement since our nation's founding; and the labor movement is the natural home for new immigrants struggling to achieve economic security and win social justice; and our commitment to building a labor movement that represents the needs and interests of all working people is fierce and unwavering; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO 2019 *Resolution on Immigration and the Labor Movement* led to the creation of the Washington State Labor

Council, AFL-CIO Immigrant and Worker Justice Toolkit, to support affiliates work to conduct a 'language access audit' to learn about the primary languages of their members, with a goal of ensuring that all contract materials, union documents and ways workers participate in their union are available in the most predominant languages in their sector; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO understands that eliminating language barriers to participate in our unions and labor movement is a continuation of our evolving racial justice work and key to strengthening the growing diversity of our labor movement; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO is committed to empowering all workers regardless of the language they speak; and all union members from all backgrounds deserve equal access to join together in union activities, to participate in labor discussions, labor programming, and the labor advocacy efforts of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO affiliated unions have many active and aspiring leaders, and growing memberships, who speak languages other than (or in addition to) English; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of those affiliated unions currently incorporate interpretation and translation into member meetings, events, contracts, negotiations, and educational materials to facilitate the full participation of their Limited English Proficient members and officers in their unions; and

WHEREAS, Washington is home to over 1,143,000 immigrants and in 2020 was the 2nd largest refugee-receiving state in nation, and 20.8% of Washington residents speak a language other than English<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that language access is part of our equity, inclusion, and racial justice work; and the fates of all workers, Black, Brown, Indigenous, Asian, or White, are interconnected, and that we either rise together or fail; and by acknowledging that economic justice and racial justice are inextricably linked, we commit to sharing the responsibility for racial justice and equity; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will encourage all affiliated unions to identify existing and/or create pathways to leadership for Limited English Proficient (LEP) member leaders; ensuring that the delegates, stewards, staff and elected leaders are reflective of the membership; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will encourage all affiliated unions to hire and utilize professional union interpreters when available; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will provide a list of education and training resources to Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO affiliates on how to expand access to Limited English Proficient members, and explore development of a resource tool to facilitate affiliate access to interpreters; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will implement a consistent practice of asking event registrants for their interpretation and accessibility needs and translation of written materials in all Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO events and meeting spaces; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO Labor and Immigration Committee will conduct a survey of all affiliated unions on the languages used by members of their unions; while learning the best practices used to expand access to union participation and leadership to Limited English Proficient members; and identifying barriers to participation to Limited English Proficient members; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, Labor and Immigration Committee will use the survey responses, and findings to develop a plan to increase language access within the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO committees, programs, meetings and events, social media accounts and website, translation of written materials, and will present the findings and plan to the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO Executive Board before the 2024 Convention.

\*(1) <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/WA>

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states-2021>

***Spanish/Español***

## **Resolución sobre Acceso Lingüístico y Movimiento Laboral**

Presentado por la Junta Ejecutiva

CONSIDERANDO, que los inmigrantes y refugiados han enriquecido el tejido de nuestras comunidades, nuestra fuerza laboral y nuestro movimiento laboral desde la fundación de nuestra nación; y el movimiento laboral es el hogar natural de los nuevos inmigrantes que luchan por lograr la seguridad económica y lograr la justicia social; y nuestro compromiso de construir un movimiento laboral que represente las necesidades e intereses de todos los trabajadores es feroz e inquebrantable; y

CONSIDERANDO, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, la Resolución de 2019 de AFL-CIO sobre Inmigración y el Movimiento Laboral condujo a la creación del Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO Immigrant and Worker Justice Toolkit (kit de herramientas de justicia para inmigrantes y trabajadores), para apoyar el trabajo de los afiliados para realizar una 'auditoría de acceso al idioma' aprender sobre los idiomas principales de sus miembros, con el objetivo de garantizar que todos los materiales contractuales, los documentos sindicales y las formas en que los trabajadores participan en su sindicato estén disponibles en los idiomas predominantes en su sector; y

CONSIDERANDO, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, entiende que eliminar las barreras del idioma para la participación en nuestros sindicatos y movimiento laboral es una continuación de nuestro trabajo de justicia racial que sigue desarrollándose y es clave para fortalecer la creciente diversidad de nuestro movimiento laboral; y

CONSIDERANDO, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, se compromete a empoderar a todos los trabajadores, independientemente del idioma que hablen; y todos los miembros del sindicato de todos los orígenes merecen igualdad de acceso para unirse en actividades sindicales, participar en debates laborales, programación laboral y los esfuerzos de defensa laboral del Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO y sus sindicatos afiliados; y



CONSIDERANDO, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, los sindicatos afiliados a AFL-CIO tienen muchos líderes activos y aspirantes, y una membresía creciente, que hablan otros idiomas además del inglés; y

CONSIDERANDO, que un número creciente de esos sindicatos afiliados actualmente incorpora interpretación y traducción en sus reuniones de miembros, eventos, contratos, negociaciones y materiales educativos para facilitar la plena participación de sus miembros y funcionarios con dominio limitado del inglés en sus sindicatos; y

CONSIDERANDO, que Washington es el hogar de más de 1.143.000 inmigrantes y que en 2020 fue el segundo estado receptor de refugiados más grande del país, y que el 20,8 % de los residentes de Washington hablan un idioma distinto del inglés (1); y

CONSIDERANDO, que reconocemos que el acceso al idioma es parte de nuestro trabajo de equidad, inclusión y justicia racial; y los destinos de todos los trabajadores, negros, morenos, indígenas, asiáticos o blancos, están interconectados, y que o nos levantamos juntos o fracasamos; y al reconocer que la justicia económica y la justicia racial están estrechamente relacionadas, nos comprometemos a compartir la responsabilidad por la justicia y la equidad raciales; ahora, por lo tanto,

SE RESUELVE, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO alentará a todos los sindicatos afiliados a identificar y/o crear caminos hacia el liderazgo para los líderes miembros con dominio limitado del inglés (LEP); asegurar que los delegados, administradores, personal y líderes electos reflejen la membresía; y por lo tanto

SE RESUELVE, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, alentará a todos los sindicatos afiliados a contratar y utilizar intérpretes profesionales que sean parte del sindicato cuando estén disponibles; y por lo tanto

SE RESUELVE, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, proporcionará una lista de recursos de educación y capacitación a los afiliados del Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO sobre cómo ampliar el acceso a los miembros con dominio limitado del inglés; y por lo tanto

SE RESUELVE, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, implementará una práctica consistente de preguntar a los participantes registrados sobre sus

necesidades de interpretación y accesibilidad en todas las reuniones y eventos del Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO; y por lo tanto

SE RESUELVE, que el Comité de Inmigración del Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, llevará a cabo una encuesta de todos los sindicatos afiliados sobre los idiomas utilizados por los miembros de sus sindicatos; mientras aprende cuales son las mejores prácticas utilizadas para ampliar el acceso a la participación y el liderazgo sindical a los miembros con dominio limitado del inglés; e identificar las barreras a la participación de los miembros con dominio limitado del inglés; y finalmente

SE RESUELVE, que el Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, AFL-CIO, el Comité de Inmigración utilizará las respuestas de la encuesta y los hallazgos para desarrollar un plan para aumentar el acceso lingüístico dentro del Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, los comités de la AFL-CIO, programas, reuniones y eventos, redes sociales y sitio web, y presentará los hallazgos y el plan al Consejo Laboral del Estado de Washington, la Junta Ejecutiva de AFL-CIO antes de la Convención del 2024.

\*(1) <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/WA>  
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states-2021>

## **RESOLUTION ON WSLC STRATEGIC PLAN: BUILDING POLITICAL POWER**

Resolution #2023.16

*Submitted by the WSLC Executive Board*

WHEREAS, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO is committed to growing independent political power that isn't tied to a specific party or ideology, but that centers the needs of the working class; and,

WHEREAS, Washington's labor movement is a reflection of the communities in which we labor and a portion of union members identify as politically conservative; and

WHEREAS, Washington State's labor movement has spent years building increasingly pro-worker majorities in the state Legislature; and,

WHEREAS, much of the legislative power runs through political programs which have emphasized urban and suburban legislative districts; and,

WHEREAS, our movement is strong not just in urban and suburban communities, but also in rural cities and towns where workers live and apply their skills to earn a living; and,

WHEREAS, many union members in rural communities want to contribute their time and energy supporting candidates who support their livelihoods and values, but are not always afforded organized ways to do so; and,

WHEREAS, many policy-makers at the state and local level might better understand and engage with working peoples' issues were working people better supported in finding opportunities to elevate their stories and policy preferences to candidates seeking union support, or who want to learn more about union issues; and,

WHEREAS, a strong state-wide movement should have a strong state-wide presence; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Board of the WSLC is developing a strategic plan under the leadership of President Sims and Secretary Treasurer Carter that prioritizes four areas of work: Creating Climate Jobs, Building Political Power, Growing Organizing Capacity, and Connecting Racial, Gender and Economic Justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this resolution be one of four on the Strategic Plan of the WSLC, building political power; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all four strategic planning resolutions be immediately circulated to the National AFL-CIO, all local unions and Central Labor Councils in Washington State, and that, accompanying this resolution there would be a letter from the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the WSLC requesting an opportunity to meet with the executive boards of the respective affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO develop a political program for the 2024 election that includes opportunities for workers in rural communities to engage and support candidates for elected office who have demonstrated sympathy and support for labor priorities, regardless of partisan affiliation, and for whom a COPE endorsement has been secured; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council explore a strategy to engage and communicate with union members who identify as politically conservative as part of the effort to grow working people's independent political power; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, work with its affiliates, constituency groups, and Central Labor Councils to identify such opportunities for candidates who share our values, and who have demonstrated a commitment to organized labor and our country's democratic principles; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, political program for 2024 consider this as an additive strategy to build political power and legislative capacity, but that it not tolerate bigotry, discrimination, or anti-democratic tendencies of any seekers, and will prioritize candidates who affirm equity, inclusion, and belonging for all; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, distribute its 2023 Legislative Report to all affiliates, constituency groups, and Central Labor Councils, to ensure that those elements of our statewide movement better understand the priorities, actions, and votes taken by current office holders as they consider ways to contribute toward the 2024 political program.

# RESOLUTION ON WSLC STRATEGIC PLAN: CREATING CLIMATE JOBS

Resolution #2023.17

*Submitted by the WSLC Executive Board*

*MERGED with Proposed Resolution #2023.20 from IBEW Local 46*

WHEREAS, energy policy in the United States is changing in an effort to address climate chaos, and Washington State has lead much of this change through mechanisms to price the impact of carbon dioxide pollution on our environment; and

WHEREAS, significant additional State and Federal resources have been made available to invest in new energy and transportation infrastructure to shift our energy economy away from carbon intensive sources and toward other sources that do not generate climate changing pollution; and

WHEREAS, Washington State has both a need to increase energy production to meet the demands of a growing population, while also continuing to introduce innovative, sustainable, and new emerging forms of renewable, clean, energy sources with the goal of replacing carbon intensive sources; and,

WHEREAS, Washington State is also poised to take advantage of Federal and private investment in green hydrogen, and alternative low-and-no-carbon jet fuels, to provide clean liquid fuels to power elements of our transportation network that are not well positioned to benefit from electrification; and

WHEREAS, our planet's climate is changing and the scientific consensus attributes that change to a general warming caused by human civilization's reliance on carbon dense fossil fuels to power our economy; and

WHEREAS, on July 3, 2023, we recorded the highest average global temperature on record, at 62.6 degrees, and on July 4, 2023 that record was broken; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, Washington State has suffered under a series of immense and runaway wildfires which have devastated communities in rural areas of our state,

and have made work more dangerous, especially for those who labor outdoors growing and harvesting the food that sustains us, building the roads and bridges that allows us to travel, maintaining and repairing the electrical grid that powers us, and puts more of our firefighters and other first responders who protect us in grave danger; and

WHEREAS, extreme weather events have become more common, including longer and more intense heat waves, less predictable snow pack to sustains our rivers and reservoirs, and more frequent intense storms that strain our water management systems, leading to more flooding; and

WHEREAS, during the Summer of 2023 extreme weather events have been reported throughout the country, including: the worst air quality ever recorded in New York and Chicago due to Canadian wildfires; 120 degree heat in parts of Texas, 130 degree heat in parts of Arizona and Nevada, and Montpelier, Vermont – the state capitol – being cut-off from the rest of the state due to historically severe flooding; and,

WHEREAS, members of our unions, our families, and the communities we care about in Washington State must be protected from the threat of wildfire smoke, power outages from increased demands on our aged infrastructure, floods, and the seasonal heat domes that cause them; and,

WHEREAS, a disproportionate health impact of climate change lands heavier on communities of color who have not historically been empowered to avoid or mitigate increased mortality rates, incidents of respiratory and cardiovascular disease, declines in mental health, and more frequent heat related illnesses, and to which children and seniors are particularly vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, an increase in intense heatwaves threatens our state's power availability precisely when residents demand it the most to cool their homes and places of work to protect their comfort and their health, risking a mass casualty event; and,

WHEREAS, workers deserve stability and safety on the job, whether they are a healthcare or homecare worker, a teacher or an electrical worker, a firefighters or any other worker providing critical services through their labor and who are negatively impacted by frequent and sustained exposure to intense heat and smoke from wildfires; and,

WHEREAS, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change has stated in its 2023 Assessment Report that approximately 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change; and,

WHEREAS, our union movement reflects unparalleled expertise in the development, construction, manufacturing, and operation of the infrastructure necessary to achieve this energy transition, while also providing the highest quality, unionized jobs with industry leading wages, top tier healthcare, and strong pensions to grow and strengthen the middle-class, and improving the standards for workers in the clean energy sector; and,

WHEREAS analyses of possible transition strategies for Washington State, including one conducted by the Climate Jobs National Resource Center at Cornell University, have identified several opportunities for our communities to build the infrastructure necessary to make this critical energy transition, some of which have been piloted locally like the Solar Schools and Health Through Heat and Smoke campaigns being led by unions in Seattle, hardening public schools, parks, and other public services against the impacts of climate change; and,

WHEREAS, these initiatives are creating areas of public respite with reliable air filtration, cooling, and rooftop energy generation capacity in areas where the public is likely to congregate for education, recreation, and shelter; and,

WHEREAS, the Executive Board of the WSLC is developing a strategic plan under the leadership of President Sims and Secretary Treasurer Carter that prioritizes four areas of work: Creating Climate Jobs, Building Political Power, Growing Organizing Capacity, and Connecting Racial, Gender and Economic Justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this resolution be one of four on the Strategic Plan of the WSLC, creating climate jobs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all four strategic planning resolutions be immediately circulated to the National AFL-CIO, all local unions and Central Labor Councils in Washington State, and that, accompanying this resolution there would be a letter from the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the WSLC requesting an opportunity to meet with the executive boards of the respective affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, continue its work convening affiliates to establish worker - centered approaches to energy policy; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will champion the construction and operation of infrastructure to improve our communities' climate resilience; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, help lead efforts to attract public and private investment in carbon-free energy development, and to do so in a way that promotes unionization in development, construction, manufacturing and operations, including but not limited to project labor agreements, apprentice utilization, labor harmony agreements, responsible bidder criteria, and prevailing wage; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that policies which increase access to union employment for those who build and operate this infrastructure be done so in such a way as to maximized unionized employment opportunities for workers traditionally left out of these industries, including women, black workers, indigenous workers, other workers of color, LGBTQI workers, and all other groups of workers who have been denied economic opportunity due to systemic racism, sexism, and other forms of oppressive bigotry; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, pursue public policies and budget priorities that promote the development and construction of new clean energy facilities, and the manufacturing infrastructure necessary to provide a Made-in-Washington component supply chain; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, organize and launch a Climate Jobs program to help coordinate and advance the work necessary to implement a labor lead approach to green energy development that protects our environment, creates good jobs, and meets the needs of all Washingtonians who want a viable, healthy future for themselves and their families.



## **RESOLUTION ON WSLC STRATEGIC PLAN: GROWING ORGANIZING CAPACITY**

Resolution #2023.18

*Submitted by the WSLC Executive Board*

WHEREAS, workers across the country, including Washington State, are rediscovering their power by organizing unions on the job at a pace not seen in decades; and

WHEREAS, Washington State’s labor movement has earned the third highest union density in the Nation through tough organizing drives in every sector, in every community, over the previous century; and

WHEREAS, Washington’s labor movement needs to organize 175,000 more workers to achieve the highest union density in the country; and

WHEREAS, the best solution to the runaway income inequality spurred by employer greed is to secure collective power for workers by organizing into Unions; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 the AFL-CIO passed Resolutions 4 (Organizing to Win Power for Working People) and 15 (AFL-CIO Prioritizing Organizing and Growth of Affiliates Unions – All in the Service of Helping Working People Organize) to recommit our movement to the life changing power of a Union on the job, and to support innovative organizing approaches through the Presidents’ Organizing Initiative (for which Seattle was identified as one of three pilot cities), resourcing organizing efforts at Amazon warehouses, and coordinated strike strategies; and

WHEREAS, in 2022 Resolutions 10 (RESOLUTION ON RACE AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT 4.0) was passed at the Washington State Labor Council Convention committing the WSLC to “continue to resource and capacitate the continued success of the Race & Labor program and racial equity across the entire organization by creating a fundraising plan to double the current Education and Organizing budgets of WSLC”; and

WHEREAS, some of the largest, most vehemently anti-union employers make their corporate homes here in the Pacific Northwest; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of thousands of workers across our state in union dense, and union light, sectors want to join and form unions at their job sites; and

WHEREAS, unionization stands to improve and correct inequities on the job laid bare by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the racial injustice our country has been grappling with since its founding; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Board of the WSLC is developing a strategic plan under the leadership of President Sims and Secretary Treasurer Carter that prioritizes four areas of work: Creating Climate Jobs, Building Political Power, Growing Organizing Capacity, and Connecting Racial, Gender and Economic Justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this resolution be one of four on the Strategic Plan of the WSLC, growing organizing capacity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all four strategic planning resolutions be immediately circulated to the National AFL-CIO, all local unions and Central Labor Councils in Washington State, and that, accompanying this resolution there would be a letter from the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the WSLC requesting an opportunity to meet with the executive boards of the respective affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will form an Organizing & Growth Taskforce of affiliates to develop unity around a Washington labor movement-wide strategy to increase the scale and pace of organizing in order to make the promise of union membership a reality for unorganized workers; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, Organizing & Growth Taskforce will determine the right and proper role for the Council to play in supporting affiliate internal and external organizing; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, Organizing & Growth Taskforce identify ways to nurture worker organizing activities, especially among women, Black, and Indigenous workers, people of color, immigrants, young, and LGBTQ workers in emerging sectors, and sectors with high rates of activism but low rates of unionization; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, Organizing & Growth Taskforce forge new partnerships, and engage current ones, with allies in the racial justice, environmental justice, gender justice, and faith communities to elevate the powerful notion that an injury to one is an injury to all; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, will present efforts of the Organizing & Growth Taskforce to its Executive Board for periodic review, and report back findings and recommendations to affiliate unions at its 2024 Convention.

## **RESOLUTION ON WSLC STRATEGIC PLAN: CONNECTING RACIAL, GENDER AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

Resolution #2023.19

*Submitted by the WSLC Executive Board*

WHEREAS, delegates at the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO 2022 Convention passed [Resolution #2022.10 on Race and the Labor Movement](#); and

WHEREAS, the WSLC, its affiliates and allies have been engaged in work on Race and the Labor Movement, also known as the "[Race and Labor](#)" program, since 2015; and

WHEREAS, the [WSLC Womens Committee](#) is the longest standing committee of the WSLC, founded in 1976, two years after the formation of the WA state chapter of the Coalition of Union Women in 1974; and

WHEREAS, the WSLC has expanded our understanding of both racial and gender justice to be intersectional and inclusive of all [genders](#), [Transpeople and LGBTQI+](#), [immigrant](#) and [indigenous](#), including the creation of the position of Director of Racial and Gender Justice at WSLC; and

WHEREAS, in 2023 the Supreme Court of the United States of America has taken positions on Affirmative Action, Student Loans, Religion, Free Speech, LGBTQ+ Rights,

Environmental Protection (The Clean Water Act), that HARM the freedoms of working people and do not align with the values of WSLC and the AFL-CIO; and

WHEREAS, in 2023 the Supreme Court has reaffirmed court decisions that STRENGTHEN the freedoms of working people in State Legislatures and Federal Elections, Race and Voting Maps, Tribal Rights, Religious Employees; and

WHEREAS, AFL-CIO President Liz Schuler quoted Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson “‘deeming race irrelevant in law does not make it so in life,’ and in their haste to do away with affirmative action, the conservative justices proved their callousness and disregard for the reality of systemic racism and its ongoing effects... preventing consideration of race does not end racism;” and

WHEREAS, the labor movement is comprised of and led by people who are descendants of both formerly enslaved people and their enslavers, indigenous and immigrant, queer and trans, disabled and able-bodied, students and retirees, veterans and pacifists, Republican and Democrat - the full spectrum of working people; and

WHEREAS, delegates of the [2017 WSLC Convention](#) called upon the WSLC to create a strategic plan to combat “the moneyed corporate financial institutions in the U.S. have gained control over our media, economy, government, courts and legislatures through the deliberate, careful and quiet execution of the strategic plan laid out in the infamous 1971 [Powell Memo](#),” created to undermine everyday working people and unions through “divide and conquer” systemic and institutionalized racism; and

WHEREAS, the American labor movement was founded more than 150 years ago, and affiliates of the WSLC have made history by electing President April Sims and Secretary-Treasurer Cherika Carter to lead a state-federated body of unions; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Board of the WSLC is developing a strategic plan under the leadership of President Sims and Secretary Treasurer Carter that prioritizes four areas of work: Climate Jobs, Building Independent Political Power, Organizing, and Connecting Racial, Gender and Economic Justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this resolution be one of four on the Strategic Plan of the WSLC, Connecting Racial, Gender and Economic Justice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that all four resolutions be immediately circulated to the National AFL-CIO, all local unions and Central Labor Councils in Washington State, and that, accompanying this resolution there would be a letter from the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the WSLC requesting an opportunity to meet with the executive boards of the respective affiliates; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Racial, Gender and Economic Justice goals of the WSLC include priorities outlined by the WSLC Executive Board and WSLC Resolution 2022.10, including but not limited to:

1. Culture Shift: Recognizing the ongoing work of affiliates within their own unions, the WSLC will convene affiliates and leaders to share and create a resource of best practices in order to build a powerful, inclusive labor movement
2. Capacity: Create a digital platform (such as Action Network) to connect and expand the geographic reach of the Race & Labor program, its workshops and certified facilitators, informed by local needs and regional perspectives (such as Local Unions, Constituency Groups, Allied Groups and the CLC Network)
3. Infrastructure: Continue to staff the work of Racial, Gender and Economic Justice in order to implement the Strategic Plan through organizing and education, developing goals across all departments at the WSLC
4. Resources: Under the guidance of the Secretary-Treasurer, support the work above through necessary fundraising, grants and identifying opportunities for collaboration in order to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, the WSLC will create a report outlining specific goals to each of the points above, to be presented at the 2024 WSLC Convention.

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF UNION BUILT AND OPERATED CLIMATE  
RESILIENCE HUBS**

Resolution #2023.20

*Submitted by IBEW Local 46*

*MERGED with Proposed Resolution #2023.17 from the WSLC Executive Board*

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FEDERAL LEGISLATION REQUIRING MINIMUM  
TRAIN CREW SIZE AND AUTHORIZING STATES TO ADOPT & ENFORCE RAIL  
SAFETY STANDARDS MORE STRINGENT THAN FEDERAL REGULATIONS**

Resolution #2023.21

*Submitted by SMART-Transportation Division/United Transportation Union Local 1348*

WHEREAS, over the past 50 years, U.S. railroads have continuously pursued a reduction in the crew size of employees aboard trains; and

WHEREAS, the elimination of crew size to the current negotiated minimum of two has significantly reduced the experience levels formerly available with larger crews, this has resulted in less experienced train crews to the detriment of the safety of the public and employees alike; and

WHEREAS, railroad operational requirements require that train crews regularly perform numerous tasks while chronically fatigued, labeled “task saturation” by the National Transportation Safety Board; duties once performed by four to six train crew members has been placed on just two crewmembers, thus threatening safe train; and

WHEREAS, technology may assist in improving the safe movement of trains, it cannot replace the safety and security of train crews consisting of at least two qualified and experienced, including some level of redundancy and, the ability to adequately respond

to accidents and critical incidents, and to separate trains stopped on crossings to allow emergency responders to cross the tracks, a task that cannot be performed by one person; and

WHEREAS, between July 24, 2013, and July 17, 2023, there have been 90 major U.S. railroad accidents involving numerous deaths, countless injuries, explosions, fires, and environmental damage; and

WHEREAS, as of June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, there have been thirteen fatalities of individuals struck by trains in Washington State so far this year; and

WHEREAS, railroad carriers, in their greed-driven quest for profits, have adopted a business model known as “precision scheduled railroading” which requires “doing less, with less” cutting critical manpower and mothballing locomotives both needed for safe, reliable rail; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2023, a BNSF train derailment in the industrial area of south Seattle took out a Seattle City Light power substation; on March 17, 2023, a BNSF derailed in Swinomish, WA. spilling approximately 3,000 gallons of diesel fuel; on May 9, 2023, an act of sabotage by one individual resulted in the derailment of a BNSF Unit Oil train in Tacoma, WA., fortunately without causing significant damage or any spillage; and on July 7<sup>th</sup>, approximately 300 gallons of diesel fuel was spilled by a tanker truck refueling a UP locomotive in Fife, WA. that the railroad carrier attempted to conceal; and

WHEREAS, in 2020 Washington State enacted reasonable and sensible minimum train crewing standards that, nonetheless, the railroad carriers are still seeking to circumvent and impose single-person train crews across the nation through maneuvering under the Railway Labor Act; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, before the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) that additional qualified train crew members aboard trains provide the public with greater levels of safety, especially where dangerous commodities are involved, and provide labor to open blocked grade crossings for emergency response vehicles needing to cross railroad tracks; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC endorses the adoption of Federal Statutory and Regulatory provisions requiring all trains operating in the United States, including Remote Controlled Yard and Industry switching assignments, to be staffed with a crew of no fewer than two qualified persons, we respectfully urge both our U. S. Senators and all members of our Congressional Delegation to support enactment of federal rail safety legislation including S. 576, the Rail Safety Act of 2023, which we applaud Washington U.S. Senator Cantwell for advocating; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC strongly advocates and urges members of the Washington State Congressional & Senatorial Delegation to take action to amend Federal rail safety legislation to allow states to enact and enforce more stringent railroad operational safety standards and requirements than the existing bare minimum federal regulatory standards, especially when it is in the interest of safety as well as reduced risk to the public, rail workers or potential harm to the environment; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we urge all members of our state's federal delegation to prioritize immediate enactment of rail safety legislation to prohibit railroad carriers from imposing perilous single-person train operations in our nation in both conventional train operations with engineers, as well as in Remote Control Switching and Industrial railroad work assignments using such technology.

## **RESOLUTION REGARDING WASHINGTON STATE RAILROAD OCCUPATIONAL AND PUBLIC SAFETY LEGISLATION & REGULATION**

Resolution #2023.22

*Submitted by SMART-Transportation Division/United Transportation Union Local 1348*

WHEREAS, railroads are a vital industrial infrastructure in Washington State employing over 5,000 unionized workers of various crafts, critical to commerce and the economy; the economic vitality of Washington State is predicated on safe, viable rail networks with adequate capacity for freight service for our ports, aerospace industry, maritime cluster, agriculture, and other businesses, as well as adequate capacity for passenger rail; and



WHEREAS the safety of railroad workers is of paramount concern including the following:

— Rail workers are among the only employees remaining without paid sick leave; although, increasing numbers of railroad employees are now being granted a very limited number of paid sick leave days annually by the rail carriers, motivated by public embarrassment resulting from the Federal government's imposition of a National Railroad Agreement that was defeated by a vote of the membership of railroad operating craft labor unions and did nothing to address many unique adverse issues that rail workers face including lack of paid sick leave;

— Nonetheless, railroad companies have unilaterally imposed, without negotiation; increasingly regressive and draconian attendance and availability policies for unpaid absences including due to sickness and injuries of rail workers and our family members; for unpaid time off for bereavement of relatives unrecognized as such by railroad carriers, subjecting rail workers to discipline and termination, and significantly contributing to ongoing exposure to and infection of illnesses of co-workers; the result is that rail crew members are operating trains through our communities when they are not physically or cognitively fit for duty due to such circumstances as well as acute or chronic fatigue;

— The Family and Medical Leave Act qualification threshold requirements do not consider the rail industry's unique work demands; as well as the absence of regulatory oversight that allows railroad carriers to continue to increase the difficulty of rail workers to qualify for, as well as to renew, and utilize FMLA as intended by Congress; the railroad carriers continue to artificially accelerate the depletion of railroad employees' annual FMLA leave banks at a rate far greater than the actual time used by rail workers;

— Railroad carriers continue to ignore and disregard Washington State laws regarding meal periods and rest breaks by denying rail workers these basic rights; they rely on a 20-minute meal period rule imposed by the General Director of the U.S. Railroad Administration in April 1919, when the Federal Government controlled the US railroad industry during World War I;

— Insufficient and/or poorly maintained walking surfaces, footpaths, and rail yard walkways also lead to worker injuries;

- Poor lighting conditions in and around rail yards and rail-adjacent industries;
- Unsafe and dangerous conditions existing at train crew change points across our state;
- Lack of adequate regulatory oversight regarding the maintenance of tracks and critical rail appliances and infrastructure;
- Lack of any regulatory oversight of switch and derail physical force operational standards and/or ergonomic standards;
- An unacceptably inadequate level of rail worker insurance protection for injuries caused by third parties;
- The lack of any hours of service law for yardmasters, the “rail traffic controllers” of train yards;
- A nearly total indifference to along with a complete lack of compliance with nearly all COVID-19 and infectious disease prevention, sanitation, and control protocols by Class 1 rail carriers operating in Washington State, placing rail workers and our families at increased risk of infection;
- No established state or federal occupational safety regulatory oversight of railroad operations; and

WHEREAS, an original exemption of railroad workers from Washington’s Minimum Wage law [RCW 49.46.010 (g)] enacted in 1959 created a loophole allowing railroad carriers to require employees to work without compensation while engaged in territorial familiarization as well as when performing other activities at the behest of rail carrier employers; additionally, this provision grants rail carriers an exemption from compliance with Washington State’s Paid Sick Leave laws, long overdue for repeal; and

WHEREAS, in 2007 [RCW 81.44.065] was inadvertently repealed, creating uncertainty regarding which state agency has authority over various aspects of railroad safety and which department is empowered to enforce railroad occupational and public safety regulations; four state agencies and ten local governments have different facets of rail regulatory authority; and

WHEREAS, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor declines to assert regulatory authority for the safety of railroad-operating employees working onboard or adjacent to trains; and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is not authorized as a rail worker occupational safety agency. The FRA underwent a June 2020 reorganization program eliminating longstanding regional safety oversight, this agency has in large part become captive to the railroad corporations. Additionally, the FRA abdicated its proper role as a rail safety agency by reversing numerous safety rulemakings and regulations, as well as numerous broad waivers of rail safety regulatory rules desired by rail corporations granted through January 19, 2021, most of which have yet to be reversed; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, and the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) have unclear and often conflicted oversight authority regarding rail workplace occupational safety; while the adoption and assertive proactive enforcement of railroad safety regulations is critical to ensure both public and worker safety, railroad operating crewmembers have very minimal occupational safety protections and work with almost a complete absence of regulatory agency oversight and safety enforcement, emboldening the rail carriers indifference to our lives, safety and wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, Washington State railroad workers continue to be disciplined and terminated for taking unpaid time off work due to illnesses or injuries or to care for a family member, or bereavement purposes and continue to be denied approval of their new and renewal applications for FMLA; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) supports, endorses, and will advocate enactment of the following legislative goals along with these regulatory policy actions regarding railroad safety:

— Enactment of The Safe Unpaid Leave Act for Washington Railroad Workers (SB 5267 & HB 1548 – 2023-24), to protect railroad employees in Washington State from railroad discipline and termination for unpaid absences due to illness and injuries of themselves and family members; for unpaid absences for bereavement, and providing railroad workers with state FMLA job and use protections including prohibiting the carriers from accelerating the depletion of employees annual FMLA time banks;

- Repeal of [RCW 49.46.010 (g)] so rail carriers can no longer use Washington State Law as justification for non-payment of wages to train crewmembers for work activities performed at the behest of the carriers, as well as refusing to provide paid sick leave to railroad workers;
- Enactment of state legislation mandating railroad carriers expeditiously clear blocked crossings when needed for use by emergency vehicles;
- Enactment of state legislation directing the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to establish a safe unpaid fatigue layoff program for railroad workers;
- Enactment of HB 1839, sponsored by Rep. Sharon Tomiko-Santos establishing maximum lengths for trains operating within Washington state;
- Enactment of state legislation, equivalent to the federal hours of service law for railroad-operating craft personnel for railroad yardmasters working within the State of Washington;
- Adoption of state regulations requiring that two paper copies of all train manifest's including the placement of hazardous material response information of all rail cars on trains containing such materials are in the possession of each train's crewmembers, to ensure this critical safety information is readily available to crew members as well as emergency responders especially at locations where cell phone and internet communication may be unavailable or non-existent;
- Adoption of a state regulation requiring that copies of all reports and complaints regarding any and all matters related to or incidental to safety (including sanitation, infectious disease control, occupational or operational safety) received from any and all sources including but not limited to employees, contract employees, vendors, shippers, and passengers, as well as from the public be submitted to the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission, within ten days of receipt; and these reports be made available in a publicly accessible and searchable database;
- Amending RCW 81.04.380 by significantly increasing the established fines and penalties that may be imposed on railroad carriers for violations of Washington

State laws and regulations, which were set by the 1911 legislature and have NEVER BEEN REVISED;

— That executive action be taken by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries and other relevant state agencies to enforce railroad carrier compliance with Washington State’s Industrial Welfare Laws (RCW 49.12) and regulations on behalf of railroad employees, who, unlike all other employees, due to extraordinary circumstances involving the Railway Labor Act (RLA) cannot avail ourselves of either the grievance and arbitration rights pursuant to the RLA, nor through the exercise of rights of a private cause of action, can rail workers “....be protected from conditions of labor which have a pernicious effect on their health.” Only by the exercise of the police and sovereign power by the State of Washington, to enforce Industrial Safety and Welfare laws upon railroad companies to compel compliance, can railroad workers obtain these same protections that all other workers of our state possess and expect; initially focusing on the ability of railroad workers to obtain lawful meal breaks and rest periods; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC advocates and urges the Washington State Legislature to enact legislation establishing a coordinated, consolidated, expanded, and comprehensive rail safety regulatory enforcement and operational oversight program, by considering the creation of a combined interagency rail safety task force; this task force should consist of staff members from all relevant state agencies, and be maintained under the supervision of the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC hereby declares legislation addressing such matters will continue to be a priority within the 2024 Washington State Labor Council’s legislative agenda; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, that in consideration of the untimely passing of our Brother Shahrain C. Allen, we pledge to pursue and complete his unfinished work agenda by obtaining enactment of the Safe Unpaid Leave Act, adoption of the Safe Fatigue Layoff program, as well as legislation to address excessively long “monster” trains, as well as blocked railroad crossings that impede emergency responders, that negatively impacts the safety of the public.

# **RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT INTEREST ARBITRATION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS**

Resolution #2023.23

*Submitted by Teamsters Local 117*

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the State of Washington to allow public safety first responders such as Police and Fire Fighters access to the interest arbitration process as an alternative to strikes as a means to settle labor disputes; and

WHEREAS, almost every emergency response begins with a request to 911 for assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety Telecommunicators who manage those requests to 911 and the subsequent emergency response play a critical role in providing public safety services to the people of Washington; and

WHEREAS, Public Safety Telecommunicators triage requests for emergency responses, provide lifesaving instructions and guidance to those who call 911, and ensure that the appropriate response for the situation, be it law enforcement, behavioral health, fire, and emergency medical; and

WHEREAS, Public Safety Telecommunicators dispatch, track, process, and transmit information from the public and continually communicates with responders providing an additional layer of safety for everyone involved in an emergency situation; and

WHEREAS, in spite of the important work that they do, Public Safety Telecommunicators are too often undervalued by their employers; and

WHEREAS, Public Safety Telecommunicators are required to work long hours including on occasion excessive mandatory overtime, for agencies that are often understaffed, in a high-stress environment, in a job that can expose them to traumatic incidents; and

WHEREAS, because police and fire cannot strike without causing great harm to the general public, they have access to Interest Arbitration which resolves outstanding issues in the collective bargaining process; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of both union members and the general public to improve working conditions for Public Safety Telecommunicators to ensure that a well-trained, well-rested, and fairly compensated worker will be on the line when disaster strikes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) go on the record in support of amending state law to allow Public Safety Telecommunicators access to interest arbitration; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC advocates and urges the Washington State Legislature to enact legislation providing interest arbitration for Public Safety Telecommunicators; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the WSLC hereby declares that legislation providing interest arbitration for Public Safety Telecommunicators will be a priority within the Washington State Labor Council's legislative agenda.

## **RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE CLOSURE OF LARCH CORRECTIONS CENTER**

Resolution #2023.24

*Submitted by Teamsters Local 117*

WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Corrections has proposed closing the Larch Corrections Center in Yacolt, Washington; and

WHEREAS, Larch Corrections Center is a minimum custody facility focused on helping incarcerated individuals prepare for release back into our communities; and

WHEREAS, Larch Corrections Center is a model facility with nationally-recognized educational programs for the incarcerated population, including College Credit courses, High School Plus Diploma courses, and General Education Development (GED) courses

offered in collaboration with Clark College and Sustainability in Prisons Project programs offered in collaboration with Evergreen State College; and

WHEREAS, the transfer of these individuals will interrupt, delay, and in some cases, eliminate the opportunity to complete course work and graduation for some students because the same or similar programs do not exist at all major institutions; and

WHEREAS, in coordination with the Department of Natural Resources, Larch Corrections Center staff train incarcerated individuals to assist in preventing and fighting wildfires, which both benefits our communities, the environment, and teaches incarcerated individuals teamwork, leadership, practical skills in forestry management, and community service skills that prepare them for good jobs after they are released; and

WHEREAS, the closure of Larch Corrections Center would have a detrimental impact on the Department of Natural Resources and its ability to prevent and fight wildfires in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Corrections plans to move both staff and incarcerated individuals to away from Southwestern Washington, to facilities where there are larger populations of incarcerated individuals, including some who are more violent and require more restrictive levels of supervision; and

WHEREAS, these major facilities often have long wait times for medical treatment and enrollment in necessary programming that may extend the amount of time individuals must remain incarcerated before accessing Graduated Re-entry and reuniting with their families; and

WHEREAS, Larch Corrections Center is the only facility in Southwest Washington and is located near Vancouver, WA the fourth largest city in the state; the families of incarcerated individuals would be harmed by the closure, and many will be forced to travel longer distances to visit their loved ones, or not visit them at all, if they are assigned to other prisons on the Eastern side of the state; and

WHEREAS, Good union jobs at Larch have supported correctional employees and their families in southwest Washington for decades; and



WHEREAS, Closure of the facility would require these families to sell their homes, in some cases end employment, and sever ties with local businesses, schools, and their neighbors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) go on the record as opposing the closure of the Larch Corrections Center; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will transmit this resolution to the Governor, all members of the Washington State Legislature, and the Executive Team of the Department of Corrections; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that, should the Department of Corrections close Larch Corrections Center, WSLC will provide layoff support to any of our Union siblings impacted by the closure.

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT ADEQUATE STAFFING AT DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTIONS AND AGAINST UNSAFE CHANGES TO THE DEPARTMENT'S  
ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION POLICIES**

Resolution #2023.25

*Submitted by Teamsters Local 117*

WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Corrections has begun working on a plan to submit to the Washington State Legislature to reduce the use of “solitary confinement” by 90 percent, by June 30, 2029; and

WHEREAS, while the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) supports reforms to make our correctional facilities more humane, it recognizes that administratively segregating certain incarcerated individuals may sometimes be necessary if there is a significant risk to staff or other incarcerated individuals; and

WHEREAS, the WSLC recognizes that the Department of Corrections currently operates with inadequate staff, in part, due to its antiquated custody staffing model; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Corrections' custody staffing model has not been significantly updated since it was developed in the 1990s despite passage of a staffing study and a report that provides a plan to do so; and

WHEREAS, unlike every other state in the country, Washington State applies the same custody staffing model at each of its correctional facilities, regardless of a facility's age, a facility's design, the type of programs offered, or the type of incarcerated individuals housed at the facility; and

WHEREAS, the Department's failure to update its custody staffing model means that the model does not reflect the changes that have occurred in our state's updated approach to corrections; and

WHEREAS, the Labor movement believes in true rehabilitation and support for reentry, namely an increased emphasis on providing education, job training programs such as apprenticeships, forestry management, wildland firefighting, improved access to healthcare and behavioral health resources; and

WHEREAS, at present, the Department's staffing model underestimates the baseline level of staffing needed to ensure basic prison operations, which results in a constant need for overtime; and

WHEREAS, making significant changes to the Department of Corrections' approach to administrative segregations without addressing the department's staffing problems will result in the prison system being more violent and more dangerous for both staff and incarcerated individuals; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, when New York State limited the use of administrative segregation without first ensuring the safety of their staff and incarcerated individuals, according to a report issued by that state's Prison Violence Task Force, staff assaults increased by 29% and assaults on incarcerated individuals increased by 39%; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the WSLC continue opposition to legislation that changes the Department of Correction's administrative segregation policy that would harm the safety of staff and incarcerated individuals without also making the necessary capital and staffing investments to do so safely; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will urge the Governor, the Washington State Legislature and the Department of Corrections to fulfill its mission ‘to improve public safety by positively changing lives’ by fully funding critical rehabilitation programs with appropriate staffing; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC advocates and urges the Governor, the Washington State Legislature, and the Department of Corrections, not to consider major changes to the Department of Correction’s administrative segregation policies until the Department can ensure that it has adequate staffing to ensure that such changes do not negatively impact the safety of staff or incarcerated individuals; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will continue to fight the root causes such as poverty, structural racism, lack of access to education and proper mental health resources that bring too many into our criminal justice system to begin with; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will transmit this resolution to the Governor, all members of the Washington State Legislature, and the Executive Team of the Department of Corrections.

## **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SAFE WORKING CLIMATES FOR ALL WORKERS**

Resolution #2023.26

*Submitted by Washington Public Employees Association/UFCW 365, Washington Education Association, and Familias Unidas por la Justicia*

WHEREAS, heatwaves and wildfires are becoming more frequent as the climate changes with the number of extreme wildfire events expected to increase by 30% by 2050; and

WHEREAS, uncontrolled wildfires are appearing in more areas that have not historically experienced wildfires; and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency states that an Air Quality Index (AQI) range of 51-100 poses “a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution”; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified socially vulnerable populations such as farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Department of Health has issued guidelines for children and youth activities for air quality that notes all youth under 18 are considered a sensitive group and begins mitigation strategies when AQI reaches 51; and

WHEREAS, particulates from wildfire smoke can be hazardous to workers' health, especially those who are prone to asthma, have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), individuals who are pregnant, or those with heart disease; and

WHEREAS, outdoor, low-wage laborers whose work might get canceled by weather impacts can't necessarily bear many days without pay – pitting financial needs against their own health and safety interests; and

WHEREAS, rising temperatures can result in high temperatures indoors as well as outdoors that impact workers' health and safety, including increased risks of heat stroke where air conditioning is not accessible; and

WHEREAS, many buildings, including public schools, in Washington are not equipped with air conditioning to control indoor temperatures during heat waves; and

WHEREAS, when heatwaves and wildfire smoke are present at the same time, indoor air temperatures can rise to dangerous levels when windows and doors must be kept shut to keep out unhealthy outdoor air; and

WHEREAS, hot and cold temperatures or otherwise unhealthy air quality can impede the ability of workers to complete jobs upon which the public relies; and

WHEREAS, hot and cold temperatures or otherwise unhealthy air quality can harm students and other children studying or receiving child care services in public spaces, raising questions as to whether working parents feel safe leaving their children in these spaces; and

WHEREAS, the health and safety impacts from heat waves and wildfire smoke fall disproportionately on lower wage workers and on students, workers and residents in communities with higher concentrations of people experiencing poverty; and

WHEREAS, the Covid-19 Pandemic highlighted the need for proper workplace ventilation to mitigate safety risks of communicable disease and exposed the inequities in health and safety protections among workers; and

WHEREAS, working conditions must consider the health and safety of workers and provide for equitable protections from particulate and temperature exposures; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will lobby that exposure control requirements begin at 51 AQI in the outdoor air quality standards for wildfire smoke under consideration by the Department of Labor and Industries; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will lobby to establish the second phase of rulemaking on heat standards to address indoor heat standards and mitigation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will reinforce the need to have indoor temperature and air quality standards that work in coordination when areas of the state face simultaneous heat wave and wildfire smoke conditions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will support capital funding requests to assist school districts, local governments, state government, and non-profit service providers to update HVAC systems to increase air filtration and provide air conditioning; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO urge the State's Congressional delegation to seek amendments to the Federal OSHA heat standards to include occupations that work out of doors like letter carriers, rail workers, and other transportation workers.