

Reclaiming Worker Power Energizing Our Movement

WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

SUPPORT OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR STRIKING WORKERS RESOLUTION #2024.23

WHEREAS, we are living through a time of historic inequality, where two-thirds of our nation's wealth is owned by just 10% of the population and working people are squeezed by increasing costs; and

WHEREAS, the cost of living in Washington is 17% higher than the national average, with forty-six percent of renter-occupied households in Washington in 2023 are spending more than 30% of their income on housing; and

WHEREAS, large national and international businesses are raking in record profits, including Amazon, which reported \$30 billion in profits, and Starbucks, whose revenue over a 12 month period ending March '24 was \$36 billion, a 7.45% increase year-over-year; and

WHEREAS, in response to wages not keeping up; in response to rampant unshared corporate profits; in response to increased productivity that does not come with increased wages, workers are forming unions; and

WHEREAS, workers from every sector across the state are demanding the respect of a strong union contract, and yet; and

WHEREAS, there is a fundamental power imbalance that inherently favors employers over workers and employers use this power to illegally refuse to bargain in good faith; and

WHEREAS, employers regularly use workers' economic instability as a union busting tactic and a strategy to pressure workers to accept concessions that risk workplace and public safety, erode wages, retirement security and health care coverage; and

WHEREAS, going on strike today for fair treatment means workers risk losing housing, healthcare and their ability to put food on the table; and

WHEREAS, allowing workers access to the unemployment safety net will help level this power imbalance and encourage fair bargaining by employers; and

WHEREAS, considering that undocumented workers contribute to the safety net are being denied access to these benefits; now therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will lead efforts to allow workers forced to strike to collect unemployment insurance, to better leverage this fundamental equalizing tactic for working people; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will work with all affiliates to promote and support solidarity actions and campaigns to pass both Unemployment Insurance for striking workers and supplement wage replacement programs for all undocumented workers; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will work with all affiliates to promote and support solidarity actions and a campaign to pass UI for all striking workers; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will meet with the next Washington governor about publicly supporting all striking workers, including immigrant workers; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO forward this resolution to the AFL-CIO.