



Resolution #1

RESOLUTION ON RACIAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

PRESENTED BY: ORANGE COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL, SAN FRANCISCO LABOR COUNCIL, SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES LABOR COUNCIL AND UDWA LOCAL 3930

WHEREAS, the California Labor Movement vigilantly agrees with the Preamble of the AFL-CIO Constitution that the fundamental goal of the House of Labor is, and should always be, “to vanquish oppression, privation, and cruelty in all their forms.”; and that all of our work in the labor movement must be rooted in this base principle; and

WHEREAS, the dehumanization of Africans was used to justify slavery and that institutions within the United States were founded upon the systemic oppression of Black people and that oppression has appeared as the Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, lynching, segregation, police violence and continues to appear today as discriminatory labor laws, housing discrimination, three-strike laws, mandatory minimum sentences, mass incarceration, economic discrimination and disenfranchisement, police brutality, poverty, unaffordable housing, income disparity, homophobia, gender inequality, gender-based violence, poor access to healthcare, educational outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The institution of policing in America has its origins directly in slavery, and the slave patrols and night watches which later became modern day police departments historically designed to control minorities and maintain the economic order, to assist wealthy landowners in recovering and punishing enslaved people, who were considered property. Those police departments did act as agents of state repression against workers, labor unions and the fundamental American right to organize and strike; and

WHEREAS, The impact of police violence on Black Americans is a concern to all Americans. Black Americans are our union brothers and sisters, family, colleagues, patients, clients and friends, and;

WHEREAS, Since the 1980s, public funding and investment have prioritized policing at the expense of education, housing, and all other social supports. The result of this organized abandonment of the public sector is that major cities such as Los Angeles, Orlando, Minneapolis, Houston, and Chicago spend as much as 30 percent of their budget on policing, leaving fewer resources for public needs. As cities face steep budget gaps due to COVID-19, mayors cut public services but not policing. In many instances, policing continues to expand into, and act in place of, community institutions such education and schools, housing and homelessness prevention, mental health services and youth services, requiring police officers to act as first responders, social and welfare agency workers, etc., when they have little training for those roles; and

WHEREAS, The safest communities are the ones with the most resources, not the communities with the most police. Now is the time to reinvest in American communities and fund those services that help to prevent and respond to harm. Including but not limited to, mediation and intention teams, community safety and restorative justice councils, the decriminalization of nonviolent offenses in favor of social supports, and meaningful mental health care; and

WHEREAS, the Building Trades Apprenticeship Readiness Programs in partnership with groups such as the Anti Recidivism Coalition, The Flintridge Center, HireLAX, etc. have proactively and successfully made it possible for disadvantaged workers from Justice Impacted communities to commence the pathway towards good careers in construction via the Joint Labor Management Apprenticeship Training Programs, and provide direct access to Veterans through the Helmets to Hardhats Program; and

WHEREAS, the California Labor Movement recognizes that all institutions in the US have been designed to keep Black, Brown, Indigenous and People of Color as second class citizens which serves to prevent them from accumulating wealth and equality; and

WHEREAS, the most recent heinous public execution of George Floyd by excessive police violence and the murder of Breonna Taylor, a weapon that is used exclusively-against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color throughout the country, have outraged the people of the United States and provoked a mass movement in every state to defund local police departments and reinvest those funds to social services, housing, community benefits and resources that keep people safe; and

WHEREAS, because of these incidents and many alike, the California Labor Federation calls on union members to mobilize in the fight to overcome systemic racism as the key to the struggle for higher wages, middle-class jobs, and the survival of organized labor; and

WHEREAS, the opponents of the labor movement have long recognized that unions promote racial, economic and social equality, and thus our adversaries have sought to destroy organized labor by fighting vigorously for the passage of so-called "right-to-work" legislation which was pushed by individuals and organizations that sought to attack unions, weaken labor and undermine interracial solidarity; and

WHEREAS, we also believe in holding elected officials, public safety officers and community leaders accountable for their actions which strengthen or undermine public safety and racial justice and unflinchingly rebuke any person or persons in positions of power or who seeks to hold a position of power that have engaged in or continues to engage in activities that are racist, sexist, ableist, misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic, Islamophobic and/or xenophobic; and

WHEREAS, racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, and xenophobia are national pandemics and should be recognized and addressed with the drive, time, energy and resources that we invest in political campaigns; and

WHEREAS, the coronavirus crisis has exposed and exacerbated consequences of systemic racism especially in economic and health outcomes for Black, Brown and Indigenous people; and

WHEREAS, the history of the labor movement has its history with racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, and xenophobia and that as a movement we must recognize that our liberation is rooted in the liberation of our most vulnerable siblings; and

WHEREAS, the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO continues has not done all it can or needs to do can to address and fight for racial justice; and

WHEREAS, the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO wields an incredible amount of power yet we have not taken enough firm stances on legislation that could or would impact Black, Brown and Indigenous people; and



WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO has established a National Commission on Racial and Economic Justice, with plans to hold discussions on this effort with labor leaders and constituency groups and offer recommendations for change, and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO welcomes and endorses this important initiative of our national leadership and commits itself to help carry out this effort in every way possible; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will commit to confronting racism and will not be silent when we hear or see racist comments or actions in the workplace; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will regularly engage in anti-racist training for all officers, staff and board members and urge all affiliates to do the same; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will push for and support efforts to ensure economic justice and equity for Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, including but not limited to; defunding local police departments to redirect funds to social services and education; access to good, family-supporting jobs, and healthcare for all; training and apprenticeship programs; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will use the recommendations from the National Commission on Racial and Economic Justice to address racial and economic issues impacting the local labor movement; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO commits to integrating anti-racist, pro-LGBTQ, immigrant, Indigenous, feminist and ethnic history and education within our unions and combat the divide and conquer strategy of our enemies; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will not sacrifice racial justice in the pursuit of endorsement. The candidate questionnaire will contain questions about the candidate's commitment to racial justice. Candidates must be thoroughly progressive on all issues, or they must seek endorsements elsewhere; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will support efforts to ensure immediate relief for all communities during and following the pandemic, with particular focus on equitable resources and outcomes for Black, Brown, and Indigenous people; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will stand with movements will stand with movements like Black Lives Matter, Healthcare for all, Housing for all, My Body My Choice, Fight for \$15, Climate Justice and other groups that are undertaking racial, economic, political, and social justice issues as partners, allies and fellow community members; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO will continue to build and support the movement for income equality by confronting racial and economic injustices in our society and recognizing that standing with these movements is not enough that in order to eliminate racism in our society we need to be vigilantly anti-racist and as such the California Labor Federation commits itself not only to address the symbols of institutional racism and white

supremacy, but also to proactively identify and address biases, practices, policies, and institutional barriers that perpetuate injustice and inequality within our labor movement by establishing its own standing Racial Justice Committee that will have dedicated staff and resources and will be responsible for assessing diversity, equity, and inclusion within its own institutional structures as well as its affiliates bodies and will report its findings and results of actions taken to the general body biannually; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Racial Justice Committee will meet at least once per month, will have established goals and benchmarks, and will report the results of their efforts to the Executive body quarterly; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, will continue to build and support the movement for income equality by confronting racial and economic injustice and commits to vanquish oppression, authoritarianism, and cruelty in all their form, disassociating from unions who perpetuate these acts of violence. (i.e., police unions and the border patrol union) and expel from this body any member or affiliate who is a member of any Fascist or White Supremacist organization or member or affiliate who pursues policies and/or activities directed toward the purposes of any Fascist or otherwise White Supremacist Ideology.

Adopted by Delegates