

RESOLUTION 45

JANUS RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, working people should have the freedom and power to have a better life; and

WHEREAS, unions promote and defend the freedom of working people to do just that: make a decent living, to support our families, to have work-life balance, to access important public services like good schools and quality health care, and to retire with dignity; and

WHEREAS, all these freedoms are under attack by wealthy corporations and right-wing politicians who rig the economy and the political system in their favor, ensuring that they get richer while working people struggle to get ahead or even get by; and

WHEREAS, public-service workers keep their communities safe and strong: teaching our kids, cleaning our streets, driving our school buses, providing quality health care, working with seniors and people with disabilities, answering 911 calls, and much more; and

WHEREAS, so-called “right to work” laws are designed to silence worker voices by making it harder to organize, harder to build solidarity and harder to assert our rights, thereby aggravating the imbalance in our economy to benefit the privileged and powerful; and

WHEREAS, unions raise wages and labor standards across the economy, improving the lives of all workers (union and nonunion), and the labor movement has historically been a force for social progress, with high union density correlating with lower incarceration rates, greater educational investment and higher life expectancy; and

WHEREAS, public-service workers negotiate contracts and terms of employment that empower their communities, with teachers fighting for smaller class sizes and nurses fighting for safe staffing ratios; and

WHEREAS, corporations go to dishonest and unscrupulous lengths to undermine unions, with the most recent case being the harassment and intimidation campaign run by Nissan at its Mississippi plant, to influence the outcome of a union election; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court has agreed to hear a case called Janus v. AFSCME Council 31 that threatens to make the entire public sector right to work, upending well over 40 years of precedent affirming the constitutionality of fair share fees.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the entire AFL-CIO stands in solidarity with its public-sector members in this struggle; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this convention supports these unions’ ongoing efforts to provide public-service employees with a voice at work, and the freedom and power to have a better life for themselves and their communities.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that regardless of how the Supreme Court rules in Janus, these unions and their members will remain clear and powerful voices for economic justice.