

# RESOLUTION 11

## ADVANCING A HUMANE

### PRO-WORKER IMMIGRATION AGENDA

Submitted by the Committee on Immigration and the Executive Council

The AFL-CIO is committed to building a bold, dynamic and inclusive labor movement that brings good jobs and a secure future to all workers, regardless of where we were born. Real immigration reform is an essential part of the larger structural change we need to dismantle systemic racism, and create an economy that protects working people and promotes democracy in the workplace and the community.

Our unions will never accept policies that relegate millions of workers to an exploitable subclass with severely constrained rights. That is why we remain steadfast in the fight to win a path to citizenship for every undocumented worker in our country, and why we reject the model of work visa programs that gives employers control over the status and fate of workers.

The pandemic laid bare the need for sweeping changes to fix the economic and political systems that are failing workers. Our global labor movement has responded with a call for a new social contract, with no exclusions. In the context of rapidly escalating mass human displacement, that includes an imperative to expand humanitarian migration pathways for working families driven from their homes by conflicts, persecution, disasters or climate change.

Our immigration system must be designed to meet the real needs of people, rather than the purported needs of employers. As we strive to welcome more refugees, asylum seekers and other forced migrants, we also must have a vision for integrating them into the workforce with good union jobs. Our Workers First Agenda embeds immigration policies that will promote shared prosperity and a new growth paradigm that closes racialized and gendered gaps in income and opportunity, rather than continued growth in the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few.

Our unyielding solidarity and commitment to building worker power animates our demand for a more just immigration system that protects those in need, and ensures full and enforceable labor rights for all. Workers with all types of immigration status will continue to organize and mobilize to win transformative changes that protect our rights to a ballot, a union, a good job, a livable planet, a just path to migrate and a truly inclusive society. To reverse structural injustices and meet the humanitarian imperatives of our time, we must rebalance power in our economy and advance immigration policies that remove barriers to organizing and put people over profit.

The AFL-CIO resolves to:

- Redouble our efforts to win a long-overdue path to citizenship for all those whose labor helps our country to prosper and comprehensive, pro-worker reforms to our unjust immigration system.
- Relentlessly defend all workers whose rights are under attack, including those with temporary protected status (TPS) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and those without formal status.
- Play an active role in the workforce integration of new immigrants and refugees so that they will have representation at work, the added protection of a collective bargaining agreement, increased training opportunities and a means to promote social cohesion with the existing workforce.
- Deepen our labor citizenship and naturalization efforts to help build worker power and expand and diversify the electorate.
- Organize all workers, regardless of status, and pursue concrete protections and work permits for immigrants who seek to form or join a union, bargain a contract or otherwise take collective action to make our workplaces safe and fair.

- Elevate our call for enhanced humanitarian commitments, including:
  - Increases in the refugee resettlement cap.
  - Appropriate treatment of unaccompanied children, ensuring that their educational, safety and legal needs are met.
  - Meaningful due process for asylum seekers and expanded criteria for eligibility.
  - New, permanent pathways for climate migrants.
  - TPS designations for all countries destabilized by conflict and disasters.
- Reject efforts to misdirect forced migrants into abusive temporary work visa programs and continue to insist that guestworker programs be fundamentally reformed to lift worker rights and labor standards, rather than expanded.
- Demand enforceable environmental and labor standards in trade deals and investment strategies, and an end to extractive, neocolonial foreign policy approaches that enrich multinational corporations and fuel poverty, exploitation, environmental degradation, violent suppression of rights and other factors that drive working families from their homelands.