

RESOLUTION # 1

UNIONS FOR ALL

WHEREAS:

Having a voice on the job through a strong union means better pay, better health care, a more secure retirement, and so much more. It means having a say in safety, staffing, and other important issues that help AFSCME members do their jobs and serve our communities; and

WHEREAS:

There's strength in numbers and power in our union. The labor movement is stronger with every new union that organizes and each new member who joins us; and

WHEREAS:

Nationwide, workers are eager to see the union difference in their lives, as 68% of Americans support labor unions, the highest level of support in 60 years; and

WHEREAS:

Millions of workers who want union representation are not yet organized, as evidenced by the gap between the 11% of all American workers who are now union members and the nearly 50% who say they would join a union if there was one in their workplace; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31's organizing program has added more than 1,600 workers to our ranks since the 23rd Biennial Convention; and

WHEREAS:

Volunteer Member Organizers (VMOs) who give their time and talents to help educate unorganized employees about the first-hand benefits of union membership are invaluable components of a successful organizing program; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31, our allies in the labor movement, and pro-union elected officials have made Illinois a bastion of worker rights through such recent efforts as the Workers' Rights Amendment to the Illinois Constitution, the Human Service Workforce Advancement Ordinance that ensures employer neutrality in organizing in the city of Chicago, and newly signed state law that provides for impasse arbitration when a public employer fails to bargain a first contract in good faith; and

WHEREAS:

Far too often, employers interfere with and attempt to frustrate workers' freedom to organize by violating labor laws, hiring costly anti-union consultants and attorneys, and threatening, retaliating against and even firing employees; and

WHEREAS:

In what has been called "literally the largest act of union busting in American history," President Trump—aided by compliant federal courts and anti-union extremists in Congress—has stripped collective bargaining rights from a million or more union members in the federal government, including in the Bureau of Prisons, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture and Veterans Affairs, and other agencies; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 is committed to building our union ever stronger through sustained and expanded efforts to organize new members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will strengthen its efforts to organize any and all unrepresented public employees, as well as employees of nonprofit agencies, state and local government contractors, hospitals and other health care facilities, and cultural institutions such as libraries and museums; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to work with our international union, other unions, the AFL-CIO and community organizations to advance needed labor law reforms at the federal, state, and local levels, such as the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, labor peace agreements and neutrality policies, and expedited recognition procedures that allow workers to exercise their right to form unions, free from employer harassment, intimidation, and retaliation; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will grow our efforts to increase union density and win greater economic justice, dignity, and respect for all workers by allocating resources to organizing efforts; integrating education regarding organizing into Council trainings, conferences, and other events; and training members to participate as VMOs in organizing drives.

Submitted by:
Heather Stanhouse
AFSCME Local 674

RESOLUTION # 2

FIGHTING FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE RETIREMENT SECURITY FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

WHEREAS:

Pensions represent a key element of employee compensation for hundreds of thousands of public sector workers in Illinois to allow for dignity and security in retirement after a career of dedicated service; and

WHEREAS:

The significant unfunded liability of these pension funds caused by prolonged underfunding by employers continues to make them a target for business elites and right-wing groups who wage an unrelenting campaign to reduce pension benefits or eliminate pensions altogether for all new hires; and

WHEREAS:

As a result of the incessant push for pension changes, in 2010 the General Assembly bulldozed through sweeping pension legislation in less than 12 hours with no analysis, no debate and no legal or actuarial analysis; and

WHEREAS:

This ill-conceived legislation created a substandard second tier of pension benefits for government employees hired since 2011; and

WHEREAS:

Most Tier 2 employees are required to work until age 67 for an unreduced pension benefit, representing the highest normal retirement age for public sector employees amongst contiguous and neighboring states; and

WHEREAS:

Some politicians and corporate executives continue to push for eliminating pensions entirely for all new hires, which would destabilize the entire pension system, putting the benefits of current employees and retirees at risk; and

WHEREAS:

Recruitment, hiring and retention of public employees is a significant issue facing state and local government employers, and, in general, public employee pensions, along

with the overall benefit package offered in negotiated contracts, are a draw to public service; and

WHEREAS:

The We Are One coalition of unions, of which AFSCME Council 31 is a leading participant, has advocated for a comprehensive fix to the structural and growing legal vulnerabilities of Tier 2 in a campaign that included over 100,000 emails and tens of thousands of calls to lawmakers, the largest rally held in the Capitol rotunda, tens of thousands of witness slips and countless conversations with legislators; and

WHEREAS:

The We Are One coalition's proposal, now contained in SB1937 House Amendment 2, is a fiscally responsible compromise to begin to fix Tier 2 inequities and includes a number of funding proposals to put the state pension systems back on sound financial footing; and

WHEREAS:

Despite a vigorous grassroots lobbying campaign and good-faith engagement with lawmakers, the General Assembly failed to take action on Tier 2 in the Spring 2025 legislative session;

WHEREAS:

The time is now for legislators to show respect and appreciation for the vital work of public employees by restoring dignity and security in retirement; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will strongly oppose any measure that would diminish pension benefits for Illinois public employees and, as such, will continue to inform and mobilize union members to defeat any such threats to their pension benefits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 remain steadfast in its efforts with labor allies on educational and legislative strategies to address the inadequacy of the Tier 2 pension benefit, including lobbying for the passage of SB1937 House Amendment 2; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 recognizes that there are public pension systems that do, in fact, face a significant funding shortfall and will continue to work with our allies to advance sound, long term solutions to this problem, recognizing that pension reforms

must be supported by an adequate revenue system for Illinois state and local governments.

Submitted by:

John Day

AFSCME Local 1048

RESOLUTION # 3

DEFENDING OUR RIGHT TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN

WHEREAS:

The right to band together and collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits and working conditions is a core tenant of the labor movement; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME members have consistently been able to achieve better wages and benefits through the collective bargaining process than we would otherwise attain if our rights at work were left to our employers' whims; and

WHEREAS:

Public employee unions, and the collective bargaining process that is our lifeblood, have been in the crosshairs of billionaires and anti-union extremists for decades; and

WHEREAS:

Billionaires have been steadily gaining influence in our country, and they are using that influence to erode working people's ability to use and expand our power in the workplace; and

WHEREAS:

Project 2025, the billionaire-backed anti-government playbook crafted for the second Trump Administration, has been a major factor in shaping the policies of the Trump presidency; and

WHEREAS:

Page 82 of Project 2025 encourages Congress to consider passing laws to outlaw public sector unions entirely; and

WHEREAS:

Project 2025 also encourages the president to rescind union protections for millions of federal employees; and

WHEREAS:

President Trump made good on that recommendation when he issued executive orders to strip collective bargaining rights from nearly 1 million federal employees, some of whom are AFSCME members; and

WHEREAS:

President Trump's assault on federal employees and their unions represents one of the largest, most vile anti-union attacks in modern American history, eclipsing President Reagan's firing of striking air traffic controllers in 1981; and

WHEREAS:

These threats to collective bargaining and union rights will likely only intensify over the coming years.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That wherever a threat to diminish or strip away collective bargaining rights may arise, our union will fight with all our muscle to beat back that threat; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That we will continue to stand firmly in solidarity with union members everywhere whose collective bargaining rights are under attack; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That our union will not only defend collective bargaining rights when they are attacked but will continue to fight vigorously to expand and enhance those rights for working people in Illinois and across the nation.

Submitted by:
Patrick Pemberton
AFSCME Local 801

RESOLUTION # 4

**PROTECTING OUR SAFETY AND OUR RIGHTS
IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES**

WHEREAS:

AFSCME members who work in state correctional facilities, juvenile justice facilities, and county jails provide an essential service as part of the public safety continuum; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME members also serve an important role in providing mental and physical health care, education, and other vital services to foster the rehabilitation of incarcerated individuals; and

WHEREAS:

No public service worker should have to fear for their physical safety when clocking in for their job; and

WHEREAS:

This work in correctional facilities nonetheless presents serious risks on a daily basis, including assaults from incarcerated individuals and an explosion in offender drug use leading to exposure to dangerous substances and fumes; and

WHEREAS:

In spite of AFSCME's numerous attempts to address the rise in assaults, drug exposures, and other workplace injuries, safety in correctional facilities in Illinois is still hindered by managerial policies that result in inappropriate assignment of offenders, inadequate staffing levels, and inadequate offender discipline standards; and

WHEREAS:

While AFSCME's efforts have led to the opening of regional training academies across Illinois, more work must still be done to hire the number of employees needed; and

WHEREAS:

The state's closure of Stateville Correctional Center and planned closure of Logan Correctional Center has led to widespread staff uncertainty as well as the rushed transfers of offenders, many of whom are reclassified to less secure facilities and present a safety threat to the staff at those facilities; and

WHEREAS:

IDOC's reclassification of offenders remains a serious problem across the state, with many offenders identified as requiring maximum security as determined by IDOC's own standards being housed in or transferred to medium security or even minimum security facilities; and

WHEREAS:

The state's policy changes in recent years have included a significant increase in sentencing alternatives for those who commit lesser offenses, leading to high concentrations of repeat offenders and more violent individuals in state correctional and juvenile facilities; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME's 2022 grievance against IDOC resulted in an arbitrator's ruling that the department must take stronger measures to protect employees; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME is once again preparing for arbitration under a different arbitrator's jurisdiction to show that IDOC has still not done enough to keep staff safe on the job; and

WHEREAS:

Employee health and safety is also compromised by the significant increase in drugs being smuggled into prisons, especially through offender mail, including synthetic drugs and other substances that are harder to detect with available tests; and

WHEREAS:

These substances have caused severe reactions in staff who are unknowingly exposed, and in many cases require hospitalization to stabilize those having such reactions; and

WHEREAS:

In September 2024, AFSCME released a report detailing the growing drug problem, which noted that IDOC omits drug-related incidents from their year-end Operational and Management Reports, making it difficult to track the scope of the problem across the correctional system; and

WHEREAS:

To combat the influx of drugs coming through the mail, AFSCME succeeded in pushing for the establishment of a new policy requiring the scanning of all incoming offender mail onto tablets; and

WHEREAS:

IDOC has been slow to fully implement this policy so it is not yet clear how significant a role it may have in reducing offender drug abuse; and

WHEREAS:

Employees in juvenile facilities operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice also face daily risk of injury, which is exacerbated by politicians who continue to press for less restrictions on youth offenders; and

WHEREAS:

In many county jails across the state employees must contend with the dangers caused by extreme overcrowding because the state has failed to develop sufficient beds for offenders who are mentally ill; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 has a strong record as the foremost force fighting for adequate staffing and safe conditions in prisons and jails, including success in initiating a mail scanning program, eliminating cell coverings, restricting inmate property, expanding employee access to mental health services, and enacting the nation's first ban on private prisons; and

WHEREAS:

Major federal funding cuts to Illinois may drastically affect the state budget, putting pressure on elected officials to reduce staffing in correctional facilities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to fight for safe conditions in all state and county correctional facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to lead the fight for employee safety in adult and juvenile correctional facilities at every level in our state, including pressing for increased hiring to ensure that all posts can be covered with the requisite number of staff and without excessive overtime burdens on current employees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to fight for an end to the growing plague of drug use in correctional facilities, and advocate for the policy changes, including offender mail scanning, increased drug counseling programs and clean cell houses, and improved training for exposure prevention that are needed to keep corrections staff safe on the job; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to oppose any attempts to privatize any correctional functions, while at the same time working to fully and forcefully represent the interest of current contractual employees, like those of Centurion Health, whom our union represents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to press for adequate numbers of parole officers and aftercare specialists who are an essential component of the criminal justice system; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That our union shall endeavor to put employee mental health and wellness at the forefront and attempt to integrate mental health services into correctional spaces in order to develop a more effective response to workplace crises and individual trauma in both state and county correctional facilities.

Submitted by:
Ryan Bell
AFSCME Local 2052

RESOLUTION # 5

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

WHEREAS:

The federal government employs roughly 3 million people, including more than 100,000 in Illinois, who provide vital services and handle administrative, professional, technical, and scientific work to keep the country running and protect national security; and

WHEREAS:

Federal employment has historically been an avenue to stability and financial security for millions of working families, with approximately 25 percent of federal workers protected by a union contract as of 2024, including approximately 10,000 AFSCME members; and

WHEREAS:

In 2023, current Office of Management and Budget director Russell Vought stated his goal was to put federal employees “in trauma”, to have the public view federal employees as “villains”, and to cut funding for key agencies with the express purpose of shutting down their operations; and

WHEREAS:

In service of this goal, the current presidential administration has launched an unprecedented attack on federal employees and agencies, firing or buying out nearly 200,000 workers, including those working to prevent infectious disease outbreaks, ensure air travel safety, provide healthcare and support services to veterans, maintain our national parks, and more; and

WHEREAS:

The administration has also unilaterally cancelled union contracts covering some one million more workers, including AFSCME members working for the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, and Voice of America, and fellow union members at other agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); the Federal Bureau of Prisons; and

WHEREAS:

The attacks on workers at the federal level provide a dangerous precedent for anti-union forces at the state, county, and local levels.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will stand in solidarity with federal workers under attack from the current presidential administration, defend the rights of these workers to collectively bargain, and support actions, campaigns, and other measures taken to re-establish these rights and re-hire wrongfully terminated federal workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will support AFSCME International's efforts and use of resources to defend and strengthen the rights of workers in the federal government, including through lawsuits, national campaigns, and other actions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will fight back against any planned or undertaken efforts to defund, shut down, or privatize the federal agencies and programs that provide vital funding to the state of Illinois, or provide any service on which the state of Illinois depends for its security, health, economy, and environment; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will also fight back against any efforts to use the current administration's actions against federal workers as a precedent for attacking the collective bargaining rights and agreements for state, county, and local government employees in Illinois.

Submitted by:
Anna Spreitzer
AFSCME Local 2854

RESOLUTION # 6

PEOPLE POWER

WHEREAS:

Billionaires and anti-union extremists, who oppose labor's interest continue to spend millions of dollars against us, and our ability to fight anti-labor interests depends on a well-funded AFSCME PEOPLE (Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality) program; and

WHEREAS:

These anti-union forces have intensified their efforts to undermine workers and labor organizations through legislative, judicial, and electoral means, aiming to weaken the collective powers of workers and erode labor protections; and

WHEREAS:

The PEOPLE program is essential in today's political landscape now more than ever to protect workers' rights, jobs, wages, benefits, and workplace safety by working to elect champions for working families; and

WHEREAS:

In a post-Janus and Project 2025 world, it is more important than ever to build our political power by increasing the number of members who belong to the PEOPLE program.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will continue to build our PEOPLE program and enhance member participation in the electoral process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

Council 31 will continue to offer training and educational programs highlighting what the PEOPLE program is and why it is important to maintain a strong program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

Council 31 will continue to periodically implement PEOPLE contests like the 2025 Power up for PEOPLE Contest; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That all AFSCME Council 31 Locals recommit to enrolling at least 10% of local union membership in the PEOPLE program at the MVP level.

SUBMITTED BY:

Joshua Hoots

AFSCME Local 51

REVENUE NOT LAYOFFS

WHEREAS:

Public service employment is an economic lifeline for working families and communities across the country and the delivery of quality public services is essential for building healthy and safe communities; and

WHEREAS:

Understaffing is a long-running problem in public service, with too many politicians afraid to raise revenue or invest in services, and enamored of rhetoric such as “doing more with less”; and

WHEREAS:

Through vital legislation like the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Biden Administration provided direct relief to working families and secured historic investments for our communities that helped to close budget holes and kept essential workers on the job in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 partnered with state and local government employers to identify and adopt solutions to increase recruitment and retention in state and local government, resulting in hiring in key departments and agencies that have been plagued with short staffing; and

WHEREAS:

State and local governments have now obligated 99% of the ARPA dollars allocated and structural budget deficits are re-emerging as the country is entering a period of expected economic slowdown; and

WHEREAS:

Current economic indicators including slowed job growth, persistent inflationary pressures, and modest economic growth are resulting in budget projections for state and local government that adopt judicious revenue growth assumptions as expenditures continue to rise; and

WHEREAS:

The recent passage of the so-called “One Big Beautiful Bill” brought sweeping changes to the federal budget that resulted in a double hit to states’ budgets, creating

losses in state tax collection at the same time as reductions in federal support for key programs like food stamps and Medicaid; and

WHEREAS:

Illinois and other jurisdictions operate under balanced budget requirements, which leave elected officials only three real options: cut spending, tap reserves or raise additional revenue and

WHEREAS:

Layoffs reduce government capacity, disrupt essential services, harm communities, diminish public trust, cause significant stress and workload increases for remaining employees, and set back gains made in addressing persistent staffing shortages in the public sector; and

WHEREAS:

The state of Illinois has consistently been plagued by a structural deficit wherein the current tax system fails to generate revenue growth at the rate needed to cover the cost of maintaining delivery of public services; and

WHEREAS:

Civic organizations as well as tax and budget experts have called on state legislators to modernize Illinois' tax structure through expanding the sales tax base and reviewing tax exemptions to generate over \$2 billion in revenue to stabilize the structural budget deficit, invest in critical state services, and increase revenue to local governments; and

WHEREAS:

The root cause of Illinois' recurring budgetary struggles is the state constitution's prohibition of a fair tax structure that would allow for progressive tax rates, ensuring that the wealthy pay at a higher rate than working people; and

WHEREAS:

Many local governments, notably the city of Chicago, are also facing serious budget shortfalls which are due to inadequate revenues and cannot be remedied by cuts to services or staff.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 supports state and local budget reforms that cut real waste, such as unnecessary contracts and consultants and costly and ineffective tax breaks in

order to preserve necessary funding for vital public services and the front-line workers that provide them; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 supports efforts by state legislators to expand local governments' ability to raise the revenue needed to adequately fund public services; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will continue to press for significant reform measures needed to allow for a progressive tax system similar to other states, in which the wealthy pay their fair share in order to allow for investment in public services and pivot the state away from disastrous austerity measures.

Submitted by:
Stephanie Hodge
AFSCME Local 401

AMENDMENT #8

COUNCIL 31 FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

WHEREAS:

Council 31 is widely recognized within AFSCME for its commitment to financial integrity and seeks to instill that commitment in all elected officers at every level of the union; and

WHEREAS:

Pursuant to the AFSCME International Union Constitution and the AFSCME Financial Standards Code, affiliates are not required to send out financial reports or minutes to members; and

WHEREAS:

Article X, Confidentiality of Financial Records, of the Financial Standards Code stresses the confidentiality of the union's financial records and states that union officers must restrict access to those records; and

WHEREAS:

Such caution with regard to the sharing of financial data has become ever more essential in this era of hacking and scamming, and internet crimes that have already struck at other AFSCME affiliates; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 provides a full financial report to the Council 31 Executive Board at each quarterly meeting for review and approval in accordance with the Council 31 constitution; and

WHEREAS:

A full quarterly report is provided by Council 31 to the International Secretary-Treasurer in accordance with the International Union Constitution; and

WHEREAS:

Council 31's financial records are regularly reviewed by three elected trustees and by professional accounting and auditing firms; and

WHEREAS:

Council 31 files in a timely manner all reports required by the United States Department of Labor and Internal Revenue Service, and all other applicable state and federal requirements; and

WHEREAS:

Council 31 consistently seeks to educate all affiliated local unions about their responsibility for filing such federal reports, to urge those who do not file timely to come into compliance, and to provide technical support and guidance to local unions in the completion of such reports; and

WHEREAS:

Pursuant to the AFSCME International Union Constitution and the AFSCME Financial Standards Code, the financial report must be made available for inspection to union members and Council 31 has fully complied with this provision; and

WHEREAS:

Council 31 is also in full compliance with both the AFSCME International Union Constitution and the AFSCME Financial Standards Code; and

WHEREAS:

In addition to all the obligations cited above, Article VII, Section 4 of the Council constitution provides that the Council “shall render a full written report on the financial standing of the council to each affiliate local union not less often than annually”; and

WHEREAS:

Article VII, Section 3 of the Council 31 convention provides that a record of the proceedings of the biennial convention and of meetings of the Council Executive Board shall be kept and a copy of this written record shall be transmitted in writing to each local union; and

WHEREAS:

This 24th Biennial Council 31 Convention will consider a constitutional amendment entitled “An Amendment to Forge Our Future Ever Stronger,” unanimously supported by the Council 31 Executive Board, that will change the dues/ per capita structure resulting in a decrease in monthly per capita for some members and a modest increase for others; and

WHEREAS:

The Council 31 Executive Board proposed the Amendment to ensure fairness and to ensure that our union will have sufficient resources required to continue to fight vigorously and win good contracts in jurisdictions large and small, to uphold members’ rights, to improve working conditions; to continue a strong legislative program, to defend our union against increasingly aggressive assaults on unions and on employees’ collective bargaining rights, and to begin building a Strike Fund;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That financial integrity is more important than ever, and the Council will provide full transparency to its local union affiliates to help ensure full faith and confidence in that integrity at every level of the union; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That Council 31 will render a full written report on its financial standing to each affiliate local on an annual basis; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That Council 31 shall transmit a written record of the proceedings of each biennial convention and of all meetings of the Council 31 Executive Board to each local union.

Submitted by:
Council 31 Executive Board

RESOLUTION # 9

SUPPORTING PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND PUBLIC UNIVERSITY WORKERS

WHEREAS:

Public higher education is of vital importance to the social mobility and economic improvement of working people; and

WHEREAS:

Public universities are essential economic engines, providing stable employment and serving as bedrocks for communities, especially in rural areas; and

WHEREAS:

The forces seeking to further enrich the wealthy corporate class at the expense of working people have targeted public higher education across the country, seeking to permanently cut off access to post-secondary education for middle and low-income students; and

WHEREAS:

The 2025 federal budget reconciliation law cuts funding and access to student loan programs and grants, making higher education harder to afford and putting public universities across the country at risk of lower enrollment and drastic revenue shortfalls; and

WHEREAS:

The current presidential administration's attacks on immigrants will have a profound impact on enrollment of international students, who pay the full cost of tuition and help to subsidize university costs for in-state students; and

WHEREAS:

Tuition at Illinois universities continues to rise, with the average in-state tuition for public universities now the second highest in the country, 10% higher since 2009 than if costs had simply kept pace with inflation, while public funding for those universities has decreased by one-half, adjusting for inflation, in that same time period; and

WHEREAS:

In the most recent state budget, lawmakers only provided a 1% funding increase to state universities, leaving an additional 2% increase to the discretion of the governor; and

WHEREAS:

The state of Illinois is set to lose tens of billions in federal funding as a result of cuts in the federal budget reconciliation law, which may lead to further state university funding cutbacks in the coming years; and

WHEREAS:

As a result of historic drastic cutbacks, support staff at state universities, many represented by AFSCME, continue to be subjected to layoffs, position eliminations, program cuts and increased workloads; and

WHEREAS:

A 2023 study by the Illinois Economic Policy Institute and the University of Illinois shows that state university staff, on average, make 21% less than their counterparts working in state government; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME backed legislation in the General Assembly that would alter the funding formula for higher education appropriations, providing more funding to most of the public universities in Illinois, but was not called for a vote; and

WHEREAS:

University management has resisted efforts by AFSCME local unions representing university employees to gain fair wage increases for administrative, technical and building support staff.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 recommits to supporting a robust system of public higher education in Illinois that is affordable to all students seeking post-secondary education, that provides the wide and diverse educational resources necessary for success in the increasingly complex world economy, and that is adequately funded to provide all staff with fair pay and decent benefits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will fight back against efforts to defund public higher education and strip access to education from working people and families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue efforts to call attention to the crucial role played by support and non-instructional staff in university operations and the failure of state universities to provide fair wages and a path for advancement for these employees; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to press for increased public funding for the state university systems in our budget advocacy.

Submitted by:
Patrick Sheridan
AFSCME Local 963

RESOLUTION # 10

OPPOSING DEVASTATING FEDERAL BUDGET CUTS

WHEREAS:

In late June 2025, the Republican majority in the US Congress passed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) that was quickly signed into law by President Trump, putting in place sweeping federal changes to programs that will have far-reaching implications for Illinois and every AFSCME Council 31 member for years to come; and

WHEREAS:

This federal budget legislation will force revisions to state and local budgets, which could result in employee layoffs, reduction or elimination of vital human service programs, the halting or limiting of infrastructure projects, and more limited access to affordable health care; and

WHEREAS:

The cuts to the federal budget contained in the OBBBA target vital public services and programs that assist children, the elderly, the disabled, veterans, farmers, small business owners, rural communities, health care providers, and working families; and

WHEREAS:

The impact of changes and funding cuts to SNAP (food stamps) benefits and related nutrition and agricultural programs included in the Republican OBBBA will ripple through the Illinois economy harming families, farmers, businesses, and grocers while placing greater stress on state and local government budgets and creating greater food insecurity and stress on food distribution systems; and

WHEREAS:

The Republican budget act further eliminates federal funding for nutrition programming and subsidies to farmers and foodbanks, which would be additional costs the state budget would need to absorb should the state continue these vital programs; and

WHEREAS:

One in four Illinoisians- nearly 3.4 million individuals- are enrolled in Medicaid in this state, with 44% of the enrolled population being children, 9% being seniors, and 7% adults with disabilities; and

WHEREAS:

The changes to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) contained in the new federal law will have severe repercussions in access to affordable health care, with an estimated 500,000 Illinoisans expected to lose program access altogether; and

WHEREAS:

The State of Illinois is projected to face a \$51 billion reduction in federal Medicaid funding in the next decade which will result in cuts to the program, reduced payments to healthcare providers and reductions to funding for other non-healthcare services in the state as a result of the budgetary impact; and

WHEREAS:

The increase in costs of uncompensated care due to the treatment of the uninsured combined with reduced Medicaid provider payments will further strain the state's healthcare network and result in the closing of provider offices, hospitals and long-term care facilities, the elimination of services and reduced access to care, and increased health care costs for all consumers as providers make up for Medicaid cuts; and

WHEREAS:

The OBBBA will trigger \$500 billion in Medicare cuts due to federal budget rules related to the significant deficit the OBBBA will create, making it harder for the nearly 70 million older Americans and people with disabilities to access healthcare, locate doctors and hospitals or keep their current physicians; and

WHEREAS:

Cuts to clean energy tax credits, initiatives and grants contained in the OBBBA mean less support for stormwater upgrades and remediation efforts in flood prone areas putting farmers, hospitals and rural communities at greater risk; increased pollution with the lessening of emission reporting requirements, increased household utility bills, and the loss of 52,000 jobs in the environmental and energy sectors; and

WHEREAS:

The OBBBA diverts public school funding to benefit wealthy families and is estimated to result in state funding cuts for public education; and

WHEREAS:

The law makes several changes to student loan programs that result in increased borrowing costs for those who currently have student loans as well as future borrowers, thus making the cost of higher education more expensive for working families and likely increased fiscal pressure on higher education institutions if expected decreases in enrollment occur; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will educate its members and retirees on the harmful impacts of the OBBBA and will work to hold Republicans that voted for this bill accountable through phone calls, emails, and attending townhall meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will work to mitigate to the greatest extent possible any negative impacts on programs impacted by OBBBA, including the law's impact on public workers that administer these programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will work with state lawmakers to identify new revenue to fill the shortfalls in the state's budget caused by cutbacks in federal dollars rather than pursuing layoffs, furloughs, hiring freezes, program cuts, or other ineffective efficiency measures; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That given the law's staggered beginning and ending dates over the next decade, AFSCME Council 31 will actively work to elect Congressional candidates in the 2026 mid-term election who advocate for workers' rights and will work to undo the harmful provisions contained within the OBBBA before they go into effect.

Submitted by:
Khalil Muhammad
AFSCME Local 654

STAFFING ILLINOIS

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 members work every day to deliver the public services that countless Illinois residents depend on, with thousands of members interacting directly with residents to provide important benefits such as food, medical care, and more; and

WHEREAS:

Feeble attempts to address the critical staffing issues across State agencies has resulted in one of the worst staffing shortages in Illinois history as the State has failed to fill vacancies and while a minimum amount of hiring has occurred over the last four years the State of Illinois is understaffed in excess of 5,000 bargaining unit workforce; and

WHEREAS:

Staffing shortages have caused not only issues in providing services to some of the state's most vulnerable citizens but has compromised the safety of staff and residents in 24-hour care facilities, inmates and staff at correctional facilities and jails, and has further compromised the safety of our communities; and

WHEREAS:

Over the last several years the State of Illinois has used overtime as a regular part of filling gaps in the staffing shortages and not as a rare emergency but as a regular and daily occurrence; and

WHEREAS:

These understaffed working conditions are driving workers out of these jobs, which only increases the burden on remaining staff, causing more overtime, more sick days being used, and ultimately more workers leaving; and

WHEREAS:

Staffing issues have reduced the number of AFSCME dues paying members causing a financial burden on Council 31, its Locals, and members.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

AFSCME Council 31 will continue to push the State of Illinois to utilize continuous open postings for all agencies where similar position vacancies exist in multiple locations; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

Council 31 will continue putting immense pressure on CMS Labor to fill these vacancies including but not limited to Statewide Labor Management Conferences, class action grievances, and arbitration.

SUBMITTED BY:

Joshua Hoots
AFSCME Local 51

RESOLUTION # 12

AGAINST THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO DISPLACE WORKERS AND DEGRADE PUBLIC SERVICES

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 members work every day to deliver the public services that countless Illinois residents depend on, with thousands of members interacting directly with residents to provide important benefits such as food, medical care, and more; and

WHEREAS:

Interpersonal communication is a core element of the work that many members do to provide these benefits and improve lives; and

WHEREAS:

In response to massive federal funding cuts and other budget crises at the state, county, and local levels, many elected officials are seeking to introduce artificial intelligence (AI) as a means of improving efficiency, while reducing employee head count; and

WHEREAS:

No chatbot, large language model, or other artificial intelligence system possesses the technical and tacit knowledge or experience to perform the jobs of AFSCME members better than the human beings already working in those jobs; and

WHEREAS:

The most effective means of improving efficiency in state, county, and local government is hiring more workers to relieve the heavy workloads that many employees already have; and

WHEREAS:

Previous introductions of AI into government services at the enterprise level have been unmitigated disasters, such as New York City's small-business chatbot, which told owners it is legal for an employer to fire a worker who complains about sexual harassment; and

WHEREAS:

The State of Illinois does not currently have adequate laws requiring consistent human oversight of the use of any artificial intelligence systems within state government; and

WHEREAS:

A recent study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology shows that 95% of companies that have implemented generative AI pilots have failed to meet the revenue goals from incorporating this technology into their business; and

WHEREAS:

AFSCME Council 31 contributed to the work of the Governor's Generative AI and Natural Language Task Force; and

WHEREAS:

The Governor's Task Force Report provided recommendations for protecting workers against possible negative impacts from the introduction of artificial intelligence into the workplace.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will promote legislation that supports the rights of workers and minimizes the potential threat of artificial intelligence in the workplace; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work to prevent AI systems from being used to violate or undermine workers' right to organize, health and safety rights, wage and hour rights, and antidiscrimination protections; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will also stand against any proposals that replace interpersonal human interaction at the core of our work with chatbots or other artificial intelligence technologies that make it harder for Illinois residents to receive vital benefits and services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work to ensure that union members have input into the development of AI systems introduced into their workplace; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work to ensure that any members whose jobs change or who are displaced by AI adoption are given adequate training and support to adapt or move into new employment.

Submitted by:
Jack Matthews
AFSCME Local 1964

STAYING AFSCME STRONG

WHEREAS:

Since the 2018 U.S. Supreme Court case *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31*, unions representing public employees have been barred from collecting fair-share fees from individuals in our bargaining units who are legally entitled to union representation and enjoy all the benefits of the union contract without paying anything toward the costs of negotiating and enforcing it; and

WHEREAS:

Dark-money front groups such as the Illinois Policy Institute and the Freedom Foundation fomented that ruling and have sought to exploit it to weaken public employee unions; and

WHEREAS:

These deceptive groups continue actively campaigning to persuade employees to drop their union membership; and

WHEREAS:

These coordinated drop campaigns are meant to drain the resources that keep our union strong, paving the way for anti-worker employers to drive down wages, cut benefits, undermine working conditions, threaten jobs and silence workers' voices; and

WHEREAS:

The most effective counter to the slick mailers, misleading emails and other elements of these costly campaigns is a strong local union that continuously demonstrates the union difference in the workplace and involves members in the life of the union; and

WHEREAS:

A comprehensive program to ensure that Council 31 locals remain AFSCME Strong includes efforts such as local union membership chairs or committees, new employee orientations to sign up newly hired workers, signing up all non-members in our workplaces, bringing previously unrepresented job titles into existing local unions, helping unorganized workers to organize new local unions, and continuously adding new contributors to the PEOPLE program; and

WHEREAS:

New employee orientation programs make new hires feel welcome, introduce them to the union and their coworkers from the very start, answer any questions they may have, and make a clear and persuasive case for the importance of a strong union, with concrete examples of the gains that the union has made in the workplace.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That delegates to this 24th Biennial AFSCME Council 31 Convention declare the importance of unity and solidarity in our ranks in the face of attacks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the best way to ensure our union has the resources to defend our jobs, wages, benefits and rights is for every represented employee to be a card-signing, dues-paying member who sees themselves as a valued and engaged part of the union; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work with local unions to ensure that every local has a comprehensive AFSCME Strong program in place—coordinated by a Membership Chair or Membership Committee—to ensure that all new employees are educated about and welcomed into the union—including being asked to sign a union card and a PEOPLE card; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue developing and disseminating creative and informational materials that engage, inspire and involve members.

Submitted by:
Minda Williamson
AFSCME Local 1028

