

**RESOLUTION #1**

**BEING 100% UNION  
AIM HIGHER, GO DEEPER, REACH OUT**

**WHEREAS:**

As in other states all across America, income inequality is growing in Illinois as big corporations glean big tax breaks while vital public services are slashed and middle income families struggle just to get by; and

**WHEREAS:**

In recent years, public employees in Illinois have faced intensified attacks on our standard of living, our retirement security and our fundamental union rights; and

**WHEREAS:**

One of the primary tools being used by the wealthy elite to tear down unions is the advancement of “right-to-work”, which is intended to strip unions of the resources needed to be a true voice for working families by passing laws to allow employees in union-represented workplaces to opt out of paying any dues or fees; and

**WHEREAS:**

In the public sector, there is a concerted effort to eliminate any “fair share” fees, which has the same effect as “right-to-work” laws, by requiring unions to represent employees who refuse to contribute to the cost of that representation; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME members have been in the forefront of the battles to combat those attacks—standing up to Governor Rauner’s attempts to eliminate unions in our state, building grassroots momentum to win fair contracts in local governments all across the state, and sustaining an unprecedented union coalition that has repelled massive pressures to slash public employee pensions; and

**WHEREAS:**

Time and again AFSCME local unions have found that winning these fights requires extensive one-to-one communication to ensure that all union members understand what is at stake and what it will take to prevail; and

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**WHEREAS:**

Steward structures and Member Action Teams (MAT) have proven invaluable in conducting such outreach efforts on a personal basis; and

**WHEREAS:**

Traditional print communications, such as leaflets, bulletins and newsletters, as well as new social media, such as texts, Twitter and Facebook, are essential complements to such one-to-one communication networks; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 has one of the most effective media outreach efforts of any organization in the state of Illinois, consistently getting out the union's message in the press and presenting the real facts in the face of misinformation put out by those who would undermine public services, public employees and our union; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME members' determination not to back down in the face of even the toughest fight and our ability to prevail in so many of those contests have earned our union the respect of individuals and organizations across the political spectrum in our state, but have also roused our enemies to even greater animosity and ever more fevered attacks; and

**WHEREAS:**

Keeping alive the dream of a better future for working families, halting the widening income gap between rich and everyone else, and ensuring fairness and dignity for all remain the cornerstones of AFSCME Council 31; and

**WHEREAS:**

Advancing those goals will require intensifying our efforts in every aspect of our union's work based on our shared commitment to Aim Higher, Go Deeper, and Reach Out to strengthen our union.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 and all affiliated locals pledge to Aim Higher by continuing our efforts to improve the standard of living and working lives of union members, refusing to accept the corporate elite's austerity plan for working families

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which is intended to drive down wages, undermine democratic rights, and decimate the middle class; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME's determination to Aim Higher is rooted in the recognition that to do so will require a willingness to fight back on every front on which we are attacked, to bring ever more members into those battles, and to increase the tenacity, skill and resources that we bring to such contests; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the ability to win such fights will depend in large measure on the ability of local unions to Go Deeper in reaching out to every member to ensure that all members are fully informed of the assaults on their standard of living and the efforts to erode the progress that has been made over so many decades; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That all local unions will strive to be 100% Union by signing up every employee as a full member, by strengthening their steward structures, and by building MAT teams to ensure that there is a solid infrastructure of committed activists who will communicate regularly with the entire membership; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 will continue to expand our capacity to communicate with members through all available means, especially new social media such as email messages, texts, Twitter, and Facebook; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 is fully committed to Reach Out to the broader community, through participation in coalitions and alliances with all forces who share our interests in improving the lives of working families, in fostering equality, in strengthening human rights and dignity, and in opposing the growing concentration of wealth and power that is so distorting our democracy; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That all local unions will expand their efforts to Reach Out to potential allies and supporters in their communities, especially those who rely on the services union members provide, to remind their fellow citizens of the importance of the work public employees do, to build relationships with civic and community groups, and to mobilize

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support for those services and for fair treatment of the employees who provide them; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 renews its commitment to carry on the fight for fairness, justice, and dignity for all workers no matter how fierce the opponents of equality and democracy are, no matter how great the odds against us may be, knowing that our union must lead in the labor movement and across the political spectrum in order to help sustain the hope for a better future for all.

Submitted by:

Trudy Williams  
AFSCME Local 3433

**RESOLUTION #2**

**SUPREME COURT RULING WON'T STOP OUR FIGHT FOR FAIRNESS**

WHEREAS:

CEO's and the wealthy elite have waged an unrelenting legal battle to undermine union strength and solidarity in our country by creating a so-called "right-to-work" environment, which includes outlawing Fair Share fees in the public sector; and

WHEREAS:

That effort has now made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*, a case backed by various right-wing groups that seek to ban all Fair Share fees in any public sector bargaining unit anywhere in the country; and

WHEREAS:

The current composition of the Supreme Court does not bode well for the outcome of this case as a majority of justices have already shown their hostility to requiring employees in union-represented workplaces to pay any fees if they refuse to join the union; and

WHEREAS:

The Supreme Court is expected to issue a decision as early as March and no later than June in this case, with a ruling resulting in Fair Share fees being declared unconstitutional and immediately being banned; and

WHEREAS:

The best defense against this effort to weaken the ability of unions to stand up for working families in our country is to strengthen our internal communication and one-on-one outreach in every AFSCME local union; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 has launched the "100% Union" program to emphasize the importance of such internal communication and of signing up all Fair Share feepayers as full dues-paying members of the union; and

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**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 is implementing the “100% Union” program as part of the International Union’s “AFSCME Strong” program which is seeking to instill this same kind of intensive employee outreach in every AFSCME local union in the country; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 has an unmatched record of fighting for the dignity, rights and economic security of union members on every front—at the worksite, at the bargaining table, in the legislative arena, and in the courts—and is widely recognized as one of our state’s most effective advocates for public services, for social justice, and for all working families; and

**WHEREAS:**

If Fair Share fees are declared unconstitutional, it is very likely that organizations backed by the Koch Brothers and other big-money contributors will try to starve unions of resources by launching an aggressive communications program to push employees to revoke their union membership and simply free-load off coworkers who continue to pay union dues; and

**WHEREAS:**

There is no way to know for certain at this time how dire the impact of an adverse Supreme Court ruling would be on the finances of AFSCME Council 31 or affiliated local unions and thus on our union’s ability to continue to vigorously advance the interests of working families in the state of Illinois.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That this 19<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention of AFSCME Council 31 commits to fully support the 100% Union program and to ensure that, at every level, our union is making every effort to communicate to every AFSCME-represented employee why it is so important to be a full member of the union and the importance of unions in defending the middle class and preserving democracy in our country; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 and all affiliates will begin immediately to take all necessary steps to be prepared to maintain and grow our union even if the U.S. Supreme Court declares Fair Share fees unconstitutional; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That delegates assembled for this 19<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention hereby commit to be prepared to take whatever measures may be necessary to assure that our union continues to have sufficient resources to wage the critical battle for the future not just of our own union, but of the entire labor movement—and of all working families in our state.

Submitted by:

Chris Milton  
AFSCME Local 799

**RESOLUTION #3**

**DEFENDING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS IN AMERICA TODAY**

**WHEREAS:**

Big business and right-wing interests have supported and helped fund a decades-long attack on collective bargaining and the rights of labor unions, including the weakening of labor laws and their enforcement, measures such as “right to work” and “paycheck protection” aimed at limiting labor’s legal rights, as well as staunchly opposing union organizing efforts with well-financed, heavy-handed and often illegal tactics; and

**WHEREAS:**

Unions in the public sector were able to withstand many of the trends and tactics that decimated the ranks of private sector unions, maintaining union density of over 30% among public sector workers; and

**WHEREAS:**

This relatively high density has led to a more direct assault on public sector unions, the last bulwark of middle class jobs for working families, by big corporations and their right-wing allies, culminating in near-total elimination of fundamental collective bargaining rights in the neighboring states of Wisconsin and Indiana, and their severe diminishment in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS:**

Here in Illinois the effort to eliminate collective bargaining rights is being spearheaded by Governor Bruce Rauner, who has made it his top priority, with backing from organizations such as the Illinois Policy Institute and the Koch-funded Americans for Prosperity; and

**WHEREAS:**

This assault is unrelenting, multi-faceted, and extremely well-funded, and is aimed at public sector unions at every level--state, city, county, universities, school districts and other units of government; and

**WHEREAS:**

In the current battle over the state budget, which has plunged Illinois into fiscal chaos, Bruce Rauner has clearly demonstrated that he is prepared to inflict immense harm on countless Illinois families to further his goal of eliminating all unions in the state of Illinois; and

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**WHEREAS:**

The fight for a new contract for state employees is widely recognized as one of the most critical battles for all public employees in Illinois because it's clear that Rauner is trying to use those negotiations to drastically weaken unions in state government; and

**WHEREAS:**

State employees have been standing up against Rauner's high-pressure tactics; and

**WHEREAS:**

All of the labor movement has come together to support state employees in their struggle and to fight Bruce Rauner's anti-union "turnaround agenda" which seeks to attack all unions and undermine working families in our state.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 will work together with all other concerned unions to build a powerful countervailing force to the corporate elites and their right-wing allies who seek to destroy collective bargaining rights for public employees; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 will work to elect political leaders who are committed to the collective bargaining process and who understand the essential role that labor unions play in advancing the interests of working people, fostering greater equality, and protecting democracy in our state and our nation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That all Council 31 affiliated local unions stand together with state employee locals in their battle with the Rauner Administration to secure a fair contract and will provide vigorous support if state employees determine that their only recourse in that battle is to go out on strike; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED;**

That Council 31 will work with all of labor and other concerned organizations to build the broadest possible coalition to oppose Bruce Rauner's crusade to destroy unions in the state of Illinois; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will work with all concerned organizations to educate the broader public about the vital importance of collective bargaining to a free society and to the preservation of the middle class in our country.

Submitted by:

Carlene Erno  
AFSCME Local 2615

**THE DANGER OF GROWING ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**

**WHEREAS:**

Inequality in income and wealth in the United States has risen to its highest level since before the Great Depression and is the most significant obstacle to achieving justice for working people in America; and

**WHEREAS:**

Half of the nation's income now goes to the top 10 percent of earners and nearly half of that – almost one in four dollars – goes to just the top 1% of all earners; and

**WHEREAS:**

Income inequality exacerbates wealth inequality in the U.S., which is even greater with the top 10% owning three out of every four dollars of the nation's net assets (and the top 1% owning half of those); and

**WHEREAS:**

Growing income and wealth inequality is the primary contributor to the continued weakness of the U.S. economy – even as Wall Street has rebounded and corporate profits have soared, lack of purchasing power by U.S. consumers, which constitutes 70% of our domestic economy, has limited job-creating investment by businesses and tax revenue for public expenditures; and

**WHEREAS:**

Growing income and wealth inequality has undermined democracy and distorted policy decisions by government officials, with the ability of super wealthy individuals like the Koch brothers, as well as Illinois' own Ken Griffin and Bruce Rauner, to spend unlimited amounts of money to dramatically skew government priorities and drown out the voices of average working people at the ballot box; and

**WHEREAS:**

Growing income and wealth inequality is shrinking the middle-class and dooming the next generation of working families to a future without the prospect of a decent and sustainable standard of living, with persistent under unemployment, stagnant wages, and consumer indebtedness; and

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**WHEREAS:**

The trend of growing income and wealth inequality has been more than 30 years in the making and has multiple causes, including deindustrialization in America and the globalization of the economy; tax, budget and other government policy decisions; the sustained corporate assault on unions and the on-going political campaign to undermine the public sector; and

**WHEREAS:**

The threat of growing inequality to economic growth, social stability, and democratic governance is now widely recognized and alarming enough to become a central policy priority for top national and global leaders, including President Obama, the Federal Reserve Board, and the International Monetary Fund.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 recommits its support for efforts to reduce income and wealth inequality and its growth at all levels, including support for policies that directly address inequality such as a higher state and federal minimum wage and living-wage ordinances at the local level, efforts to reduce consumer indebtedness and provide home mortgage relief, and to create more public sector jobs; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 also supports national and international policies to tackle the excesses of economic globalization and finance capital, including fair trade agreements and enforcement policies, support for worker's rights abroad, the stricter regulation of banking and aggressive prosecution of criminal behavior by Wall Street and other financial actors; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 supports policies to restore tax progressivity at state and federal levels, including higher federal income taxes on the wealthy and an end to tax breaks for capital gains, the elimination of wasteful corporate loopholes in the state and federal tax codes, and strongly supports the effort to win fair taxes in Illinois; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 supports efforts to increase worker rights and strengthen collective bargaining in the public and private sectors at both state and federal level, while making an all-out commitment to defend the rights and benefits of public sector union members, their jobs, pay, health care, retirement security, and political activity; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work with its Illinois allies in labor and the community to strengthen these efforts, as well as participating through our international union in federal and global battles.

Submitted by:

Ruby Robinson  
AFSCME Local 2833

**RESOLUTION #5**

**FIGHTING FOR A SAFE AND SECURE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM IN ILLINOIS**

**WHEREAS:**

It is of vital importance to the personal safety of employees and to the safety of the general public to provide secure environments and rehabilitative programs in Department of Corrections state prisons and Department of Juvenile Justice youth centers and to ensure appropriate safeguards as part of the parole process; and

**WHEREAS:**

Overcrowding and understaffing within these departments are undermining security and jeopardizing the safety of staff and inmates, as well as local communities; and

**WHEREAS:**

Policy changes and mismanagement within IDOC and IDJJ have led to a growing number of violent incidents and a breakdown of internal security in the state's correctional and youth centers which continues to accelerate in severity; and

**WHEREAS:**

A continued lack of programming in both departments, including reductions in basic and vocational education, for inmates and youth makes facilities less secure, makes communities more dangerous when offenders are released, and makes it more likely those offenders will return to the system; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has been successful in achieving landmark agreements with both DOC and DJJ that bar mandatory overtime and the harm it has caused to so many employees' lives; and

**WHEREAS:**

The ban on mandatory overtime compelled the departments to begin hiring new staff after hiring had been frozen for more than four years; and

**WHEREAS:**

The Rauner Administration is now seeking to severely weaken the limitations on forced overtime; and

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**WHEREAS:**

The Rauner Administration is seeking other changes to the union contract that would undermine employee morale and weaken safety in correctional and juvenile facilities; and

**WHEREAS:**

Pressures on DJJ have continued to come from various outside groups who too often lack a full understanding of the challenges involved in providing a secure and therapeutic environment for youth who have committed serious crimes; and

**WHEREAS:**

Corrections health care employees who work for private vendors are a vital part of the correctional system and deserve fair treatment and compensation; and

**WHEREAS:**

These employees have become part of AFSCME so that they can have a voice in the conditions affecting their working lives; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME led and won the fight to prevent the closure or downsizing of Pontiac, Stateville, Decatur, East Moline, Lincoln, Vandalia, Vienna and Logan correctional centers, as well as IYC Pere Marquette; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has a long history of successfully addressing problems in our state correctional facilities including: preserving the classification of sergeant; preventing the privatization of dietary and commissary services; eliminating cell coverings, limiting inmate property, reducing the influence of gangs, increasing penalties for attacks on staff; and enacting the nation's first private prison moratorium law.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME will continue to lead the fight for safe adult and juvenile correctional facilities and for an effective parole system in our state and to press for adequate staffing levels at all facilities; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME will continue to strongly oppose all efforts to downsize or close any correctional facility or youth center so long as current laws continue to produce high levels of incarceration of dangerous individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will continue its advocacy for the renewal of the educational and vocational programs that have been so severely cut back over the past decade and that are so essential to the rehabilitation of prison inmates and juvenile offenders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME will continue to press for adequate numbers of parole officers who are an essential component of the criminal justice system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME local unions in correctional facilities will seek to ensure that correctional health care employees are fully integrated into the locals' activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will continue to oppose any policies that might open the door to an attempt to privatize any other IDOC or IDJJ programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That all Council 31 locals stand with the State Bargaining Committee in resisting Rauner's demand for contract changes that would undermine safety and security in the prison system; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That Council 31, in conjunction with all Corrections local unions, will continue to press DOC and DJJ management to hire sufficient staff, honor the union contract, respect employees, and foster safe conditions.

Submitted by:

Ralph Portwood  
AFSCME Local 1866

**IN DEFENSE OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION**

**WHEREAS:**

High-quality, low-cost mass public higher education was one of the great achievements of postwar American society and remains the cornerstone of a just and democratic society; and

**WHEREAS:**

Institutions of higher education, traditionally beacons of truth, independent thought and social change, increasingly serve business needs by hiring high-ranking administrators and consultants out of corporate America reducing students to customers, turning degrees into commodities, rather than teaching critical thinking, and seeking solutions for the collective good; and

**WHEREAS:**

A plethora of private, for-profit educational institutions have come in direct competition for students' tuition dollars in recent years. Their prime objective is to earn profit, unlike state universities, community colleges and not-for-profit institutions; and

**WHEREAS:**

Public higher education has a long history of welcoming faculty, students and staff from historically discriminated groups such as African-Americans, Latinos, veterans, LGBTQ persons, disabled persons, etc. Public institutions also have stronger protections against discrimination and are therefore more likely to comply with Affirmative Action; and

**WHEREAS:**

A wave of right-wing elected officials have targeted institutions of higher education to replace tenure positions with adjuncts, revoke benefits, raid pensions, then engage in slander campaigns against employees for protecting their rights to job security, collective bargaining, fair pay, etc., in order to turn public opinion against them; and

**WHEREAS:**

Governor Bruce Rauner has proposed huge budget cuts for our current fiscal year cutting funding to state universities by 31.5%, a total of \$390 million which would eliminate nearly 3,000 positions, and likely bring tuition increases for students. Lay-offs of faculty and staff would result in decreased class offerings, thereby increasing time to graduation; and

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WHEREAS:

Rising tuition at public institutions would increase student debt load and put further strain on working families, and would make it harder for marginalized populations to access the educational opportunity that public higher education provides; and

WHEREAS:

President Obama has proposed making community college open and accessible to all throughout the country; and

WHEREAS:

Along with union membership, access to higher education has long been considered a reliable route out of poverty and into the middle class. Higher education has become increasingly important since the rise of the information age and the global economy; and

WHEREAS:

A skilled, educated work force is a vital part of a robust economy; and

WHEREAS:

The underfunding of public higher education follows the pattern of starving all public education in the City of Chicago and other Municipalities. This systemic attack on the public domain threatens the very fabric of our democracy.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME, whose members have faithfully served in public institutions of higher education, supports cradle-to-grave affordable public, quality, education for all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That we call for solidarity with students, educators, and communities throughout our state to continue actions in defense of public higher education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That we call for public higher education to be fully funded by new revenue streams such as a financial transactions tax as well as a graduated tax structure; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That public higher education remain autonomous and public.

Submitted by:

Ellen Larrimore  
Linda Loew  
Ethel Monroe  
Jeff Wade  
AFSCME Local 1989

**RESOLUTION #7**

**FOR FAIR, ADEQUATE AND STABLE PUBLIC REVENUES**

**WHEREAS:**

The provision of public services at all levels of government in Illinois requires fair, adequate and stable public revenue; and

**WHEREAS:**

The lack of such revenue for the State of Illinois has resulted in an ongoing structural deficit that means critical public services are significantly underfunded, state government operations are inadequately staffed, and state obligations to its retirement systems are woefully behind; and

**WHEREAS:**

The failure to replace the revenue lost by the expiration of the 2011 income tax increase has meant that the state's fiscal deficit has now reached crisis proportions; and

**WHEREAS:**

That crisis has resulted in layoffs, closures and reductions in needed services not just in state government, but in higher education, community-based human service agencies, and local governments across the state; and

**WHEREAS:**

The root cause of the state's failed revenue system is the overreliance on regressive taxes that are not based on the ability to pay, especially the flat rate state income tax that does not have higher rates for higher income levels and lower rates for lower income levels, as well as a tax code that does not tax services and is riddled with loopholes for corporate interests and upper income taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS:**

Securing a truly fair, adequate and stable revenue system in Illinois will require both immediate action to stabilize the current crisis as well as a constitutional amendment to allow for a fair tax structure; and

**WHEREAS:**

Illinois voters showed their support for amending the state constitution to allow for fair taxes by approving the "Millionaire's Tax" advisory referendum with 64% support in November 2014.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will support legislation to restore the previous state income tax rates, expand sales taxes to services, close corporate tax loopholes and stabilize local government revenues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 recommits to its long-time support for amending the Illinois constitution to allow for a fair income tax, and calls on lawmakers to place such an amendment on the ballot in November 2016; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work with its allies in the labor movement and the community, along with legislators and other elected officials, to promote such an amendment and win its approval by Illinois voters.

Submitted by:

Dave Delrose  
AFSCME Local 1028

**DEFENDING RETIREMENT SECURITY**

**WHEREAS:**

Retirement security is one of the most important issues facing working people in our country with employer-provided retiree health care benefits under attack and worker pension benefits threatened in both the public and private sectors, and the basic concept of defined benefit pension plans under direct assault; and

**WHEREAS:**

Social Security and Medicare, government-sponsored insurance programs that provide dignity and security to senior citizens and people with disabilities, are more threatened today than at any time in their history; and

**WHEREAS:**

Public pensions in Illinois represent a key element of employee compensation for hundreds of thousands of workers in the public service based on our state's commitment to the fundamental principle that those who have worked hard and played by the rules should be able to retire and live out their remaining years with dignity and security; and

**WHEREAS:**

Two-thirds of all seniors depend on Social Security benefits for more than half their income and a third depend on it for more than 90% of their income, while Medicare protects beneficiaries and their families from the potentially bankrupting cost of a serious illness; and

**WHEREAS:**

Individual retirement savings, on average, are dangerously low, making the guaranteed benefits of pensions, Social Security, and Medicare fundamental to a secure retirement after a lifetime of work; and

**WHEREAS:**

For far too long the State of Illinois, the City of Chicago, and Cook County have failed to adequately fund their pension systems, leaving the state with an unfunded pension liability estimated at \$111 billion and the City of Chicago with an unfunded liability estimated at more than \$20 billion; and

**WHEREAS:**

Study after study has shown that pension benefits received by most Illinois' public retirees are modest and well in line with national trends and that pension plans are a far more cost-efficient means of providing retirement income as compared to defined contribution (401-K) accounts; and

**WHEREAS:**

The Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF), with benefits comparable to the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) of Illinois, does not have a liability crisis, proving that the State of Illinois has a pension funding problem, not a problem of excessively generous pension benefits; and

**WHEREAS:**

Article XIII of the Illinois Constitution contains a "non-diminishment" clause that prohibits the pension benefits of current employees from being reduced by the General Assembly; and

**WHEREAS:**

In an effort intended to cut pension costs for all Illinois state and local governments, the Illinois General Assembly enacted a substandard "Tier II" pension benefit for all Illinois public pension systems that applies to employees hired after 2010 and which requires most of these employees to work until age 67 to receive an unreduced pension while saddling future retirees with a totally inadequate cost-of-living adjustment in retirement; and

**WHEREAS:**

Despite the unanimous ruling by the Illinois Supreme Court confirming that the Illinois Constitution ensures against the unilateral diminishment or impairment of pension benefits, the Illinois business community, led by the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago and backed by other business organizations and most of the news media, continue a sustained and relentless propaganda and political campaign aimed at substantially reducing public employee benefits and silencing labor's voice in negotiating retirement security for its members; and

**WHEREAS:**

Leaders from both political parties in state government have been joined by many local government officials in embracing the corporate assault on public employee pension benefits, and continue to endorse proposals which would slash future retirement earnings for teachers, state, and university employees; and

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**WHEREAS:**

Proposals for benefit cuts include raising the age of eligibility for Medicare benefits; changing the formula for the Social Security COLA to a chained CPI in order to reduce annual increases; further Medicare means-testing that would raise premiums; turning Medicare over to private insurance companies; and introducing a process to fast-track major changes to Social Security threaten the critical safety net these programs provide; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME and our allied public sector unions, including both teachers' unions, police, fire, nurse and the service employees, have organized and financed the We Are One Illinois coalition to oppose attacks on our members' retirement security through grass-roots mobilization and paid media in order to educate the public on the need to maintain public defined benefit pension plans and retiree health benefits; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME and our allies in the We Are One Illinois coalition have held off repeated attacks on pension benefits, including the defeat of the 2012 constitutional amendment aimed at limiting pension rights and the court victory which found SB 1 unconstitutional; and

**WHEREAS:**

Governor Rauner is now leading the charge to find a way to cut pension benefits, including the possibility of placing a measure on the 2016 November ballot to repeal the pension protection clause of the Illinois constitution; and

**WHEREAS:**

Social Security and Medicare have made full payment of benefits for over 70 years and almost 50 years respectively, and the long term solvency of these programs should be addressed with all parties at the table and with the goal of protecting the integrity of the benefits, not in the context of federal budgets or deficits.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 continue to strongly oppose any measure that would unfairly diminish the pension benefits of Illinois public employees or establish defined contribution plans for such employees; and

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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 will continue to inform union members about the on-going threat to their pension benefits and mobilize members to engage in the kind of concerted, intensive political activism that is essential to defeat this threat; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 commit itself to a long-term strategy to ensure that those public employees who were hired on or after January 1, 2011, have a pension plan that allows them to retire at a reasonable age with benefits which allow them to live out their retirement years with adequate income; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOVLED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 will vigorously oppose any effort to repeal the constitutional protections afforded to public employee pensions in Illinois; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 recognizes that Illinois public pension systems do, in fact, face a significant funding shortfall and will continue to work with our allies in We Are One Illinois to advance sound, long term solutions to this problem, recognizing that such reforms must be supported by an adequate revenue system for Illinois state and local governments; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 rejects all efforts to balance the federal budget on the backs of seniors and people with disabilities by cutting benefits in Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid for either current or future beneficiaries; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 will work in coalition with all other concerned organizations to build the strongest possible bulwark against all those who seek to shred the retirement safety net that Social Security and Medicare provide for our nation's senior citizens of today and tomorrow; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 will work closely with Retirees Chapter 31 which is leading the fight in Illinois to protect and defend these retirement programs; and

**RESOLUTION #8**

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That since budget and benefit cuts are clearly not the answer to the pension funding crisis, AFSCME supports new revenue measures—including making Illinois' temporary income tax increase permanent, amending our state constitution to allow fair state taxes for individuals and corporations with higher rates for higher income levels and lower rates for lower income levels, and closing corporate tax loopholes to raise additional revenues that would allow the state to balance its budget while meeting its obligation for the unfunded pension liabilities of Illinois state and local governments.

Submitted by:

David Morris  
Local 805

**FAIR WAGES FOR NON-PROFIT AGENCY WORKERS**

**WHEREAS:**

In the last three decades the state's system of care for individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable populations has shifted from state and local government employees to non-profit agencies; and

**WHEREAS:**

This shift was motivated in large part by a desire to reduce costs, eliminating public sector jobs where union representation has won affordable health care, pensions, and fair wages and enlarging a workforce with low levels of unionization and therefore low compensation; and

**WHEREAS:**

Some 20 years ago AFSCME Council 31 resolved to bring to these non-profit agency workers the rights, protections and voice on the job that are only guaranteed through union representation; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 now represents nearly 20% of workers in non-profit agencies serving individuals with developmental disabilities. and has also helped workers who support behaviorally challenged children, counsel the mentally ill and those recovering from substance abuse, and provide child care to form unions with AFSCME; and

**WHEREAS:**

Adequate compensation is necessary to develop the stable workforce so critical to high quality supports for vulnerable individuals, which makes AFSCME an advocate for both the workforce and the individuals they support; and

**WHEREAS:**

Local minimum wage laws and national efforts to raise wages in the fast food industry have increased competition for workers, such that non-profit employers are reporting great difficulty in filling low wage vacancies; and

**RESOLUTION #9**

**WHEREAS:**

Non-profit agencies are virtually entirely dependent on state funding at a time when state revenue has plummeted, budgets are being cut, and Illinois is in its fourth month of a budget stalemate which threatens even the current inadequate level of state reimbursement to non-profit agencies; and

**WHEREAS:**

The union's legislative program includes advocacy for needed state revenue increases to fund improvements in non-profit agency workers' wages and benefits; and

**WHEREAS:**

Among the lowest paid community workers are those supporting individuals with developmental disabilities, whose average wage is \$9.35 per hour and whose employers have seen no increase in state support in eight years; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 brought together members in developmental disability agencies, their employers, and advocacy organizations to commit to an intensive lobbying and public education effort, known as The Care Campaign, aimed at winning a livable wage; and

**WHEREAS:**

The goal of The Care Campaign is that no worker performing this difficult and demanding work be paid less than \$13 per hour—bringing them above the poverty level for a family of four.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 will work in coalition with progressive elected officials, other labor unions, human service organizations and advocacy groups to increase state revenue sufficient not only to avoid further cuts to the human service safety net, but to provide funds to increase compensation to non-profit agency workers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to engage local unions in The Care Campaign to raise the wages of workers supporting individuals with developmental disabilities; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #9**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will expand the Care Campaign model of working cooperatively with employers to improve quality of care through joint advocacy for non-profit agency workers in other sectors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That every AFSCME local union representing non-profit agency workers will renew its efforts to engage the individuals its members support, their family members, advocates and state legislators in the fight for adequate compensation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to reach out to non-profit agency workers who are seeking to gain union representation in order to help them gain the respect, dignity and voice on the job that only a union can bring; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will continue its efforts to foster a stable, well-trained, unionized workforce in non-profit agencies as a critical element in assuring quality care.

Submitted by:

Nicole Henson  
AFSCME Local 2515

**BUILDING P.E.O.P.L.E. POWER**

**WHEREAS:**

Public service workers have a fundamental democratic right to collectively participate in the political process that determines the terms and conditions of their employment, the welfare of their communities, and the future prospects of their families; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has established the “Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality” (PEOPLE) program to exercise that right and support the union’s political and legislative efforts to build power for every AFSCME member at the local, state and national levels; and

**WHEREAS:**

The PEOPLE program provides resources for AFSCME Council 31 to conduct legislative and political activities including educating members on legislative issues, lobbying legislators and other decision-makers, educating and mobilizing members on political issues, and supporting campaigns for candidates and ballot questions; and

**WHEREAS:**

At no time in our history has the political and legislative activity supported by PEOPLE at the national, state and local levels been of more direct consequence to the members of Council 31 as we face the most sustained and aggressive assault on our fundamental rights, including that of participation in the political process; and

**WHEREAS:**

As a consequence of *Citizens United* and other rulings, the floodgates of corporate and big donor money have been thrown wide open, with the prospect of literally billions of unrestricted dollars being spent by the likes the Koch brothers and other anti-labor members of the 1% to determine the 2016 elections and support passage of legislation and court decisions to hobble the union movement; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 has a long and enviable record of strong support for the PEOPLE program, and has regularly led the union in the percentage of members contributing to it as VIPs and MVPs, while mobilizing thousands of member volunteers in recent election cycles to knock doors and make phone calls, resulting in tens of thousands of person-to-person discussions of the critical issues at stake; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #10**

**WHEREAS**

In response to the assault on our union, and at Council 31's initiative, the AFSCME international recently established "PEOPLE Champions" as a new category of higher member contributions -- one in which Illinois again leads in the rate of support but one in which most of our members do not currently participate; and

**WHEREAS:**

Just as important as the funds raised through the PEOPLE program is the focus on recruitment of members who will volunteer to reach out in their communities to educate voters about the candidates that the PEOPLE program has endorsed; and

**WHEREAS:**

The next two years will bring unprecedented legislative and political challenges to the Council and our union as a whole: the sustained legislative and legal assaults on collective bargaining and union rights, a Governor overtly hostile to our union and organized labor as a whole, the Presidential election and other critical battles at the ballot box, including primary and general election threats to pro-labor lawmakers all across Illinois as well as probable ballot questions and amendments impacting our future.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 renews its commitment to maximizing support for PEOPLE and will redouble its effort to increase the ranks of Council 31 members volunteering and contributing to the program; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That all affiliated local unions will make it a priority to actively recruit new participation by their members in the MVP program and strongly encourage existing MVP participants to step up their support and become PEOPLE Champions; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:**

That all affiliated local unions will work to develop a solid core of volunteers who understand the importance of electing candidates who will stand up for working families and who will do the community outreach needed to help make sure those candidates win their elections.

Submitted by:

Carmin Willis-Goodloe  
AFSCME Local 1111

**BUILDING ALLIANCES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**WHEREAS:**

Across the country too many elected officials, spurred on by corporate leaders and billionaire elites, have responded to the ongoing fiscal crisis by scapegoating public employees--demanding cuts in wages and benefits, privatizing or eliminating public services, eroding collective bargaining rights and laying off public service workers; and

**WHEREAS:**

To fight back against this attack, public employees must reach out to their communities to remind our fellow citizens that everyone benefits from the work of public employees and that eliminating public sector jobs undermines public services and the quality of life for all citizens, while increasing unemployment, income inequality and economic instability; and

**WHEREAS:**

In Illinois, Governor Bruce Rauner vowed during his election campaign to “take a strike and shut down state government” in order to impose his demands on state workers, and as governor has waged an unprecedented battle to demonize unions, undermine workers’ rights and threaten working families’ economic security; and

**WHEREAS:**

Rauner has also specifically targeted local government employees, pressing for a state law or local ordinances that would leave it up to local government officials whether or not to bargain with unions representing their employees over wages, benefits or conditions of work; and

**WHEREAS:**

The Governor has been aided and abetted in his assault on public employees by big, profitable corporations eager to protect their tax breaks and curtail the power of unions and by elected officials falling into line; and

**WHEREAS:**

At the citywide and statewide level, AFSCME Council 31 has played a leadership role in building important coalitions that work on a variety of fronts to defend the standard of living of working families, to oppose the cutbacks of vital public services, to ensure adequate revenue, and to advance equal rights for all; and

**RESOLUTION #11**

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 and its affiliated local unions have reached out to involve members of the broader community and other labor unions in campaigns to halt anti-union initiatives, prevent further cuts to public services, build support for new revenue sources to maintain vital services, and demand fair treatment of public employees; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 and AFSCME members across the state have reached out to Illinois citizens – through neighborhood groups, small businesses, churches, other unions and more – and engaged their support for AFSCME members in contract fights, against facility closures, in opposition to privatization, and in other critical battles; and

**WHEREAS:**

In defending public services and jobs, AFSCME local unions have developed effective partnerships with the individuals and their families who most heavily rely on those services; and

**WHEREAS:**

The assaults on public services and public workers are intensifying, and coalition-building and community outreach have become even more indispensable to our union's ability to advance the interests of working families.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That all local unions seek to strengthen ties with their local community groups and institutions on an ongoing basis in order to be able to draw on broader community support when public services or public workers are under attack; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 support and aid local unions as they reach out to community members to defend public services and public employee rights; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 and all local unions work to strengthen ties with service recipients and to strive to improve service quality in order to deter attempts to cut or privatize services; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #11**

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 continue to help form, build and lead broad-based coalitions built on shared goals and mutual respect that can provide a unified force capable of advancing issues of critical importance to working families in the state of Illinois.

Submitted by:

Glenn Sago  
AFSCME Local 448

**FIGHTING LAY-OFFS AND SERVICE CUTBACKS IN A TIME OF FISCAL STRESS**

**WHEREAS:**

Governor Rauner and elected officials across Illinois in counties, municipalities, and school districts, responding to the prolonged fiscal crisis, continue to eliminate jobs and downsize their workforce, including laying off employees; and

**WHEREAS:**

Eliminating public sector jobs increases unemployment, dampens economic growth, and undermines public services and the quality of life for all citizens; and

**WHEREAS:**

Nationally private employers added 7.6 million jobs in the past six years, pushing employment numbers back above pre-recession levels, yet half the new jobs are in the food service, healthcare and temporary agency sectors, which tend towards low-pay and few or no benefits; and

**WHEREAS:**

In those same six years government employment declined sharply with little recovery, so that there are currently a combined total of 634,000 fewer federal, state and local public sector jobs; and

**WHEREAS:**

Our state gained 50,000 private sector jobs in the past year, while losing another 2,000 public sector jobs that had provided Illinois families decent pay and benefits, and

**WHEREAS:**

Nonprofit agencies providing public services--such as Head Starts, community mental health and disability agencies, child welfare and youth service agencies and other human service providers--which are largely dependent on funding from the federal, state or local governments--have been particularly hard hit as they face funding cutbacks and payment delays; and

**RESOLUTION #13**

**WHEREAS:**

The state budget stalemate puts even greater pressure on these agencies, with non-Medicaid funding stopped for programs like substance abuse treatment and Early

Intervention and reports of dozens of agencies on the brink of closure resulting in hundreds of additional layoffs; and

**WHEREAS:**

Continued economic distress and continuing high unemployment and underemployment have increased the demand for public services, from direct aid like unemployment benefits, food stamps, and Medicaid to such services as mass transit, libraries, returning education and job training, as well as higher demands for mental health services and increased public safety needs; and

**WHEREAS:**

Governor Rauner, in response to a drop in state revenue for which he advocated and the state budget stalemate which he provoked, announced the layoff of more than 100 AFSCME members employed at ICC, DCEO, Agriculture, IEMA and DNR; and

**WHEREAS:**

Governor Rauner closed the Illinois State Museum and all 5 branch sites which together logged 386,750 visits last year, and which celebrate and preserve Illinois art, history, anthropology, natural history, and earth sciences; and

**WHEREAS:**

The governor also plans to close Hardin County Work Camp, although the Governor's own corrections policy agenda, which calls for significantly reducing incarceration, argues for the opening of more such facilities to help reintegrate offenders into their communities; and

**WHEREAS:**

The governor has threatened additional closures and state layoffs in the months to come, including the closures of two still-unnamed Illinois Youth Centers; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #13**

WHEREAS:

Organizing and advocacy by AFSCME Council 31 and local unions generated an overwhelming, bipartisan defeat of the closure proposals before the legislative Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability and veto-proof support for legislation aimed at keeping the State Museum open; and

WHEREAS:

The union's legal team is seeking court action to block all planned state layoffs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to vigorously oppose cuts to public services and the layoffs of public service workers as a response to the fiscal challenges facing state and local government, through legislative, legal and contractual means; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to advocate for new revenues to fund public services at all levels including local governmental bodies, statewide tax reform and greater federal assistance to state and local government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will help all local unions to mobilize the grassroots campaigns and public outreach needed to stop layoffs in state government, universities, counties, municipalities, school districts, nonprofit service providers and other public service entities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will work with local unions to devise bargaining strategies to avert layoffs at a time when laid-off workers face the prospect of a very long period of unemployment and an economy with a dearth of well-paying jobs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will reach out to and work with its partners in labor, the broader community, and elected officials to build the broadest possible coalition in the battles against public service reductions and layoffs.

Submitted by:

Susanne Littlefield  
AFSCME Local 2912

**IN OPPOSITION TO THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP (TPP)  
AND ITS FAST TRACK PASSAGE THROUGH CONGRESS**

**WHEREAS:**

The attack on workers' rights continues domestically and abroad, with many manufacturing plants in the United States shutting down due to international conditions promising increased profits, despite the loss of jobs at home and at the expense of working people everywhere; and

**WHEREAS:**

The United States and 11 other countries that make up 40% of the world's GDP are complicit in these attacks through negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which ease trade restrictions allowing further corporatization; and

**WHEREAS:**

The TPP would accelerate the global race to the bottom by granting trade preferences to countries including Vietnam, Mexico, Brunei and Malaysia where rampant abuses of workers' rights are ongoing; and

**WHEREAS:**

The TPP would jeopardize American jobs by undermining Buy American laws, failing to combat currency manipulation, and granting major new investment protections to companies that ship jobs overseas; and

**WHEREAS:**

Similar trade agreements in the past such as NAFTA, have also attacked workers' rights, resulting in the loss of nearly 700,000 domestic manufacturing jobs and the loss of 5 million jobs here and abroad due to offshoring and import competition; and

**WHEREAS:**

The negotiation process and the final agreement are taking place in private, giving very limited access to our representatives in Congress and greater access to corporations and heads of state, and the only information known to the public is through leaks; and

**RESOLUTION #14**

**WHEREAS:**

Trade Promotion Authority was finally granted to the President by Congress, despite more than 150 representatives who strongly opposed Fast Track, which is similar to the authority granted for NAFTA; and

**WHEREAS:**

The Trade Promotion Authority bill requires the U.S. government to open the final agreement to public comment for 60 days before the President signs it, and up to four months before Congress votes to open the bill to amendment, all preceded by 7 years of negotiation in private, which gives limited time for people to organize and have their voice heard by representatives; and

**WHEREAS:**

Limited corporate media coverage or public awareness of the leaked information about TPP undermines the democratic process at a time when American citizens will be affected by job loss, increased healthcare costs, etc.; and

**WHEREAS:**

Current environmental protection efforts can be halted by powers granted to corporations by the TPP, in which corporations can sue governments for hindering “expected future profits.”

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 stands opposed to the Trade Promotion Authority granted by Congress and is against compromising the democratic process with negotiations that are not transparent to the public; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 urges all members of Congress from Illinois to overturn fast-track trade rules when the final agreement comes to a vote, opening the deal to amendment, and giving citizens and their representatives an opportunity to protect their rights.

Submitted by:  
Resolutions Committee

**FIGHTING ON THE LEGAL FRONT**

**WHEREAS:**

The rights of AFSCME members are under attack on many fronts as far too many employers violate legal, contractual or even constitutional protections; and

**WHEREAS:**

In every instance where employers commit such violations, AFSCME has not hesitated to challenge those actions in court—and to pursue justice up the ladder of the legal system wherever appropriate; and

**WHEREAS:**

One of the most long-standing such affronts was the withholding of pay raises that state employees were scheduled to receive on July 1, 2011; and

**WHEREAS:**

While the Union was successful in securing the back pay owed for employees in many state agencies and some portion of the pay for employees in others, thousands of employees in several agencies are still owed significant amounts of back pay; and

**WHEREAS:**

From the time that the pay was withheld AFSCME has been fighting in court to defend the union's arbitration victory which required that state employees be paid every dime they are owed; and

**WHEREAS:**

Both a Cook County Circuit Court and the First District Appellate Court upheld the arbitrator's ruling and directed that the wages be paid; and

**WHEREAS:**

The Illinois Attorney General appealed the appellate ruling to the Illinois Supreme Court which recently heard oral arguments in the case and is expected to issue a final ruling soon as to whether the funds can be paid without a legislative appropriation; and

**RESOLUTION #15**

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 challenged the constitutionality of a recently-enacted state law that requires significant increases in retiree health care premiums and won a landmark victory when the Illinois Supreme Court struck down the law; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has joined with other unions in critical fights to protect the pension benefits of public employees after state laws were enacted that cut the benefits of active and retired state of Illinois, state university, teachers and City of Chicago employees; and

**WHEREAS:**

The union coalition won a decisive victory when the Illinois Supreme Court struck down the law cutting state pensions and teachers' pensions and has also prevailed at the Circuit Court level in a separate suit that seeks to overturn the law that cuts City of Chicago pension benefits; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME is currently battling in circuit court to counter the impact of Governor Rauner's refusal to work toward the adoption of an FY 16 state budget—including seeking to ensure that employees will continue to be paid and the health insurance claims will be paid as well; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has also filed suit seeking to compel the Rauner Administration to pay the step increase and semi-automatic increases that are due to state employees in the current fiscal year; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has also filed suit in state court seeking to block state employee layoffs that the governor is trying to implement; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME and other unions are also still in court defending against Governor Rauner's attempt to eliminate fair share fees for union-represented employees in state government; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #15**

**WHEREAS:**

The high number of legal battles currently underway represent a significant drain on the union's resources, but are essential to making sure that the governor and every other employer understand that AFSCME will not allow union members' rights to be violated.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That if the Illinois Supreme Court rules in the Union's favor and order the back wages to be paid, AFSCME Council 31 calls on the Illinois Comptroller to immediately issue checks for the wages owed and any interest payments that the law requires; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to work with our coalition partners to protect and defend retirement security for all union members, including Cook County employees whose employers continues to press for passage of a law cutting their pension benefits; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:**

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue its aggressive pursuit of justice for AFSCME members utilizing every legal path available.

Submitted by:

Steve Howerter  
AFSCME Local 3585

**RETIREES**

**WHEREAS:**

Retirement from state service should not mean retirement from the union; lifetime unionism strengthens AFSCME and the entire labor movement; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 and our local unions can obtain great benefit from the lifelong experience and knowledge of retired members, many of whom are eager to continue with efforts to ensure workplace dignity, fair contracts and retirement security for all AFSCME members; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 and our locals have a special understanding of the needs of our retired members, and of the pensions and retirement benefits on which they depend; and

**WHEREAS:**

The AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31 organization currently counts more than 26,000 dues-paying members in 37 retiree sub-chapters throughout the state; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31 and local sub-chapters throughout the state enable retiree members to meet regularly in their communities for information updates, grassroots legislative and political action, and solidarity activities; and

**WHEREAS:**

Retiree Chapter 31 and its chapters have been fighting to protect public pensions and retiree health care benefits for over 30 years, winning benefit improvements for their members and paving the way for future retirees who are still in the public workforce.

**RESOLUTION #16**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That Council 31 re-affirms its support of AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31 and agrees to support initiatives that build Retiree membership statewide; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That in the effort to ensure retirement security for both current and future members and to ensure Council 31 remains an effective and powerful advocate for retirement security, Council 31 encourages all our locals to help build membership in the retiree subchapters in their geographic area by providing retiring members information on the Retiree Chapter and encouraging them to join, and strengthening relationships with AFSCME Retiree subchapters in their area.

Submitted by:

Duane Montgomery  
AFSCME Local 1805

**Substitute Resolution**

**RESOLUTION #17**

**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

WHEREAS:

AFSCME, since its inception, has a proud history in the fight for racial and economic justice, from the Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike to the broader struggles against Jim Crow in the South and segregation in the North; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME has been a strong supporter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) since its inception and continues to support its efforts to highlight and address racial and economic injustice; and

WHEREAS:

The disproportionate number of police-related shootings in the black community should be of concern to every American; and

WHEREAS:

In a number of high-profile incidents, serious questions have been raised about the conduct of the officers involved in such shootings; and

WHEREAS:

These incidents have called attention to the inequities that continue to exist in the American criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS:

These inequities are systemic problems and should not be used to besmirch the law enforcement profession; and

**RESOLUTION #17**

**WHEREAS:**

The overwhelming majority of law enforcement personnel perform very difficult jobs diligently and responsibly every day, often putting their own lives in jeopardy to safeguard communities all across this country; and

**WHEREAS:**

Thousands of AFSCME members live in, work in, and serve communities of color and know firsthand the challenges of coping with the consequences of economic and social injustices; and

**WHEREAS:**

According to a report released by the African American Policy Forum, the killing of unarmed black women is on the rise; and

**WHEREAS:**

In response to these events, there has been a sustained resurgence of protests and mobilizations which have drawn on the legacy of the civil rights movement and the black freedom struggle; and

**WHEREAS:**

The reality of racial profiling remains a barrier to the free exercise of basic democratic rights for people of color and thus harms the social fabric of our society as a whole; and

**WHEREAS:**

The trend toward privatization of schools and prisons by profit-making corporations has exacerbated problems in the criminal justice system; and

**WHEREAS:**

Residents of the black community, and all communities of color, are an essential part of the entire working and unemployed population; our solidarity can help to defeat the strategy of divide and conquer which pits us against one another rather than uniting in our common struggle for economic and social justice; an injury to one is indeed an injury to all.

**RESOLUTION #17**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue our union's longstanding involvement in efforts to address the systemic problems of inequality and injustice in our society that give rise to crime and violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 recognizes that the overwhelming majority of police officers and other law enforcement personnel strive—often against daunting odds and at great risk to themselves—to fairly and faithfully fulfill their responsibility to keep our communities safe; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 join with Americans across the country in affirming that black lives matter and supporting efforts to reduce the incidence of police conduct that results in the killings of unarmed men, women and children of color; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 fully supports efforts to improve law enforcement training and education in order to further the goal of ensuring fair and equal treatment under the law for all of our citizens and will work cooperatively with our partners in other unions representing law enforcement personnel to that end.

SUBMITTED BY:

Resolutions Committee

**RESOLUTION #18**

**BUILDING OUR POWER THROUGH ORGANIZING AND STRENGTHENING  
THE RIGHT OF WORKERS TO FORM UNIONS**

**WHEREAS:**

Public service workers need and deserve the strength that comes with AFSCME representation so that they are treated and compensated fairly and have a powerful voice to address their concerns on the job; and

**WHEREAS:**

Organizing to bring new members into the ranks of AFSCME Council 31 increases our union's ability to fight and win for our current members; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 is committed to building a strong public service union through aggressive efforts to organize new members; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31's organizing program reaches out to public service workers throughout Illinois—those who work directly for government and those who work for agencies that are funded by government--to help them form unions in their workplaces; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 continues to seek to organize all employees of contractors performing work that is related to the work that AFSCME members are already performing in order to aid these workers and to provide a disincentive for any further privatization of bargaining unit work; and

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 is organizing thousands of Chicago taxi drivers who are regulated by the city to improve their lives; and

**WHEREAS:**

Less than 7% of all private sector workers are represented by unions and the resulting decrease in the standard of living threatens all workers—public and private—alike; and

**RESOLUTION #18**

**WHEREAS:**

The National Labor Relations Act fails to adequately protect private sector workers who frequently face threats, intimidation and termination by their employers when they attempt to form a union; and

**WHEREAS:**

In far too many instances, organizing campaigns are costly and time-consuming because employers flagrantly violate labor laws, spend large sums on union-busting consultants and run campaigns designed to intimidate their workers; and

**WHEREAS:**

There are still hundreds of thousands of workers who don't have the protection of the National Labor Relations Act, the IL Public Labor Relations Act or the IL Educational Labor Relations Act; and

**WHEREAS:**

The absence of these rights serves only to accelerate the race to the bottom which further enriches the wealthiest in a country where the top 1 percent already owns more than one third of the wealth and have received 95 percent of income gains since the Great Recession; and

**WHEREAS:**

Only strong worker organizations will reverse these trends, lift the incomes of working people and create economic opportunity for generations to come; and

**WHEREAS:**

Reforming our nation's labor laws is essential to enabling private sector employees to exercise their right to form a union; and

**WHEREAS:**

Corporate interests, politicians, the press, and other anti-union critics point to the diminished compensation and rights in the private sector to justify their call for reducing the salaries and benefits and rights of public sector workers.

**RESOLUTION #18**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That Council 31 and all its affiliates continue to emphasize that we are a union for all those who work in service to the public, whether in public or private employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 strengthen its efforts to organize all unrepresented public employees, as well as employees of nonprofit agencies, state or local government contractors, and hospitals and other health care facilities—all of which are funded with public dollars; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will continue its efforts to organize workers, like Chicago Cab Drivers whose bargaining rights are restricted or who are excluded from collective bargaining; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 work in concert with AFSCME International, other unions and concerned community and religious organizations to do everything possible to advance legislative and policy labor law reforms to allow employees the right to organize free of harassment, intimidation and retaliation; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That Council 31 continue to grow its organizing program by allocating resources to strengthen organizing efforts, giving organizing a high priority in all publications, and integrating education regarding organizing into Council trainings, conferences and other events.

Submitted by:

Yurvette Simmons  
AFSCME Local 3237

**RESOLUTION #19**

**FIGHTING PRIVATIZATION IN STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

**WHEREAS:**

Illinois state government's longstanding revenue deficit and the state budget stalemate continue to have a negative impact at every level of government in Illinois; and

**WHEREAS:**

The revenue systems of most Illinois cities, counties, and other local governmental units are affected by the state budget problems and afflicted with their own structural imbalance, including an over-reliance on property taxes, and a sales tax with a very narrow base; and

**WHEREAS:**

Politicians and government managers all too often turn to privatization as a purported solution to a fiscal crisis; and

**WHEREAS:**

In reality privatization undermines the quality of public services and the local economy by rewarding private vendors with lucrative contracts which often result in less accountability, compromised service quality and access, higher long-term costs and a loss of decent, family-supporting jobs; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 has been successful in negotiating contract provisions restricting privatization, including the state master agreement which limits privatization to areas where management can demonstrate efficiency gains or cost savings; and

**WHEREAS:**

Such language protects taxpayers and union members alike, as when a grievance arbitration against a Maximus contract returned the work to AFSCME members and continues to save the state some \$24 million annually; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 has passed legislation and ordinances banning or limiting some privatization, including state prisons and support services in local school districts; and

**WHEREAS:**

In the City of Chicago, AFSCME and community allies recently introduced landmark legislation--the Privatization Transparency, Accountability and Performance Ordinance—which will require greater oversight of proposed privatization including a comparison of the cost of privatizing to the cost of maintaining the services in-house, time for review, and public hearings; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME local unions across Illinois have successfully fought off privatization attempts through a combination of enforcing relevant union contract provisions, relying on existing legislative protections, effective media outreach and—most importantly—building strong community coalitions; and

**WHEREAS:**

Despite all evidence to the contrary, the reality of public budget shortfalls, along with aggressive lobbying and marketing by corporate privateers, is producing continuing pressures for privatization at all levels of government.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 and all local unions will work to strengthen ties with service recipients, to strive to improve service quality, and to build support in our communities in order to deter attempts at privatization; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 will push back against Governor Rauner’s attempts to strip privatization protections from the state master contract and will continue to work to strengthen provisions in all union contracts to make it more difficult for employers to privatize public services that AFSCME members provide; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That Council 31 and all local unions will ensure that language in our union contracts limiting subcontracting is strictly enforced; and

***AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015***

**RESOLUTION #19**

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will continue to work with local unions to vigorously oppose efforts to privatize governmental services at any level of government through legislative action and member mobilization.

Submitted by:

Lori Gladson  
AFSCME Local 51

**RESOLUTION #20**

**SAVING STATE DEVELOPMENTAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS,  
VETERANS HOMES AND STATE SCHOOLS**

**WHEREAS:**

Council 31 has long supported an array of settings and services for individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities, mental illness and the frail elderly; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME believes this continuum of care should take into account the individual's needs as well as the personal preferences of the individual and his or her family; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME Council 31 has long represented employees who work in state-operated facilities for the mentally ill and the developmentally disabled, state schools for young people with physical disabilities, county nursing homes and state veterans homes, and increasingly represents caregivers who work for publicly funded private agencies; and

**WHEREAS:**

Through the years AFSCME has fought to assure adequate staffing and quality services in all those service settings, as well as a decent standard of living for the employees who provide essential supports to individuals served there; and

**WHEREAS:**

Our state's structural deficit has made it difficult to identify sufficient resources to fund an adequate social service system, so that Illinois' ranking in almost all aspects of care – from home services to congregate care to state facilities - is consistently among the poorest in the nation; and

**WHEREAS:**

Despite cuts in staffing, excessive overtime, increasing regulatory demands and the nay-saying of those unfamiliar with all that state centers have to offer, dedicated AFSCME members strive to deliver the best possible supports and services to individuals; and

**WHEREAS:**

State rehabilitation schools have expanded to meet not just the educational and habilitative needs of residential students, but also to provide technical assistance and support to students, educators and school districts across the state; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #20**

WHEREAS:

Staff dedication at Illinois Veterans Homes is demonstrated by their response to the tragic outbreak of Legionnaires' Disease at Quincy, where employees continued to report to work to provide needed care despite five co-workers falling ill; and

WHEREAS:

In recent years our union has fought intense battles over the closure and downsizing of centers that provide essential services for individuals with severe disabilities and/or high levels of service needs; and

WHEREAS:

The FY 16 state budget crisis, and a Governor passionately committed not to quality care but contracting out, may drive anti-state facility zealots to push for more facility closures; and

WHEREAS:

Governor Rauner's transition committee report, released in January 2015, called for evaluating the outsourcing of state veterans homes to "third-party providers" or ending the operation of state homes entirely; and

WHEREAS:

After years of state mental health hospital closures and downsizings, the Rauner administration continues to make it more difficult to access care at the remaining hospitals, which impedes some individuals from getting the supports they need and places them at greater risk of incarceration and even death; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME resistance to the Murray Developmental Center closure, including support for a family lawsuit and a grievance to stop a contractor willing to dump individuals into inadequate community settings, helped turn back that closure; and

WHEREAS:

By halting the previously planned closures of the Kiley and Mabley Developmental Centers, Chester Mental Health Center, ICRE Roosevelt, and by converting Anna Veterans Home to a state facility from a state-funded for-profit home, AFSCME has demonstrated that when employees, family members, advocates, elected officials and the community unite to preserve the continuum of care they can win.

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #20**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to support a continuum of care by uniting all disability workers around a shared agenda of improved funding to support quality care in whatever setting an individual with disabilities chooses to receive services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will continue to build support for a continuum of care and fight ideologically motivated attacks on congregate care settings in the state legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will work with family and advocacy groups and supportive legislators to continue to oppose the irresponsible closure, downsizing or privatization of state facilities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That local unions will strengthen their efforts to build strong ties with the families of those whom their members serve and to educate their local communities and elected officials about the vitally important role that state operated services play in a continuum of care for individuals with disabilities.

Submitted by:

Cheryl Graham  
AFSCME Local 785

**RESOLUTION #21**

**IN SUPPORT OF A FINANCIAL TRANSACTION TAX (FTT)**

**WHEREAS:**

Due to unfair tax codes, the decline of the middle class and of the manufacturing economy around the country, many governments and municipalities are struggling to pay for essential services, ranging from public libraries and mental health clinics to street lighting and garbage collection; and

**WHEREAS:**

Many state governors and city mayors have called for so-called shared sacrifice, which really amounts to raising taxes for working families and/or cutting service, hurting everyone, including AFSCME members and collective bargaining in general; and

**WHEREAS:**

Wall Street, which is largely responsible for the financial crisis in 2008, still remains a law-free zone and to date, no one has been prosecuted for financial crimes nor have any reforms to prevent future crimes been put into place; and

**WHEREAS:**

A financial transactions tax, of as small as 50 cents per \$100 of stocks, dividends and other financial transactions (equal to one half of one percent) could generate up to \$350 billion a year in much-needed revenue and deficit reduction. These transactions are engaged in largely by big banks and investment firms such as Citigroup, JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs, and Morgan Stanley, which account for almost 25% of global market volume on currency trades; and

**WHEREAS:**

An FTT, sometimes referred to as a Robin Hood Tax, or a LaSalle Street Tax, would have negligible impact on investors and would help stabilize markets by curbing excessive speculation, which has grown 400% in the last decade. This would not affect everyday consumer financial activity such as ATM withdrawals, initial home loans, debit card purchases, individuals who have 401k plans, etc.; and

**WHEREAS:**

The fastest growing markets around the world such as the UK, South Africa, Hong Kong, Singapore, Switzerland, and India have successfully implemented FTTs, which raise billions of dollars per year; and

**AFSCME Council 31 Convention Resolutions—2015**

**RESOLUTION #21**

**WHEREAS:**

Many prominent labor, faith, anti-poverty, and environmental leaders and organizations support the idea of an FTT: the AFL-CIO, National Nurses United, Pope Francis, Oxfam, the World Wildlife Fund and Nobel Laureate economists Paul Krugman and Joseph Stiglitz, et al. Billionaires such as Bill Gates and Warren Buffet support such a tax as well.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

AFSCME Illinois supports the movement for a tax on financial transactions in Illinois, sometimes called a “LaSalle Street Tax”, as one of the progressive revenue measures needed to fully fund public services and pensions in Illinois, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

AFSCME Council 31 and its allies advocate for adoption of legislation needed to enact such a tax at the state and national levels, and communicate its support to elected officials in Illinois and affiliated union locals.

Submitted by:

Resolutions Committee

## **Substitute Resolution**

### **RESOLUTION #22**

#### **SUPPORTING THE ONGOING FIGHT FOR HEALTHCARE JUSTICE**

**WHEREAS:**

Access to health care is a basic human right, recognized and delivered by most advanced nations in the world and many less developed nations; and

**WHEREAS:**

High and escalating health care costs have helped to sustain a climate of concessionary bargaining, pushing down wages, causing bitter strikes and lockouts, triggering intensified attacks on public sector workers and retirees, and shifting more and more of the costs onto the backs of working people; and

**WHEREAS:**

Despite the improved access to healthcare for millions of Americans, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) still leaves too many uninsured or underinsured, and has and will make it more difficult for workers who have quality health care to maintain it because of the so-called Cadillac excise tax, while allowing record profits to insurance companies and pharmaceuticals to continue to drive healthcare policy; and

**WHEREAS:**

A broad-based coalition has formed to press for repeal of the so-called “Cadillac Tax” which is scheduled to go into effect in 2018 and which is already undermining employees’ position in collective bargaining over health care benefits; and

**WHEREAS:**

The 2009 Convention of the AFL-CIO called for a Social Insurance Model for Health Care Reform that treats healthcare as a fundamental human right and stated that the most cost effective and equitable way to provide quality healthcare is through a single-payer system; and

**WHEREAS:**

AFSCME has been a long-standing supporter of a single-payer system, with the goal of assuring comprehensive, high quality, affordable health care for all Americans, regardless of age or ability to pay, as stated in our resolution at the 40th International Convention in 2012; and

## **RESOLUTION #22**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 supports the effort to repeal the Cadillac Tax and to enact other reforms needed to make sure that all Americans can benefit from the increased access to health care provided under the Affordable Care Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 affirms that the best system of health care delivery would be a publicly financed single-payer system that provides comprehensive benefits and a single standard of care for all, where healthcare decisions are made by patients and their caregivers; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will support any initiatives undertaken by our national union and the national AFL-CIO to advance public education and/or legislation regarding the potential for a single-payer system to advance the cause of economically efficient, high-quality health care for all in the United States.

Submitted by:  
Resolutions Committee