2024 COMMITTEE REPORTS

VOLUME TWO

Presented to the National Convention of the AFT, AFL-CIO Committee Reports on Constitutional Amendments and Resolutions
Houston | July 22–25, 2024

FIGHTING FOR REAL SOLUTIONS FOR A BETTER LIFE
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Substitutions for these committee chairs may be made if, for any reason, the appointees are unable to serve.

## EDUCATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
Committee Chair: Donna Chiera, AFT New Jersey
Committee Secretary: April Giannosa, West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In Support of Our Profession, Our Public Schools</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>More Teaching, Less Testing: End Over-Testing in Schools</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cellphones/Smartwatches</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Supporting the Freedom to Read in Public Schools and Protecting our School Librarians from Harassment</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Protecting Public Education From Right-Wing Extremism</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Promote the Ethical and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Schools</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Promoting Professional Learning for the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Creating an AFT-Owned Accredited Alternative Certification Program</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Committee Chair: Lacy Barnes, California Federation of Teachers
Committee Secretary: Karla Hayashi, University of Hawaii Professional Assembly, Local 6625

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Real Solutions for Higher Education</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>In Support of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity in Response to the June 2023 Supreme Court Ban on the Use of Affirmative Action in College Admissions</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>AFT Policy Toward Dual Credit</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Adult Autism Initiative</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
Committee Chair: LaBrina Hopkins, AFT-Maryland
Committee Secretary: Shonda Below, Northeast Houston AFT, Local 6568

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resolution No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Support for Newcomers, Asylum Seekers and Refugees</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Guidelines for Educating Students and School Staff About Indigenous People’s Culture and History</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Committing to the End of a ’Lifetime on Alert’ for Physical and Psychological Violence Against LGBTQIA+ Youth and Adults</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Brown v. Board of Education: Honor the Milestone, Finish the Work</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Support for New Families</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Support for the LGBTQIA+ Community</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution No.</td>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Black Lives Matter at School Month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Opposing the Weaponization of Antisemitism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Adopt Gender-Neutral Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>For an End to the War in Gaza and Lasting Peace, Security and Self-Determination for Israel and Palestine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Hope and Resilience in Haiti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Ukraine: Teachers’ and Students’ Social and Emotional Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Iran: Human Rights, Labor Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Support Workers’ Rights in the Philippines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>National Labor Network for Ceasefire Stands in Solidarity with Campus Protesters, Demands Their Rights to Protest and Free Speech Be Respected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Sell State of Israel Bond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>AFT Divestment from State of Israel Bond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Stop Enabling Genocide: Halt U.S. Military Aid to Israel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>AFT Supports the Call for Divestment from Exploitation and Genocide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Addressing Staff Shortages in the Government Workforce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Addressing the Harms Exacerbated by State-Level Tax Cuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Affirming the First Responder Status of Open Water Lifeguards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>In Support of Just, Respectful and Safe Public Safety Practices for All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Swatting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Opposition to the Trading of California’s Water Supply on Wall Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Recognition for Bea Lumpkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>In Support of Screenings/Training on Elder Abuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Support CalSTRS and CalPERS Using Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Criteria in Making Investment Decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Supplemental Pension Plan Protections for Education Workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, the AFT represents the collective voice and aspirations of a diverse body of professionals, including teachers, school and college support staff, public employees, higher education faculty and healthcare workers, advocating for equitable access to high-quality healthcare, public services, education, and the advancement of social justice; and

WHEREAS, the emergence and integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, exemplified by innovations such as ChatGPT, machine learning algorithms and other AI-driven tools, have ushered in a new era of technology with the potential to foster transformative change across all sectors around the globe, particularly in education, healthcare and public services creating both remarkable opportunities and significant challenges that necessitate careful consideration and a strategic and immediate response; and

WHEREAS, the AFT advocates that any and all implementation of advanced technology must be guided by core commitments to ensure safety and privacy, promote human-centered implementation and individuality, advance equitable access, guarantee equity and fairness, advance democracy, and teach digital citizenship and balance; and

WHEREAS, the AFT has created the report “Commonsense Guardrails for Using Advanced Technology in Schools,”¹ which shares the expertise and collective voices of our members in the field as they navigate the integration of advanced technology and AI in the classroom and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the AFT champions the principle of participatory innovation, advocating for the meaningful involvement of workers and other relevant stakeholders in the design, development, procurement, application and ownership of AI technologies to ensure that AI-based tools enhance rather than replace human expertise, judgment and interpersonal interactions, and that they are tailored to meet the specific needs and challenges of the sectors in which they are employed; and

WHEREAS, critical decision-making must remain with teachers, paraprofessionals, higher education faculty, healthcare professionals, and public service workers, regardless of the AI tool being used, and

must never allow the institutions where we work to become dependent on AI or the corporations that develop it; and

WHEREAS, the opportunities of AI in education hold the promise of personalized learning experiences, adaptive instructional design, increased access, and enhanced teacher and staff support. AI-driven innovations in healthcare have the capacity to optimize diagnoses, streamline treatment plans and improve patient outcomes. In addition, AI technologies offer opportunities for more responsive government, data-driven decision-making, and enhanced service delivery, enabling governments to improve public infrastructure, and promote inclusivity and equity; and

WHEREAS, the challenges of technological development have, in some instances, been marked by a prioritization of technological advancement and profit over ethical considerations and societal welfare, leading to adverse outcomes, including the negative impacts of social media on young users; the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation, including deepfakes; creation of unreliable responses such as hallucinations and other nonsensical results; undermining of intellectual property rights; erosion of public trust; the loss of students’ and workers’ personal information and privacy; the widening of socioeconomic gaps; and the narrowing of workers’ rights; and

WHEREAS, the indiscriminate or ill-considered implementation of AI-based technologies, particularly in sensitive sectors such as education, healthcare and public services risks compromising the quality and integrity if these essential services, exacerbating existing disparities and diminishing the role and efficacy of the professionals in these fields; and

WHEREAS, the international community, including the International Labor Organization, UNESCO and the U.N. High Commission on Technology continues to examine a global response to an emerging technology; and

WHEREAS, the current regulatory and policy landscape in the United States has proven inadequate in addressing the complex and evolving challenges posed by many technologies, including AI, evidenced by the failure to hold technology companies accountable, ensuring robust protections for personal privacy, enforcing ethical standards in AI development and use, and preventing potential harms associated with these technologies, leaving individuals, public workers and communities vulnerable;

WHEREAS, the AFT recognizes the profound implications of AI and social media on the professional practices and personal lives of our members, underscoring the need for a nuanced, informed approach that maximizes the benefits of these technologies while proactively addressing their potential risks and ensuring they serve to support, rather than undermine, the critical work of educators and school staff at all levels, healthcare workers and public employees; and
WHEREAS, the AFT stands firmly against any application of AI and social media technologies that may lead to displacement; that infringes upon the fundamental rights of workers, including the right to collective bargaining; that perpetuates or amplifies systemic biases; that contributes to the widening of the digital divide, or that in any way detracts from the core mission and values of the AFT and our members, advocating instead for the development and implementation of these technologies in a manner that is ethical, equitable, transparent, inclusive and aligned with the public interest:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will endorse the responsible and principled development and use of AI and social media technologies, emphasizing the importance of transparency, accountability, corporate responsibility, respect for intellectual property and other creative outputs, the protection of workers’ rights and privacy, and the maintenance of professional integrity, and calls for the establishment of ethical guidelines and standards that govern the use of these technologies across all sectors; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will emphasize the critical need for equitable access to AI and advanced technologies across all sectors, advocating for the democratization of technological benefits to ensure that no group is left behind in the digital age. Recognizing that AI has the potential to significantly enhance education outcomes, healthcare delivery and public services, the AFT will call for intentional efforts to bridge the digital divide and provide equal opportunities for all individuals to benefit from these advancements, regardless of socioeconomic status, geographic location or other barriers; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT strongly will advocate for a union seat at the table during the development, procurement and implementation of comprehensive, forward-looking regulations and policies that directly address the multifaceted challenges and opportunities presented by AI and social media, ensuring that these technologies are harnessed to serve the public good in a manner that upholds the principles of quality, equity and accessibility in education, healthcare and public services, and that safeguards are in place to prevent potential harms; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will assert that the impact of AI in the workplace is a mandatory subject of bargaining and will develop contract language, policies, procedures and practices to support our affiliates at the bargaining table and beyond, including specific measures to mitigate the displacement of workers due to the integration of AI or other advanced technologies; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will call for robust regulatory and policy measures to address the ethical, legal and social
implications of AI. These measures should prioritize the protection of personal privacy, enforce ethical standards in AI development and deployment, and prevent potential harms such as bias, misinformation, disinformation, deepfakes and the erosion of public trust. The AFT will urge policymakers to implement forward-thinking regulations that safeguard individual rights and promote the responsible use of AI in ways that align with societal values and the public interest; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will proactively engage with policymakers, technology developers, educational institutions, healthcare organizations, civil rights organizations and other key stakeholders in a concerted effort to establish clear, ethical guidelines and standards for the use of AI and social media within educational, governmental and healthcare settings, prioritizing the well-being, development and success of students, patients and the broader communities served by AFT members, and ensuring that these technologies are deployed in a manner that is respectful of the professional expertise and autonomy of educators, healthcare workers and public employees; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will commit to facilitating ongoing research both in the United States and abroad, dialogue, professional development and training initiatives designed to empower our members with the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to effectively navigate and leverage AI and social media in their professional practices, thereby enhancing the quality of education, healthcare and public service delivery, and ensuring that members are well-prepared to engage with these technologies in an informed, critical and constructive manner; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will reaffirm our unwavering commitment to advocating for a future in which technological advancements, including AI, serve to enrich and enhance the professional endeavors of educators and staff, healthcare workers and public employees, fostering environments that are inclusive, equitable and conducive to high-quality, personalized learning and public service, and ensuring that technology acts as a catalyst for positive change, empowerment and innovation within society, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of the federation’s mission to improve the lives of our members and the communities they serve; and

RESOLVED, that all AFT members will be provided with the tools, time and trust necessary to learn and use AI technologies in an ethical, responsible and effective manner, ensuring that they are equipped to integrate these new tools into their professional practices in ways that enhance their work and uphold the highest standards of integrity and efficacy; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for ongoing comprehensive training and professional development programs to equip our members with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively utilize AI and advanced technologies. Such initiatives should focus on enhancing digital literacy, fostering critical thinking and promoting ethical considerations in the use of AI. By empowering educators, healthcare workers and public employees with the tools to navigate and leverage these technologies, the AFT aims to improve service delivery and outcomes while maintaining the highest standards of professional integrity; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to ensure that the expertise of our members is front and center in any development and/or integration of advanced technology and AI in their workplaces by expanding the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on AI and widely sharing its work such as the report “Commonsense Guardrails for Using Advanced Technology in Schools,” conducting a back-to-school conference on AI highlighting the leadership of AFT school-based members, creating similar ad hoc committees, as necessary, in all AFT constituencies, and continuing to grow and disseminate user-ready resources and additional examples of productive use of advanced technology on dedicated sections of AFT’s Share My Lesson and e-learning platforms; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT executive council will periodically review and update this resolution to reflect the rapid evolution of AI technologies in the workplace. This ongoing review will ensure AFT policies remain current and effectively address the dynamic nature of today’s workplaces, thereby safeguarding the interests and enhancing the capabilities of our members in an increasingly digital world.

☐ Adopted ☐ Adopted as Amended ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by______________________ ☐ Referred to_____________

2. IN SUPPORT OF OUR PROFESSION, OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, OUR STUDENTS

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, public education is vital to safeguarding our democracy, is the manifestation of our civic values and ideals, and can

help bridge differences between people with divergent backgrounds and beliefs; and

WHEREAS, we are at a critical moment requiring us to renew our commitment to public education and its central importance in the lives of students, their families and communities, and in maintaining a thriving democracy and healthy economy; and

WHEREAS, as educators, our job is to prepare our students for life, for careers, for college, for civic opportunities and engagement, and to advocate for our expertise in our knowledge of content, context and the students we serve; and

WHEREAS, educators are leading schools’ recovery in the midst of their own pandemic challenges, including mental health and well-being issues, while extremely focused on helping students overcome literacy challenges, learning loss, behavioral health challenges, and social media-induced isolation and loneliness; and

WHEREAS, families want their children to have access to a well-rounded education; develop strong fundamental academic and life skills; and have pathways to career, college and beyond; and

WHEREAS, a challenging, well-rounded curriculum supported by deeper learning that allows students to engage in robust, hands-on learning experiences will enable students to leave school with the ability to analyze, apply, synthesize, problem-solve, evaluate, collaborate and create; and

WHEREAS, experiential learning—a process for students to learn through hands-on experiences, also referred to as “learning by doing”—is a powerful way to address students’ learning needs in an engaging, relevant and fun manner; and

WHEREAS, experiential learning is crucial in helping students to think and write, solve problems, apply knowledge, and discern fact from fiction because it provides real-world life skills and builds background knowledge, also referred to as content or prior knowledge, which allows students to make meaning of what they are reading, and can boost academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, teaching for deeper learning is essential for an education system grounded in educational equity for all students; research shows that schools focused on deeper learning demonstrate stronger student achievement, with pronounced gains for students from low-income families, new immigrants and students of color; and

WHEREAS, authentic systems of assessment that are culturally and linguistically responsive; provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning and development in a variety of ways; and are designed to measure growth and progress are more equitable than the narrow, annual high-stakes standardized tests that incite fear and anxiety and undermine cognitive capacity; and

WHEREAS, research in neuroscience and the developmental and learning sciences shows that students’ emotional and psychological
safety supports their ability to learn and take risks, and is undermined when they feel threatened or unsafe; and

WHEREAS, research has documented that well-designed systems of support communicate to students that they are respected, valued and loved; can enable resilience and success for youth who have faced serious adversity and trauma; and have significant positive effects on student progress, attendance, mathematics and reading achievement, and overall grades, in addition to measurable decreases in grade retention, dropout rates and absenteeism;¹ and

WHEREAS, partnerships with parents, the community and community-based organizations through the community schools model offer schools and school districts additional capacity to improve schools, by offering responsive programming for all students and families; and

WHEREAS, the AFT is committed to these strategies, and has pursued them through our Real Solutions for Kids and Communities campaign this year. The campaign has also fought against the undermining of public education through culture wars, denying honest history, draining funds from public schools through voucher programs, and de-professionalizing teaching; instead, the campaign works to strengthen public schools through proven solutions and positive supports:

RESOLVED, that the AFT and our affiliates will engage in strategic actions and partner with families, communities, and allied organizations to transform teaching and learning in America’s public schools by continuing and building on the Real Solutions for Kids and Communities campaign to:

- Create joyful and confident readers by helping teachers access, learn, use and advocate for evidence-based strategies for reading instruction; and

- Care for children’s mental health and well-being through school-linked supports and services and related specialized instructional support personnel such as school counselors, psychologists and social workers; and

- Expand community schools as a proven strategy for addressing academic learning and development along with well-being, providing needed services and deepening family and community engagement; and

- Provide all students as early as possible with opportunities to learn by doing via experiential and project-based learning that provides them with real-world, real-life skills as well as

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opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge through performance-based assessment; and

- Bring additional resources and attention to career and technical education, to link education to economic development as well as to expand career pathways, internships and apprenticeships for students, by working with districts to offer high-quality pathways in areas of high demand, such as cybersecurity, welding, healthcare, advanced manufacturing and robotics; and

- Elevate the work of the Biden-Harris administration around investments made in infrastructure, manufacturing, energy and the environment that support well-paying, safe and sustainable jobs, and work with companies and school districts partnering to prepare youth for these opportunities; and

- Renew our focus on educator and school staff health and well-being to ensure they have the support, tools and strategies to make teaching and other school-based careers more sustainable so that staff can adequately care for themselves and their families, and remain in the profession; and

- Secure investments that public schools need for improved teaching and learning conditions, adequate staffing, fair pay for teachers and school staff, and other fundamentals for a high-quality education in every school; and

RESOLVED, the AFT will utilize new avenues and partnerships for accessing existing professional learning content that helps educators:

- Build on and refine student-centered practices grounded in a strong foundation in child and adolescent development and learning; and

- Learn to use data about school climate and other student outcomes to pursue continuous improvement; and

- Problem-solve around the needs of individual children; and

- Build their knowledge of how to create engaging, effective instruction that is culturally and linguistically responsive; and

- Strengthen skills for implementing and integrating social-emotional learning and restorative justice practices; and

- Work with families and community to create a shared supportive approach for teachers and school staff alike; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to advocate for equitable school environments that affirm student identities and include culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy and curriculum that is inclusive of multidiverse groups’ history, contributions and insights by providing local affiliates with
regular opportunities for educators to support their cultural
proficiency and professional growth; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will press for transformative
accountability and assessment practices at the classroom,
school, district and state levels that actually assess what students
need to know and do, and lessen the damage of current
standardized assessments practices, while large-scale change is
being advocated for and worked toward at the federal level; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will share best practices on:
• Using pedagogical practices that ensure students are active,
  not passive, participants in learning, and infuse hands-on
  student-centered practices that foster student ownership of
  learning across grade levels; and
• Procuring resources for a variety of learning environments;
  and
• Extended learning outside the classroom; and
• Structuring school days to allow educators and school staff
time to collaborate, plan, grade, and foster relationships with
students and families and incorporating these practices in
collective bargaining or memoranda of understanding where
possible; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will identify and disseminate
information on how affiliates can:
• Negotiate practitioner-led district-level committees on
curriculum, assessment and instructional strategies; and
• Provide input on the job descriptions for instructional
  coaches and other related roles that support the
development of educators and school staff; and
• Collaborate with educators and school staff, families,
  community organizations, and municipal and/or regional
  partners to develop a variety of publications that provide
  actionable practices around social-emotional learning and
  restorative justice that families can use in the home and
  other learning environments; and
• Advocate for culturally and linguistically responsive
  teaching and curriculum that is developmentally
  appropriate, and inclusive of the history, contributions and
  insights of diverse groups; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT, with our affiliates, will work to
remove barriers that impact students, teachers and schools,
including access to broadband internet, negative effects of
unchecked social media, culture wars and censorship laws,
voucher and choice schemes that siphon public funds,
underinvestment where it is needed most, and anything else that
weakens the ability of public education to be a main avenue to
freedom and prosperity for all; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT, with our affiliates, will continue our unwavering commitment to advancing opportunity, justice and freedom for every educator, as they are the basis for preparing all children for bright futures as active and engaged citizens in our democracy.

5. MORE TEACHING, LESS TESTING: END OVER-TESTING IN SCHOOLS

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, all children deserve a rich, meaningful public education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges that await them as contributing members of a democratic society and a global economy; and

WHEREAS, educators are called to this profession by a singular purpose: an unwavering, unequivocal commitment to our students’ learning, well-being and potential. Our members do their jobs because they want to prepare students for future success; and

WHEREAS, the deeper learning we strive for is too often lacking the necessary support to make implementation a reality—and eclipsed by the misuse and overuse of standardized assessments required by policymakers fixated on accountability above all else; and

WHEREAS, the coupling of state standards and assessments to measure and report student and school performance under the No Child Left Behind Act narrowed curricula across the country; and

WHEREAS, the current test-and-punish accountability system has squeezed out vital parts of the curriculum that are not subjected to accountability testing, sacrificed student learning time to testing and test preparation, and has forced teachers—particularly those teaching our most vulnerable students—to focus their attention on students achieving just below the passing score; and

WHEREAS, despite a laudatory goal of shining the light on student needs, this emphasis on tests and accountability took us in another direction, away from valuing the essential skills of persistence, critical thinking and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, even under the heavy weight of federal testing requirements, many schools at all levels have implemented best practices in education—such as interdisciplinary, inquiry and project-based learning and career and technical education programs across a wide range of subjects and skills—that support the whole child; there is a better way:
RESOLVED, that the AFT will call on state and federal policymakers to affirm our commitment to a public education system that reflects the diversity of children’s experiences and abilities, allows students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do throughout a child’s academic career, and ensure educational excellence and equity for every student; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support legislation that promotes improved assessments and accountability; allows states more flexibility to administer and design assessment systems that support teaching and learning; eliminates the current federally mandated testing schedule for summative assessments in math, reading and language arts, and science; and establishes options such as grade-span testing, representative sampling, and combination testing; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to work with our local affiliates and state federations to mobilize members and support an education system that fosters joy, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity in every classroom; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for multiple pathways to graduation that may include, but are not limited to, the inclusion of performance-based measures that demonstrate the full spectrum of student experiences and learning; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support policies that prohibit the use of federally mandated assessments as the sole or dominant factor for retention policies, program placement, high school graduation decisions, teacher evaluations, or school rating systems; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT remains committed to ending the overemphasis on high-stakes testing that has harmed children’s learning experiences for far too long.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to_____________

6. CELLPHONES/SMARTWATCHES

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, personal cellphones and smartwatches are now often used by students at all grade levels; and

WHEREAS, cellphones and, more recently, smartwatches have become a learning distraction, a tool for cyberbullying and an unhealthy addiction; and

WHEREAS, screen addiction is changing the way students think and decreasing their levels of concentration; and
WHEREAS, notifications and alerts on cellphones and smartwatches are creating challenges for educators to keep students focused and engaged; and
WHEREAS, cellphones and smartwatches may be used to record in classrooms, violating personal privacy and potentially violating the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; and
WHEREAS, some of these devices have user and parent functionality to “focus” and limit the usage times, but these functions are not often used or students find ways around them:

RESOLVED that the AFT will compile information regarding best practices and develop and advocate for strong unambiguous policies regarding the possession and use of cellphones and smartwatches in classrooms; and
RESOLVED that the AFT will support our local affiliates and state federations in advocating for the adoption and implementation of appropriate legislative guidelines to reduce the impact of cellphones and other devices on students and the classroom.

7. SUPPORTING THE FREEDOM TO READ IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PROTECTING OUR SCHOOL LIBRARIANS FROM HARASSMENT

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, the freedom to read is under attack by well-funded right-wing organizations seeking to destroy foundational community organizations such as public schools and libraries; and
WHEREAS, both groups and individuals are employing harassment and targeting of school librarians, diverse reading materials, and students engaging in the freedom to read in furtherance of their goal of destroying public schools and libraries; and
WHEREAS, the harassment of school librarians and targeting of diverse reading material are an attempt to marginalize and eliminate the identities of LGBTQIA+ people and people of color; and
WHEREAS, the harassment of school librarians and targeting of diverse reading material are also part of a larger coordinated nationwide attack by special-interest groups, legislators, policymakers and politicians to gain support for anti-LGBTQIA+ and racist policies and laws:
RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to support and advocate for policies and laws requiring that diverse reading materials and resources be available to all students; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT condemns the harassment and targeting of school librarians as they fulfill their duties to obtain and maintain diverse collections that promote equity and empathy; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT supports the right of all school librarians to work free from harassment and to fulfill their professional responsibilities to provide students with diverse texts; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT strongly believes in the right of every student to see themselves reflected in school and library reading materials and to exist in the public school space free from targeting and harassment based on race, color, sex, gender identity/expression, age, religion, disability, national origin or sexual orientation; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT supports the freedom to read as outlined in the American Library Association’s Freedom to Read Statement.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_______________________  ☐ Referred to_____________

8. PROTECTING PUBLIC EDUCATION FROM RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, our communities, schools and union are under attack by strategically funded extreme right and MAGA political factions that seek to dismantle public education as a public good through disinvestment, disenfranchisement and direct attacks on individual and community efforts to increase equity and transparency in school funding; and

WHEREAS, at the same time, these bad actors recharacterize their efforts and claim to be in service of low-income children and families of color, despite their long collective record of attacking and destroying neighborhood schools and other community-based support systems in the very same Black and brown communities; and

WHEREAS, efforts by these entities have included the voucher schemes across the country; and

WHEREAS, groups like the State Policy Network and Moms for Liberty, and school privatizers like Paul Vallas, seek to silence authentic curriculum to further obscure and exclude Black history (an
effort gaining ground across 36 states\(^1\), ban books as part of a radical anti-Black and anti-LGBTQIA+ agenda, and exploit legal asylum seekers as political props, enlisting support and engagement from documented hate groups; and

WHEREAS, attempts to ban books and tax schemes to rob public schools of funding come from the same people, the same groups, the same bank accounts, and they are connected with similar efforts nationwide; and

WHEREAS, conservative megadonors and their dark-money organizations seek to influence elections ranging from local library and school boards to Congress and the presidency, often explicitly campaigning on their plans to further attack, censor and dismantle public education nationwide. Their goal is to elect radical extremists like Ron DeSantis and bring back the likes of Betsy DeVos; and

WHEREAS, all of these efforts aim to erode public trust in the rights and benefits of public education as a public good and advance a radical overhaul of our nation's commitment to public education to inform our citizenry and strengthen our democracy; and

WHEREAS, the same groups attack public pension systems and exacerbate shortages of public educators; and

WHEREAS, our union democracy has faced and defeated threats from right-wing campaigns, lawsuits, social media attacks and other interference with our democratic processes; and

WHEREAS, our own members, from classroom teachers and support staff to union leadership, have experienced targeted threats and harassment from extremist groups and their supporters because of our work supporting schools as institutions of inclusive democracy:

RESOLVED, that the AFT stands in solidarity against well-funded forces that want to destroy our union and public education as we know it, and we will fight these entities in order to protect our students, our schools, our members, our profession and public education as a public good; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will speak in one voice as a union when we condemn their attacks on libraries, LGBTQ+ students and their families, and our ability to teach an accurate and more complete history of our nation, including teaching about the insidious nature of white supremacy, about Black resistance, and about the contributions of other historically excluded populations such as the Asian American and Pacific Islander diaspora, Native nations, migrants and refugees, and others; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to support and advocate for policies and state laws requiring honest and inclusive curriculum such as Black history, Latino history,

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genocide and holocaust studies, reparations won and Native American history, among others; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT refuses to ignore the connections between the inflammatory, anti-inclusion rhetoric of right-wing politicians, their funders and their supporters, and the ongoing threats to and attacks on schools, libraries, other educational spaces, and the students and workers endangered each time such rhetoric incites action, ranging from personal attacks to system wide bomb threats; and

RESOLVED, that we recommit to educating ourselves as members of the AFT through workshops, webinars, resource groups and other professional development to better understand the history, role and threat of these groups attacking public education as a public good. We will work to better understand their goals, how they operate, how they exploit our political and nonprofit systems to dismantle public education, how they seek to make educational spaces less inclusive and democratic for our students and families, and what we can do to protect our schools, our communities and our union from their attacks; and

RESOLVED, that as AFT leaders, we commit to engaging and supporting new educators in this work, sharing additional information with members at our committee and building-level meetings, and participating in union efforts to organize against these attacks; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support progressive revenue campaigns that force the same wealthy elite who fund attacks on our schools to pay their fair share so that we can fund schools and other community needs, and we will endorse and support candidates and elected officials who share our priority to protect public education as an institution of inclusive democracy; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will increase our strength to defend against these attacks in partnership with our allies and coalitions, including United Working Families, Grassroots Collaborative and Black Lives Matter at School; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT commits to bargaining for the common good as a central value of the AFT.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_______________________  ☐ Referred to_____________
3. PROMOTE THE ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SCHOOLS

Committee recommends non-concurrence.

WHEREAS, the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has led to their increasing adoption in educational settings; and
WHEREAS, AI-powered tools and systems have the potential to enhance learning experiences, personalize instruction, and streamline administrative tasks, but also raise concerns about privacy, bias and the dehumanization of education; and
WHEREAS, the integration of AI in schools must be carefully considered and implemented in a manner that prioritizes the best interests of students, teachers, and the broader educational community and society at large; and
WHEREAS, there is a need for clear guidelines, ethical frameworks, and robust safeguards to ensure the responsible and equitable use of AI in education; and
WHEREAS, the development and deployment of AI systems in schools should be transparent, accountable, and subject to ongoing evaluation and oversight:

RESOLVED, that the AFT recognizes the potential benefits and risks associated with the use of AI in educational settings and will call for a comprehensive, inclusive and transparent approach to its implementation; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for the development of ethical guidelines and best practices for the responsible use of AI in schools, with input from educators, students, parents and relevant experts; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will urge educational institutions to prioritize the protection of student and educator privacy, the prevention of algorithmic bias, and the preservation of human-centered learning experiences; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will support ongoing professional development and training for educators to ensure they are equipped to effectively and ethically integrate AI technologies into their teaching practices; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will remain committed to fostering a learning environment that values critical thinking, creativity and human interaction while leveraging AI’s potential to enhance educational outcomes in a responsible and equitable manner.

☐ Adopted    ☐ Adopted as Amended    ☐ Defeated    ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________    ☐ Referred to____________
4. PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION

Committee recommends non-concurrence.

WHEREAS, artificial intelligence is rapidly advancing and has the potential to revolutionize the field of education; and

WHEREAS, AI can be leveraged to personalize learning, automate tasks and provide valuable insights to educators, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for students; and

WHEREAS, the effective integration of AI in education requires educators to develop new skills and knowledge to harness its potential and navigate its challenges; and

WHEREAS, professional learning opportunities are essential for educators to gain the necessary competencies to effectively incorporate AI into their teaching practices; and

WHEREAS, the majority of educators across the country should receive professional development to use these new AI technological tools to support students in ways that do not perpetuate biases or discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the AFT recognizes the importance of empowering educators to embrace and utilize emerging technologies to serve their students better:

RESOLVED, that the AFT advocates for the development and implementation of comprehensive professional learning programs focused on AI in education; and

RESOLVED, that these professional learning programs should cover topics such as AI fundamentals, ethical considerations, practical applications and best practices for integrating AI in the classroom; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT encourages collaboration among educators, AI experts and educational institutions to create relevant and accessible professional learning resources; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT supports the allocation of necessary funding and resources to ensure all educators have equal access to professional learning opportunities related to AI in education; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT remains committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation, empowering educators to leverage AI to enhance educational outcomes and prepare students for the future.

☐ Adopted    ☐ Adopted as Amended    ☐ Defeated    ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________    ☐ Referred to_____________
9. CREATING AN AFT-OWNED ACCREDITED ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Committee recommends non-concurrence.

WHEREAS, many trade unions offer apprenticeships that successfully launch workers into new careers with a pro-union mindset; and

WHEREAS, each state in the United States and the District of Columbia have varying alternative certification requirements for those interested in becoming certified teachers; and

WHEREAS, the AFT is filled with members, including retirees, who are experts in the craft of teaching and who would be excellent instructors for future teachers on pedagogy and instructional strategies; and

WHEREAS, teachers trained under an AFT-owned accredited alternative certification program would be more likely to have a positive view of the union:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will create an exploratory committee with the task of researching the feasibility of creating an AFT-owned accredited alternative certification program; and

RESOLVED, that the committee’s work would include, but is not limited to, researching the costs of creating and maintaining such a program, how different the program would need to be to accommodate the requirements of each state and the District of Columbia, which states may be the best choices for a pilot implementation of the program, the accreditation requirements for the program in each state, and an assessment of how difficult it would be for an AFT program to meet said accreditation requirements; and

RESOLVED, that the results of the committee’s research will be presented at the 2026 national AFT convention.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_________________________  ☐ Referred to_____________
16. REAL SOLUTIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, our system of higher education—from community colleges and land grant institutions to research universities, from historically Black colleges and universities to other minority-serving institutions—is a public good that supports the future of society, by knowledge creation, economic prosperity of the communities and states it serves, strengthens civic and democratic institutions, and results in individual growth and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, there has been a huge assault on higher education, starting with its defunding which has increased the costs of college, including the long-term costs associated with student loan debt, creating barriers to accessing higher education and to completing programs of study; and

WHEREAS, even with the high cost to students and their families, the money flowing into higher education is not directed enough toward teaching, research and student support but rather toward a proliferation of executive positions and initiatives that prioritize generating revenue over education; and

WHEREAS, this focus on higher education as a commodity rather than as a public good means to a better life for all has resulted in institutional closures, program discontinuance, the rampant casualization of the academic workforce, and faculty and staff layoffs; and

WHEREAS, the attack on knowledge creation and on universities and colleges as sites of free and open debate and protest are part of a larger effort to undermine our colleges and universities and to weaken the very institutions that prepare students to engage in a robust, vibrant, multicultural, pluralistic democracy; and

WHEREAS, these attacks show up as targeting faculty, staff and students with racist, misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic and ableist harassment for their academic work and public stands, often based on bad-faith accusations of academic misconduct or purposeful misrepresentations of their work; and

WHEREAS, these same extremist activists are fighting to limit students’ right to learn, circumventing the academic freedom and shared governance rights of faculty, and limiting the professional autonomy of academic staff by attempting to outlaw academic disciplines that center on the lives and experiences of marginalized
communities, and by banning diversity, equity and inclusion programs that support academic and professional success; and

WHEREAS, more than 70 percent of the instructional workforce are faculty in contingent positions who lack protection for academic freedoms, workplace voice and professional autonomy and the job security that are foundational to high-quality research and education and who, because of employment status, are more vulnerable to violations of their academic freedom and repression of their free speech rights and more often face discipline and termination of employment for exercising these rights:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will reaffirm its commitment to combating these attacks on colleges and universities, and advancing real solutions that support and strengthen the public mission of all institutions of higher education; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue its work to increase investment and public funding for higher education so that the cost of college is not a barrier to accessing higher education and a barrier to the mission of these universities and colleges, and to further ensure that resources are directed to instruction and support for students; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will protect the right of students to learn and faculty to teach and research by vigorously defending academia from political interference and faculty from political harassment, and by advocating for programs and support staff that support academic opportunity and success for students from all backgrounds; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to fight for full-time college and university jobs with meaningful job security so that all members of the higher education workforce, so that they have the economic security, professional autonomy and resources necessary to provide and support a high-quality higher education experience for all students; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to organize the higher education workforce both inside and outside of the collective bargaining context, and use the power of the union to help our affiliates defend knowledge creation and faculty and staff rights, achieve real solutions for sustainable higher education careers for all members of the higher education workforce, and to work with state legislatures and the federal government to secure the funding necessary for higher education to truly serve the public good.

☐ Adopted    ☐ Adopted as Amended    ☐ Defeated    ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________    ☐ Referred to_____________
18. IN SUPPORT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN RESPONSE TO THE JUNE 2023 SUPREME COURT BAN ON THE USE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, affirmative action was established in 1961 to promote equal treatment regardless of race, color, religion and national origin, later expanded to include gender in 1971; and

WHEREAS, affirmative action addresses systemic discrimination by ensuring opportunities for marginalized groups and admitting qualified individuals traditionally excluded based on gender, race, ethnicity and disabilities; and

WHEREAS, affirmative action has significantly impacted employment patterns and diversity in educational institutions; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, the Supreme Court allowed race as a factor in college admissions but prohibited quotas; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court upheld diversity benefits in education but struck down quota-like admissions policies in 2003; and

WHEREAS, in June 2023, the Supreme Court banned the use of affirmative action in college admissions presenting Asian American applicants as victims of affirmative action and unfair admission policies disregarding their decades-long fight for equity:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue our support of affirmative action and calls for federal legislation to uphold its original intent; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will reaffirm the need for affirmative action to ensure representation and promote diversity and opportunity for all marginalized groups in all sectors; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will assert that affirmative action should continue until discrimination no longer exists in America, and will address misconceptions and challenges to affirmative action policies.

☐ Adopted     ☐ Adopted as Amended     ☐ Defeated     ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_________________________    ☐ Referred to_________________
WHEREAS, dual credit/dual enrollment provides a valuable path for students to jump-start a college career and receive college credit in advance of attending a university, college or community college; and
WHEREAS, competency-based education programs offered in secondary schools rely heavily on dual credit as a means of student academic and career advancement; and
WHEREAS, it is essential that the quality of these classes should be maintained by ensuring that the curriculum, instruction, academics, library resources, and technological support meet higher education institutions' standards and provide students with an adequate opportunity for success in a higher education context; and
WHEREAS, states should provide the resources necessary to allow all students to pursue a college education; and
WHEREAS, dual enrollment career and technical education programs help keep disengaged students in school and create opportunity for knowledge and skills that result in well-paying jobs with dignity and drive the economy; and
WHEREAS, states should ensure that the price of a college education is affordable for all families and does not force families to compromise the social and instructional experience of students; and
WHEREAS, systemic and persistent underfunding of higher education has led to diluting the academic integrity of college classes in a dual credit environment; and
WHEREAS, the current dual credit system incentivizes inequitable teaching assignments for both high schools' and higher education institutions' full-time and part-time faculty; and
WHEREAS, collaboration between high school dual credit instructors, faculty from higher education institutions, and education administrators benefits students who participate in these classes; and
WHEREAS, establishing these dual credit opportunities should be spearheaded by faculty from higher education institutions and high schools; and
WHEREAS, regardless of who teaches or where dual credit is taught, academic freedom should be consistent with standards used in institutions of higher education; and
WHEREAS, admission into dual credit classes should include the student meeting academic requirements of the local higher education institution; and
WHEREAS, high school students should be paired with counselors and librarians from the partnering higher education institution to ensure that the dual credit curriculum is appropriate and students are in a position to meet educational goals; and
WHEREAS, all students should have the opportunity to utilize dual credit regardless of location, socioeconomic status, race, gender or sexual orientation:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support policies that require dual credit instructors, including in CTE, regardless of institutional setting, to hold the minimum qualifications required by the local higher education institution and/or the specific industry experience to teach the courses; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will encourage local districts and higher education institutions to set standards for high school students enrolling in dual credit courses that uphold the minimum required academic qualifications of the local higher education institution, including meeting minimum course requirements including for GPA, algebra and basic English placement processes; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will encourage locals to work with school district administrations and the local higher education institution to ensure that course length and academic integrity are aligned for students taking the course, regardless of whether the course is taught at high school or at the higher education institution; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT and its locals will support policies that afford faculty members and students academic freedom in both the higher education and high school settings; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will provide bargaining resources to support locals to establish formal collaborative structures between the higher education institution and local school district, led by the high school and higher education faculty who are teaching dual credit courses; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will help develop sample contract and MOU language that protects high school, college or university faculty from being displaced as part of dual enrollment; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support policies that recognize the need for students to have the benefits of a collegiate experience by supporting and advocating for policies that place an emphasis on students’ academic and social development; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for dual credit being a supplement to secondary education and a transition into fully collegiate higher education; dual credit should not undermine regular high school courses and/or higher education; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will encourage locals to establish systems that ensure high school students are paired with higher education counselors as part of the dual credit course experience; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to advocate for dual credit opportunities to be made available to all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, while also advocating for fully funded and resourced preK-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to____________________

17. NEURODIVERSITY_ADULT-AUTISM INITIATIVE

Committee recommends concurrence as amended:

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of children with autism spectrum disorder has grown from 1 in 150 in the year 2000 to 1 in 36 currently; and

WHEREAS, in Illinois, 15 percent of all preK-12 students in school districts ages 6-21 have the support of an individualized education program. Of the students with an IEP in Illinois, 11 percent have IEPs related to autism (Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Report Card); and

WHEREAS, in the national 2020-21 student preK-12 student population, 14.7 percent of students had a reported disability with autism accounting for 12.2 percent of this population (National Center for Education Statistics); and

WHEREAS, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which requires providing eligible students with IEPs, does not apply to students once they graduate from high school; and

WHEREAS, neither the IDEA nor the Americans with Disabilities Act requires colleges or universities to seek out students with learning challenges or provide diagnostic services. Additionally, neither law provides prescribed requirements for documentation that colleges and universities must accept; and

WHEREAS, neither the IDEA nor the ADA requires more than reasonable accommodations with a few exceptions; and

WHEREAS, only 24 percent of students with autism spectrum disorders notify their institution of their disability, and approximately only 34 percent of students with autism spectrum disorders complete their postsecondary program, compared with 59 percent of the general population of students and 50 percent of students with all disabilities (Petcu, Zhang, & Li, 2021, Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health); and

WHEREAS, students entering university and college-level institutions are largely on their own, and parents are kept out of conversations due to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act provisions; and
WHEREAS, universities and colleges have limited resources to expand aid and support; and
WHEREAS, existing state laws and individual policies have hardly been able to keep pace with the fast growth of this population:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will create a member committee to identify, define and create specific legislative and preK-12, college and university policy changes, such as instructional training for teaching neurodivergent students, with autism spectrum disorder and related disabilities, changes to the IDEA and the ADA to require colleges and universities to actively reach out to students who may be in need of support, changes to IEPs to require self-advocacy skills for high school students and similar reforms; and programming that assists the school to post-school transitions; and

RESOLVED, that the above committee will present its recommendations to the AFT, which will then advocate for strong legislative and institutional policy language pertaining to the individual needs of this growing population.

☐ Adopted ☐ Adopted as Amended ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by______________________ ☐ Referred to_____________
20. SUPPORT FOR NEWCOMER, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, the AFT recognizes the unique challenges faced by newcomer, asylum seeker and refugee students and their families in our schools, and AFT members have a proud history of welcoming students from vastly different backgrounds for generations to our public schools; schools are indeed a place of great pluralism and diversity; and

WHEREAS, we have a responsibility to all students, regardless of their immigration status, that they have access to a high-quality public education that is safe, inclusive and supportive; and

WHEREAS, migrant families, like successive waves of immigrants before them, are coming to the United States for a better life—to escape violence, natural disasters and extreme poverty; they’re in the United States to work hard and build a future that gives their children a fair shot at a decent life; and

WHEREAS, the federal government must address all aspects of our broken immigration system, including securing our border and dealing with the fentanyl crisis, while at the same time providing fair, efficient and humane pathways to immigration; providing protections for Dreamers; and addressing the increasing humanitarian crisis along the border and in cities like Chicago and New York; and

WHEREAS, those cities and other frontline communities need resources from the federal government to meet the pressing human needs of migrants, without straining the other needs of communities, including educational resources and housing:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to advocate for additional federal, state and local funding and resources to support newcomer, asylum seeker and refugee students and their families in our schools; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will work with local, state and federal agencies and school districts to welcome our migrant students and meet their needs and fight against the pitting of their needs against the needs of all our students; and

RESOLVED, to that end, that we will fight to:

1. Ensure that schools have access to culturally competent professional development and resources for educators and staff members;
2. Support initiatives that facilitate language acquisition and proficiency for newcomer students through programs for English language learners, bilingual education and targeted interventions;

3. Ensure the hiring and retention of qualified bilingual educators and support staff to serve the diverse linguistic needs of newcomer students;

4. Encourage schools to establish and/or strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations, nonprofits and governmental agencies to provide wraparound services and resources for newcomer students and their families; and

5. Promote the creation of safe and welcoming spaces within schools, free from discrimination or harassment, where newcomer students can thrive academically, socially and emotionally; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue the long-term fight for a broad pathway to citizenship as well as comprehensive reform of our broken immigration system; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will call on the administration to use every tool in its toolbox to prevent labor exploitation and help migrant families achieve self-sufficiency, including the use of expedited work permits, improved asylum processing, expanded refugee resettlement, and new and renewed TPS (temporary protected status) designations for all unsafe countries; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will engage in outreach and education efforts to raise awareness about the needs of newcomer, asylum seeker and refugee students within our communities in ways that strengthen our communities; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will work to amplify the voices of newcomer, asylum seeker and refugee students and their families in discussions surrounding education policy and practice.

21. GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATING STUDENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE’S CULTURE AND HISTORY

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, there are 574 federally recognized Native American tribes in the country, many of which have unique languages and cultures; and
WHEREAS, there are 326 Native American reservations in the U.S., making up almost 6.7 million people, according to the most recent U.S. census, making up about 2.02 percent of people in the U.S. who are registered to a federally recognized Native American Tribe; and

WHEREAS, many Americans are not registered under a federally recognized tribe, but identify as Indigenous, Native American or belong to a non-federally recognized tribe; and

WHEREAS, less than 1 percent of students (449,000 students) enrolled in public schools in the U.S. identify as Native American when enrolling in the 2023 school year; and

WHEREAS, many people arriving in the U.S. today from the Caribbean, Mexico, South and Central America speak an Indigenous language as their home language and/or identify as Indigenous; and

WHEREAS, many U.S. public schools lack guidelines regarding activities and discussions about Indigenous peoples that are historically accurate and culturally appropriate:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will charge its Native American and Indigenous Task Force to make recommendations on how to ensure that all schools are create culturally and academically affirming schools for Indigenous students; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will encourage the U.S. Department of Education to work with educators to collaboratively develop guidelines regarding activities and discussions that pertain to Indigenous peoples and their historjesy; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will collaborate with our locals to educate teachers and administrators about culturally appropriate practices regarding the teaching of Indigenous people’s cultures and their historians.

☐ Adopted     ☐ Adopted as Amended     ☐ Defeated     ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_________________________     ☐ Referred to_____________

22. COMMITTING TO THE END OF A ‘LIFETIME ON ALERT’ FOR PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTQIA+ YOUTH AND ADULTS

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, in May 2024, U.S. State Department and joint FBI-Department of Homeland Security international travel alerts have been issued warning LGBTQIA+ Americans of increased risk of terrorist attacks aimed at June’s pride events worldwide; and

WHEREAS, in June 2023, the Human Rights Campaign declared a "state of emergency" for LGBTQIA+ people in the U.S., citing the more
than 500 bills in state legislatures—more than 80 of which have been signed into law—targeting LGBTQIA+ people, primarily transgender youth; and

WHEREAS, in April 2023, Equality Florida issued a travel alert “warning of the risks posed to the health, safety, and freedom of those considering short- or long-term travel, or relocation to [Florida] … following the passage of laws that are hostile to the LGBTQIA+ community, restrict access to reproductive healthcare, repeal gun safety laws, foment racial prejudice, and attack public education by banning books and censoring curriculum”; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the American Medical Association alerted the nation to an “epidemic of violence” against transgender people, the FBI reported 20 percent of the 8,000+ reported hate crimes in the U.S. resulted from sexual orientation and gender identity bias aimed at LGBTQIA+ persons, the number of anti-LGBTQIA+ hate crimes have increased each year (2020-23) since, and Black trans women are the most likely victims of violent bias-motivated crimes; and

WHEREAS, incidents of anti-LGBTQIA+ hate crimes are rising faster in the 28 states that have laws that ban gender-affirming care, restrict the rights of K-12 transgender students (restrict bathroom use to one that matches their gender identity at birth, allow pronoun misgendering) and restrict classroom discussion of gender identity and sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQIA+ youth have more than double the risk of homelessness with a greater risk for LGBTQIA+ youth who are Black, Indigenous or people of color; and nearly half of homeless LGBTQIA+ youth run away because they were disowned by their family; 2 out of 5 are kicked out by their parents; and one-third face physical, emotional or sexual abuse; and

WHEREAS, suicide is a leading cause of death for LGBTQIA+ young people ages 10-24; LGBTQIA+ youth are four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers; transgender and nonbinary youth are two to five times more likely to attempt suicide than their cisgendered peers; 41 percent of LGBTQIA+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide, and nearly 14 percent of LGBTQIA+ youth attempted suicide in 2023; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQIA+ young people with at least one accepting adult in their life report significantly lower rates of attempting suicide, and LGBTQIA+ youth who experience supportive parents/caregivers are half as likely to report suicidal thoughts and half as likely to report attempting suicide; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQIA+ middle and high school students had 26 percent lower odds of attempting suicide in 2022 when they had access to at least 1 of 5 of these school-related protective factors: (1) learning about LGBTQIA+ people and experiences in sex education, (2) learning about LGBTQIA+ stories and people in history class, (3)
having access to a gender-neutral bathroom, (4) the presence of an on-campus Gender and Sexuality Alliance or a Gay Straight Alliance, and (5) teachers who respect student’s pronouns:

RESOLVED, that the AFT acknowledges that LGBTQIA+ persons face a lifetime on alert due to greater risk of psychological and physical violence because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender and/or race; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will survey and collect anti-violence and anti-bullying policies that specifically address anti-LGBTQIA+ bias and develop and make available model anti-violence and anti-bullying policies to local and state affiliates for adoption by state legislatures, educational boards, employer agencies and boards; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will survey and collect school and school district policies that support LGBTQIA+ affirming and inclusive school environments and curriculum for students, make available model policies to local and state affiliates, and provide support and strategies for the adoption of such policies by local educational boards; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to develop and disseminate to local and state affiliates LGBTQIA+ public relations content and strategies for adoption of LGBTQIA+ affirming policies by state legislatures, educational boards and employers; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to survey and collect workplace policies and contract language that support LGBTQIA+ affirming and inclusive work environments, make available model policies and contract language to local and state affiliates, and provide support and strategies for the adoption of such policies and contract language by employers; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to defend and support members who are committed to carrying these goals forward; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to respond with tangible and specific actions to help end the need for LGBTQIA+ people, especially BIPOC and rural LGBTQIA+ people and communities, to live in a perpetual state of caution at their school, at their workplace, in their communities, and at times in their own homes; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue our advocacy against the torrent of anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation, and will never end our fight for the dignity and civil and human rights of all persons; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will recommit resources to achieve these goals.
23. **BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION: HONOR THE MILESTONE, FINISH THE WORK**

**Committee recommends concurrence.**

WHEREAS, in 1954, following unyielding efforts by the NAACP and the courage of the petitioners who brought the case, the U.S. Supreme Court finally struck down the legal basis for racial discrimination in public facilities by ruling that segregated public schools were inherently unconstitutional in *Oliver Brown, et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, et al.*; and

WHEREAS, at the national level, the *Brown* decision was pivotal in fueling and strengthening civil rights activism in the United States and must be considered foundational to the achievement of such transformational legislation as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

WHEREAS, with regard to public schools, the *Brown* decision and the court’s subsequent directive in *Brown* to desegregate schools “with all deliberate speed” accelerated the movement toward realization of an equitable, multiracial democracy in the U.S. but also that such movement was immediately countered by opposition at individual, institutional and governmental levels by forces bent on defending and entrenching racial discrimination in education; and

WHEREAS, even as historic progress has been made in the desegregation of schools, continual and continuing resistance and backlash—what author Carol Anderson terms “white rage”—have impeded the complete dissolution of segregation in public schools, thus rendering fulfillment of the principles and practices embedded in *Brown* incomplete; and

WHEREAS, the metrics of public education—literacy, achievement, discipline, educator diversity, school funding, graduation rates, college enrollment—all confirm the persistence of dire racial and socioeconomic inequities in education; and

WHEREAS, some of the central moments in the Civil Rights Movement—from the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, which was organized by labor activist A. Philip Randolph, to Martin Luther King Jr.’s solidarity with striking Memphis sanitation workers at the time of his assassination in 1968—are testament to the symbiotic relationship between labor and civil rights:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will partner with our local affiliates and state federations throughout 2024 to commemorate and celebrate the 70th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will honor the authentic legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education* with teacher learning programs and
resources designed to expand historical understanding of Brown but also forward-looking programs that document the degree of ongoing racial and socioeconomic divisions in public schools today, and thus underscore the urgency of educator and union advocacy to fully dismantle segregation in our schools.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by______________________  ☐ Referred to______________________

24. SUPPORT FOR NEW FAMILIES

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, the AFT is dedicated to the welfare and bright future of all students and members of our communities; and
WHEREAS, districts across the country have significant Latine populations; and
WHEREAS, cities across the country are experiencing the harsh reality of homelessness, including thousands of students, due to lack of affordability, racism and lack of investments in BIPOC [Black, Indigenous and people of color] communities; and
WHEREAS, Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott is playing politics with the lives of immigrant children, women and men by deporting them from his state to other cities across the country deemed sanctuary cities; and
WHEREAS, cities like New York City, Washington, D.C., and Chicago have received thousands of displaced immigrants; and
WHEREAS, cities have received insufficient support to assist new arrivals; and
WHEREAS, some schools are better equipped with resources and community infrastructure to receive students, in particular those deemed sustainable community schools that have community partners that house immigration services and have years of experience in doing immigration advocacy; and
WHEREAS, bilingual educators and educators in general are experiencing an increased number of newcomers each year without the resources to match; and
WHEREAS, interpretation and translation services are a necessity in schools, yet they are widely unavailable, and those who can interpret are facing increased difficulties to do so; and
WHEREAS, the cities could respond to this crisis by expanding affordable housing that would help not only address the incoming population but also the existing houseless:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will condemn the actions of Republican Texas Gov. Abbott; and
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED, that the AFT locals will provide support to displaced immigrants by coordinating hands-on volunteer opportunities, developing training to support bilingual educators and educators in general on the rights of immigrant and homeless students and parents; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will engage with city and state elected officials and community organizations to advocate for the rights of the displaced immigrants; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will demand more robust bilingual services, housing for homeless students, appropriate interpretation staffing, support for educators and support staff who wish to obtain education in becoming bilingual, and filling critical vacancies to assist incoming students displaced by right-wing governors with an equitable and appropriate educational program representative of an actual sanctuary city.

☐ Adopted □ Adopted as Amended □ Defeated □ Tabled
☐ Precluded by______________________ □ Referred to_____________

25. SUPPORT FOR THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, the LGBTQIA+ community should be able to teach, learn, work, and live freely without fear of harassment and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, our students deserve supportive, welcoming and affirming school environments, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression; and

WHEREAS, conversion therapy, which targets and harms transgender individuals along with the rest of the LGBTQIA+ community, has been completely banned in Canada, and in New York and other states, but remains—without law or policy—in over 20 states; and

WHEREAS, many health plans are not allowed to exclude transition-related care, and healthcare providers are required to treat a person with respect and according to their gender identity; however, a study by the Center for American Progress found that LGBTQIA+ patients report experiencing discrimination in healthcare settings, ultimately discouraging them from seeking medical care; and

WHEREAS, in many states, transgender athletes are unable to compete in the sports teams that they identify with; and

WHEREAS, educators fostering positive LGBTQIA+ environments are being met with baseless, unfair and hurtful accusations; and
WHEREAS, state school boards and school districts are being pressured to renounce support for LGBTQIA+ clubs and school activities; and

WHEREAS, a 2021 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey indicated that 43 percent of transgender youth have been bullied on school property; and 29 percent of transgender youth, 21 percent of gay and lesbian youth, and 22 percent of bisexual youth have attempted suicide; and

WHEREAS, the Trevor Project, a national organization founded to eradicate suicide and other mental health challenges facing the LGBTQIA+ community, reports that affirming school environments were found to have a positive impact in saving young LGBTQIA+ lives; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, a record 520 anti-transgender state laws and 23 national laws were introduced, including more than 30 anti-transgender bathroom bills, more than 100 anti-LGBTQIA+ curriculum censorship bills, and 45 anti LGBTQIA+ drag performance ban bills; and

WHEREAS, the Anti-Defamation League and GLAAD reported that from June 2022 to April 2023, there were over 356 anti-LGBTQIA+ hate and extremism incidents documented across 46 states and the District of Columbia (with California, New York and Texas seeing the highest number of incidents): 138 incidents relating to drag events and performers, 33 incidents relating to schools and educators, 23 incidents relating to healthcare facilities and providers, and 22 incidents relating to government buildings and elected officials; and

WHEREAS, these incidents create fear and divide our communities with mass disinformation and misinformation, continuing a cycle of hate and bigotry and dismantling the basic freedoms of the LGBTQIA+ community; and

WHEREAS, the proponents of the aforementioned laws have legislated and misused the courts to enact policies that promote discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning individuals; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned restrictive and punitive measures make already vulnerable students even less secure, leading to missed classes, academic underperformance, increased dropout rates, and increasing their likelihood of homelessness:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will work with state federations and local affiliates to promote strong state and national protections for LGBTQIA+ youth and adults, including:

- Inclusive language in all schools;
- Proper use of identifying pronouns and a person’s chosen name;
- Equitable access to facilities that match gender identities;
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

- Respect for gender expression, including, but not limited to, attire and appearance;
- Policies that allow transgender athletes to compete in the sports teams that they identify with;
- Policies that protect and respect the gender identities of students and staff; and
- Inclusive anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies that protect students and staff; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for the availability of gender-affirming medical care and a full range of family planning medical care no matter an individual’s state of residence and that these services be fully covered by medical insurance; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for the banning of conversion therapy throughout the United States; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to vigorously defend school, healthcare, and public employee workers who support LGBTQIA+ youth, their families and the broader LGBTQIA+ community, as well as those who teach about their existence, history and the fight for dignity, rights, and pride for LGBTQIA+ people; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will consider supporting advocacy organizations—such as Pride at Work, PFLAG, GLSEN, the Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal and the Trevor Project; identify and support other local, community-based organizations that provide services to LGBTQIA+ youth and workers; hang pride flags; and celebrate holidays such as National Coming Out Day and Pride Month; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ history within history curriculum across the country; professional development, continuing education, and training for school staff; complaint procedures that are inclusive of LGBTQIA+ pupils; and the development and promotion of LGBTQIA+ safe space trainings.

[Adopted] [Adopted as Amended] [Defeated] [Tabled]
[Precluded by____________________] [Referred to_____________]

26. BLACK LIVES MATTER AT SCHOOL MONTH

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, the closing of public schools and other school actions across the country have negatively and disproportionately impacted Black and brown communities; and

WHEREAS, Black educators have been disproportionately targeted for layoffs, have endured persistent racism, both overt and covert, and
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

have been exploited for their cultural experiences to implement diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives without receiving adequate support or recognition; and

WHEREAS, mandates to teach Black history have been under attack by right-wing forces that want to distort and deny the vital history of Black people in the United States and across the world; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of ethnic studies and culturally sustaining curriculums is of critical importance to supporting the learning needs of all students, but particularly Black and brown students, as decades of research have demonstrated; and

WHEREAS, Black and brown students face suspensions from school at disproportionate rates even when risk factors such as poverty and low achievement are controlled for; and

WHEREAS, discipline, criminalization and over-policing of Black and brown students have proven to be ineffective in improving outcomes and are damaging to their health and well-being, and restorative practices have proven to be a powerful tool in reducing disproportionate discipline and improving school climate; and

WHEREAS, school districts often ineffectively implement restorative practices without adequate training, support and understanding of their role in a developmentally appropriate system of accountability, consequences and harm reparation; and

WHEREAS, increased staffing of social workers and nurses and the protection of counselor time to do counseling work are vital and should meet levels recommended by their respective national professional organizations in order to support and address students’ social-emotional and other needs:

RESOLVED, that the AFT endorses participation and encourages members in all locals to participate in Black Lives Matter at School Week to take place during Black History Month; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT and its affiliates will host events during or around this week and engage in advocacy, on an ongoing basis, aligned to the national demands for hiring more Black teachers and ending the pushout of Black teachers in our schools, proper implementation of restorative practices in schools and ending zero-tolerance discipline, teaching students Black history and other ethnic studies curriculums, and funding more counselors in schools as opposed to police officers; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will encourage its members to wear Black Lives Matter at School shirts to school that week and teach lessons about related topics; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT executive council and AFT members in classrooms will participate in the Black Lives Matter at School
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

50 Week(s) of Action by teaching one or more lessons in our classrooms.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________   ☐ Referred to____________________

27. OPPOSING THE WEAPONIZATION OF ANTISEMITISM

Committee recommends non-concurrence.

WHEREAS, the AFT is on record calling for an immediate end to the relentless bombing of Gaza. The AFT also reiterates our long-standing and uncompromising opposition to antisemitism, Islamophobia and all forms of hate and incitement to violence. The AFT defends the reasonableness of criticizing Israel while forcefully condemning the rise of antisemitism. It is equally reasonable to support Palestinian independence without opposing an Israeli state that lives in harmony with its neighbors and abandons the project of apartheid occupation; and

WHEREAS, as educators, healthcare professionals and public service professionals, we are sick at heart over the toll of the war on Gaza. As the bombing continues, despite orders from the International Court of Justice to desist, the death toll is now in the tens of thousands; and

WHEREAS, students across the U.S. have risked their scholastic standing and career prospects to oppose the killing. We are proud of them; and

WHEREAS, opponents of this burgeoning anti-war movement have levied charges of antisemitism against those who oppose the assault on Gaza. This is a false characterization of antisemitism; and

WHEREAS, right-wing antisemitism in the U.S. is a serious threat. It has led to synagogue shootings in 2018 and 2019. White nationalists in Charlottesville, Va., chanted “Jews will not replace us” in 2017; and in the 2021 siege on the Capitol, insurgents were seen with pro-Holocaust paraphernalia. Violent right-wing antisemitism has also been resurgent in Europe;¹ and

WHEREAS, the AFT opposes the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of “antisemitism” (and similar definitions) in any proposed rule the U.S. Department of Education may formulate in response to Executive Order 13899, or in any other policy or practice to enforce civil rights law. This definition of antisemitism conflates protected political speech with unprotected

¹ Eitan Hersh and Laura Royden, Political Research Quarterly, 2023, Vol. 76(2) 697–711)
discrimination, and enshrining it into regulation chills the exercise of First Amendment rights, undermining the agency’s legitimate and important efforts to combat discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the American Association of University Professors correctly notes the clear connection between silencing voices critical of Israeli state policy and censoring “teaching about racism” in the United States. Sadly, a partisan effort to weaponize civil rights law threatens to smother dissent and cast a pall of conformity over our campuses. It is not the role of the government to terminate political debates on campus; indeed, government must protect the right of universities and colleges to foster debates on pressing matters of the day. Disagreement and dialogue are central to both intellectual inquiry and democratic self-government; and

WHEREAS, the weaponization of accusations of antisemitism in campaigns to censor dissenting views of the war and the decades-long Palestinian efforts to govern their own affairs is deeply disturbing. In education, we insist on the freedom to have unfettered, intellectually honest, and respectful discussion and to freely debate ideas, even controversial ideas. That is the hallmark of both American education and American democracy. We will defend the rights of educators and their students to participate in intellectually honest discussions, to articulate and rally around their views, including the ongoing struggle for Palestinian self-determination; and

WHEREAS, any attempt to impose by legal means a highly polemical and widely contested definition of antisemitism amounts to reckless state overreach and directly undermines educators’ responsibility to educate. We call on our elected representatives to stand up in defense of the core values of free speech, free association and academic freedom that provide the foundation for democratic self-government and the realization of the academic mission of Washington’s colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, antidiscrimination law appropriately ensures a safe and inclusive environment on university campuses. But it is not designed and should not be employed to foreclose the analysis of current conflicts or inequities and the historical conditions that gave rise to them. We believe the American Civil Liberties Union got it right in a recent letter to the Department of Education: “the federal government is equipped with the standards to address hostile environment harassment, including when speech is involved. But the IHRA definition of antisemitism is not rooted in the legal protections against hostile environments and instead seeks to prohibit speech based on viewpoint alone; and

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WHEREAS, the ACLU has cautioned: If the Department of Education were to use the IHRA working definition of antisemitism in its investigations of Title VI complaints, protected speech would inevitably be chilled. In fact, the lead author of the original IHRA definition, Kenneth Stern, has himself opposed the application of this definition to campus speech, noting that codifying this definition would lead campus administrators to “fear lawsuits when outside groups complain about anti-Israel expression, and the University doesn’t punish, stop or denounce it.” Even if lawsuits and complaints are dismissed, merely bringing them would likely be sufficient motivation for schools to censor their communities, fearing recourse from donors, faculty, political leaders and prospective students. In other countries that have adopted this definition, universities have routinely censored speech in a manner that would be unconstitutional if conducted by an American public university. For example, students in British universities were subjected to disciplinary proceedings for sharing a Human Rights Watch infographic, signing a letter in support of a former president of the UK National Students’ Union who was accused of antisemitism, and even liking and sharing a social media post, which stated “If you are silent when it comes to Palestine, you would have been silent at the time of the Holocaust.”:

RESOLVED, the AFT will oppose H.R. 6090, passed in the U.S. House of Representatives on May 1, 2024, which “provides statutory authority for the requirement that the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights take into consideration the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA’s) working definition of antisemitism when reviewing or investigating complaints of discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. According to the IHRA’s working definition, antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.” We also oppose the companion Senate Bill 4127, introduced in April 2024, by Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will oppose H.R. 6408, passed by the House on April 15, 2024, which would enable a new category of legal targeting of nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that engage with Palestinians or on Palestinian issues. It would also enable attacks on nonprofits working in any sector on any issue. The bill gives the Department of Treasury the right to remove the tax-exempt status of organizations based solely on an accusation of wrongdoing with virtually no accountability or recourse for those accused. If it were to become law, any presidential administration could use it as a tool to stifle free speech, target political opponents and punish disfavored groups
or those seen as a political threat. We also oppose the companion Senate Bill 4136; and

RESOLVED, that adopting the IHRA working definition of antisemitism would lead to more censorship on campus, and change the nature of universities, which exist to promote the free flow of information and marketplace of ideas. While we wholly support efforts to fight discrimination and harassment through Title VI complaints and investigations, we strongly caution against adopting the IHRA definition, or any definition of discrimination that threatens to censor or penalize political speech laying at the heart of the First Amendment.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to____________

28. ADOPT GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

Committee recommends referral to Executive Council.

WHEREAS, gender-neutral language is a generic term covering the use of non-sexist language and gender-inclusive language, and the purpose of gender-neutral language is to avoid word choices that may be interpreted as biased, discriminatory or demeaning by implying that one sex or social gender is the norm;¹ and

WHEREAS, using gender-neutral language also helps reduce gender stereotyping, promotes social change and contributes to achieving gender equality;² and

WHEREAS, gender-neutral language is more than a matter of political correctness—it powerfully reflects and influences attitudes, behavior and perceptions;³ and

WHEREAS, a growing awareness exists that language matters, especially in regard to the subtle and not so subtle, as well as the intended and unintended consequences of language, including implicit or explicit bias;⁴ and

WHEREAS, per our Constitution and Bylaws, the AFT is committed to fighting “all forms of bias due to race, creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status;”⁵ and

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ City of Urbana, “Draft resolution regarding the implementation of gender-inclusive language in official written and verbal communications.” https://urbanaillinois.us/sites/default/files/attachments/Discussion_Gender_Inclusive_Language_Resolution_DRAFT_updated.pdf
⁵ AFT, “2022 Constitution and Constitution and Bylaws.”
WHEREAS, the AFT is committed to promoting inclusivity and, per our Constitution and Bylaws, avows that no “discrimination shall ever be shown toward individual members or applicants for membership because of race, creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political or economic status.”6 and
WHEREAS, continued use of linguistic conventions that differentiate and identify people by perceived gender may undermine the AFT’s commitments to fighting bias and discrimination and promoting inclusivity; and
WHEREAS, adopting gender-neutral language may help the AFT affirm our commitment to building a safe, diverse, compassionate, inclusive, respectful and welcoming community:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will prepare amendments to the AFT Constitution and Bylaws that replace gender-specific language (including the pronouns he, him, his, she, her, hers) with gender-neutral language (they, them, theirs) and refer them to the 2026 AFT convention; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will use gender-neutral language in all new policies and that all policy documents up for revision be edited to adopt gender-neutral language; and

RESOLVED, that all future communications from the AFT, including new webpages, press materials, reports, recruiting materials and fliers, use gender-neutral language; and

RESOLVED, that where gender-specific references are not substantive to the document in question, gender-neutral language revisions will be made administratively (in other words, not requiring a vote of the AFT executive council); and

RESOLVED, that in the conduct of routine proceedings, meetings, staff presentations, official videos and other verbal communications, whenever practical and appropriate, the AFT will utilize gender-inclusive positions, titles and forms of address (for example, “supervisor,” “spokesperson,” “chair,” “professor/officer emerit,” “alum,” “cousin,” “sibling,” “Welcome, everyone!” and “Good evening, folks”); and

RESOLVED, that, in the furtherance of gender inclusivity, the AFT will forward this resolution to our locals and state federations and offer them support/advice in the process of revising language in their own policies, documents and practices.
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Peter Goodman, United Federation of Teachers, Local 2
Committee Secretary: Joshua Gary, AFT West Virginia

30. FOR AN END TO THE WAR IN GAZA AND LASTING PEACE, SECURITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Committee recommends concurrence.

RESOLVED, that the AFT issue the following statement:

The histories of the Israeli Jewish and Palestinian peoples are filled with heart-rending stories of oppression and the terrible loss of human life. Over the last 100 years, those histories have been intertwined in an ongoing, shared tragedy, with the latest chapter beginning on Oct. 7 and the war in Gaza. Nearly 1,200 Israeli Jews, Israeli Palestinians, Israeli Bedouins and foreign guest workers, including children, died on Oct. 7: It was the most significant mass murder of Jews since the Shoah, the Nazi Holocaust during World War II. Over 35,000 Palestinians—and most painfully, over 8,000 Palestinian children—have died in the ensuing war in Gaza: This is more than double the number of Palestinians who died in the Nakba, the event of Palestinian displacement in 1948.

In the face of this unspeakable tragedy, the AFT says: the war, the violence and the bloodshed must end, and they must end now. We repeat our call of January of this year, which has only become more morally urgent over the subsequent months: for an immediate bilateral cease-fire, guaranteed by the international community; for the immediate delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid—food, medical supplies, clothing and emergency shelter—to the people of Gaza; and for the immediate release of all Israeli hostages held by Hamas.

There are truths that define the path not only to an end of this horrific war, but also to a resolution of 100 years of conflict and bloodshed between Israel and Palestine. There is no military solution to this conflict, no way forward that rests on the domination of one people and the subordination of the other, no force of arms that can bring lasting peace and security. The only way forward is one that recognizes that there are two peoples of approximately equal size that reside in this small part of the world, each with historic ties to the land, each with the right to live in freedom and peace, and each with the right to national self-determination—including the right to govern themselves in their own state. A cease-fire must be the first step on a journey that concludes with two states for two people: peace, freedom and self-determination will be possessed by both peoples, or they will remain out of reach for all.
We support a cease-fire accepted by both Israel and Hamas that will bring a permanent close to this war, as advocated by President Biden on May 31, and begin the process of achieving a lasting peace. Further, we support that U.S. aid to Israel should be used only for purposes that conform with American and international law: American military aid cannot be used in ways that facilitate the seizure of Palestinian land, the violent dispossession of Palestinian communities, and the annexation of occupied Palestinian territory. Nor can U.S. military aid be used to harm civilian populations.

An end to this war has proven so difficult because of the absence of a will to end it. Hamas has demonstrated a readiness to sacrifice Palestinian life on a massive scale when it thinks it will serve its ends: It began this war with its attacks on Oct. 7, and it has continually insisted that it be ended on its terms. The Palestinian people have suffered under the dictatorial rule of Hamas, which has brutally repressed and eliminated its Palestinian opponents. It is not a credible partner for peace, security or a two-state solution; the Palestinian leadership to accomplish these objectives will come from other sources.

 Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and his far-right government are an obstacle to achieving lasting peace, freedom, and security. He has opposed a two-state solution, and stood idle as extremist setters have engaged in violence and land theft against Palestinians on the West Bank, and as they have cruelly blocked emergency food aid to Gaza. Netanyahu has an interest in prolonging the war to escape the public scrutiny of his colossal failure to protect Israel’s citizens and his own pending criminal prosecution. While Israel’s initial cause of war—self-defense against the criminal acts of Oct. 7—was just, the ways in which the Netanyahu government has prosecuted it—its sanctioning of indiscriminate and disproportionate violence, resulting in a massive civilian death toll—has made it unjust. It is past time for an election so that Israelis can choose leaders committed to democracy, security and a peace process.

The AFT supports those forces in Israel and in Palestine that seek a different future for themselves—a democratic future where Israelis and Palestinians can both live in dignity, with peace and self-determination for all. We reaffirm our work with civil society organizations and unions in Israel and Palestine—such as the Hand-in-Hand schools, Standing Together, and the Parents Circle-Families Forum—that are committed to that different future, and working to bring it into a reality. Rather than turn away and divest from Israel and Palestine, now is the moment to rededicate ourselves to support for that future, starting with the
reconstruction of Gaza and the West Bank, focusing on education and healthcare.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to____________________

31. HOPE AND RESILIENCE IN HAITI

[Committee recommends concurrence.]

WHEREAS, the AFT and Haiti have strong and enduring ties, as we are linked by family and profession, and many AFT teachers, nurses and students are proudly of Haitian descent; and

WHEREAS, the United Federation of Teachers and the Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals led early-response healthcare teams in the wake of Haiti's devastating earthquake; and

WHEREAS, then-Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson brought an AFT delegation to Port-au-Prince to help open a neighborhood free clinic serving the families of union workers; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that while Haiti was the first Caribbean nation to gain independence from European powers and was once one of the wealthiest colonies of the Americas, it is now the Western Hemisphere’s poorest country; and

WHEREAS, the challenges facing Haiti are daunting, and the Haitian people are trying to persevere amid political instability, social unrest, financial greed, financial profiteering from other countries, the central government’s inability to deliver much-needed public services for its people, and the devastation caused by climate change and natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that the transformation of Haiti rests ultimately in the hands of its own people, who will need to initiate a multiparty dialogue and elect a new government that delivers human rights, civil liberties and equality—a solution for Haitians, by Haitians; and

WHEREAS, we assert that through all the years of civil strife, Haitian educators and nurses have functioned as strong voices for the protection of the people by denouncing the country’s episodes of violence against women and girls; fighting the recruitment of schoolboys into criminal gangs; fighting the illegal trafficking in arms, drugs and forced labor; and reaching across political lines to oppose the growing polarization of society; and

WHEREAS, we have seen that the government has tried to intimidate Haitian unions, but the government’s strong-arm tactics have failed because unions and their community allies stood in resistance for what is right and fair, and the fight continues for labor union rights and the right to organize; and
WHEREAS, despite all the challenges facing Haiti, we remain resolutely optimistic about the power of educators, healthcare workers, public sector employees and their unions to promote democracy and social justice in Haiti:

RESOLVED, that we stand in unity with the people of Haiti and remain committed to defending and promoting the vital work of the public sector, because we know that high-quality public services are the vehicle by which people gain opportunity and freedom; and

RESOLVED, that to monitor events in Haiti and to identify credible aid organizations to partner with, we will empower a committee of AFT leadership and members—including members from the Haitian-American AFT community, faith groups, our regional trade union network and other donors—to show humanitarian solidarity with the people of Haiti.

32. UKRAINE: TEACHERS’ AND STUDENTS’ SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, the AFT’s solidarity with the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Ukraine and its members is long-standing and was strongly expressed in our 2022 convention resolution “Solidarity with Ukraine”; and

WHEREAS, AFT President Randi Weingarten and Vice Presidents Dan Montgomery and Shari Obrenski have traveled to Ukraine at the invitation of TUESWU and met with hundreds of members and leaders and personally witnessed the impact of the war with Russia on teachers and students; and

WHEREAS, the AFT’s support for Ukraine’s teachers and students has been lifted through partnerships with TUESWU, Education International, the Solidarity Center, the Ukraine Children’s Action Project, Human Rights Watch, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, Save Ukraine, and the Kosciuszko Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the generational impact of the war has been devastating: More than 6 million Ukrainians have fled the country; 3,798 educational institutions have been bombed, of which 365 have been completely destroyed; and only 52 percent of students are optimistic about the future of Ukraine; and
WHEREAS, the AFT and TUESWU have worked with Human Rights Watch in Ukraine to document Russia’s attacks on Ukraine’s education sector—the loss of schools, the crises among teachers and the tragic impact on communities; and

WHEREAS, the AFT and many affiliates, including the IFT, have long experience in offering trauma-informed instruction training to teachers and staff, and the AFT is committed to working with TUESWU in the development of professional development methodology to address the social and emotional trauma experienced by teachers and students, using the tools developed by a team of trauma psychologists at Columbia University for the Ukraine Children’s Action Project:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support TUESWU in developing and offering a union-sponsored professional development course for its members in trauma-informed education and social and emotional well-being. Over the next two to three years, in collaboration with the Solidarity Center and the Ukraine Children’s Action Project, TUESWU and the AFT will conduct focus groups and pilot, monitor, roll out, evaluate and refine a continuing series of online and in-person tools to address the social and emotional impact on teachers and students of the war and its aftermath. After initial focus groups and training of leaders, the Ukrainian teachers union will be well-positioned and have the capacity to cascade this training forward and reach its 1.5 million members throughout the country; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will inform the Department of State, civil society organizations, global trade union partners and other stakeholder organizations of the ongoing impact of this project; further, the AFT will advocate among government and contracting agencies to include the concepts of trauma-informed education and educators’ social and emotional well-being in their development assistance programs; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will broadly distribute the Human Rights Watch report on the impact of the war on Ukraine’s physical and education infrastructure, highlighting violations of the additional protocol to the Geneva Convention’s “fundamental guarantee” of protecting children, schools and education, even in areas of armed conflict.
29. IRAN: HUMAN RIGHTS, LABOR RIGHTS

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, in recent years, the world has witnessed the inhumane response of the Iranian regime as it violently attacked and terrorized people who protested the death of Jina Mahsa Amini—a young Iranian Kurdish woman arrested for not observing Iran’s dress code—while she was in custody. The Woman, Life, Freedom movement that has arisen in response from those protests continues the fight for a life of respect, dignity and justice; and

WHEREAS, the struggle for human rights in Iran has deep roots, reaching across all parts of civil society, including trade unions, which have long sought their rights to freedom of expression and association. Yet today, workers are still high-profile targets of government repression, subject to intimidation, violence and imprisonment; and

WHEREAS, Iran’s educators have been especially targeted, with authorities not allowing peaceful trade union demonstrations over teachers’ poor wages, the inadequate education budget and the jailing of educators in the country’s most notorious prisons. Hundreds of teachers have been summoned and interrogated on baseless and false national security charges, and hundreds more have suffered pay cuts and have been suspended from work, forced to retire, or dismissed outright; and

WHEREAS, although Iran is a member of the International Labor Organization, it has not yet ratified the ILO Conventions guaranteeing the right to organize and the right to collective bargaining. We remain steadfast in our belief that labor rights defenders play an important role not only in protecting workers but also in protecting the people’s right to have a voice in their societies:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women for the courageous, history-making movement: Woman, Life, Freedom. We join its call for equality, dignity, development, democracy and peace; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will urge the AFL-CIO to advocate for responses from Iran to a number of worker issues raised by the International Labor Organization’s Committee of Experts, including inquiries about basic labor rights, anti-discrimination and protection from exploitation at work; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will inform the Department of State and relevant members of Congress that we condemn Iran’s brutality against its trade union movement. We will continue—despite the difficulties and the dangers—to work with Education International, Public Services International, global trade unions,
and local Iranian civil society organizations in finding ways to extend solidarity to teachers and other trade unionists in Iran.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled  
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to__________

35. SUPPORT WORKERS’ RIGHTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Committee recommends non-concurrence.

WHEREAS, workers in the Philippines face an ever worsening economic situation, including low wages, high inflation, lack of job security, and attacks on their rights to organize; and

WHEREAS, these economic conditions lead to the forced migration of Filipinos in search of work abroad, including as nurses, teachers, caregivers, domestic workers, construction workers and seafarers where they often face discrimination, low wages and hazardous working conditions; and

WHEREAS, labor activists in the Philippines are routinely “red-tagged,” a practice where government entities label activists and critics as terrorists, which often leads to harassment, detention, imprisonment or extrajudicial killing; and

WHEREAS, red-tagging and other forms of state repression have led to the murders of Alex Dolorosa and Jude Fernandez, just two of over 72 labor-related killings since 2016; and

WHEREAS, the International Labor Organization has condemned the deadly practice of red-tagging, which continues under the government of Ferdinand Marcos Jr.; and

WHEREAS, the Marcos Jr. regime continues to open up the country to plunder and exploitation at the hands of foreign corporations, including Oregon-based NuScale Power by promoting neoliberal reforms that deregulate and privatize the economy, including changing the constitution to allow 100 percent foreign ownership of the energy, advertising and education sectors; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. provides security assistance to the Philippines in the form of military aid, intelligence and training, including over $1.14 billion in military aid since 2015, and conducts regular joint military exercises with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, which is responsible for war crimes, including ongoing indiscriminate aerial bombings in the countryside and the harassment, red-tagging, forced disappearance, detention, torture and extrajudicial killing of activists, including labor organizers; and

WHEREAS, this U.S.-backed state repression has a chilling effect on the ability of workers to organize and fight for their basic rights; and
WHEREAS, the Philippine Human Rights Act (PHRA) would halt U.S. military aid to the Philippines until there are accountability measures in place; and

WHEREAS, workers’ rights at the international level are laid out in a number of human rights conventions and treaties, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); and

WHEREAS, the AFT mission statement reads: “The AFT is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities”; and

WHEREAS, 24 cents of every U.S. tax dollar goes to the U.S. military, while 2.2 cents of every U.S. tax dollar goes to education; and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO awarded the Philippine labor movement with its 2023 George Meany-Lane Kirkland Human Rights Award for its “dedication and courage” in the face of “aggressive surveillance, mistreatment, torture, imprisonment and even killings of workers”; and

WHEREAS, AFT members have thus far demonstrated their support for workers’ struggles in the Philippines through:

- Mobilizing to Seattle to protest the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the negative effects of neoliberal reforms on workers both in the U.S. and in countries like the Philippines;
- Attending the speaking tour of Kilusang Mayo Uno labor leader Elmer Labog;
- Signing a letter in support of Justice for Jude in the wake of the murder of Kilusang Mayo Uno labor organizer Jude Fernandez by the Philippine National Police;
- Rallying outside Sen. Jeff Merkley’s office in support of the PHRA;
- Struggling against military aggression by rallying and opposing JROTC in their schools in solidarity with students, veterans and victims of U.S. aggression; and
- Planning, participating in, and speaking at International Human Rights Day in Portland:

RESOLVED, the AFT will commit to building solidarity for the fight for workers’ rights in the Philippines through:

- Demanding an end to U.S. military aid to the Philippines by supporting the passage of the PHRA;
- Continuing to provide education about the conditions facing workers in the Philippines and the role of the U.S. in supporting the brutal anti-worker policies of Ferdinand Marcos Jr.;
- Partnering with the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines in continuing to build solidarity for the

1 https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2019/tax-day-2019/where-your-tax-dollar-was-spent-2018/
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

fight for workers’ rights in the Philippines;

• Opposing all unequal military and economic agreements between the U.S. and the Philippines;

• Supporting the demands and campaigns of Filipino workers, many of whom work dangerous, underpaid jobs as teachers, nurses, caregivers and seafarers;

• Committing to AFT participation in labor solidarity missions to the Philippines and support in future U.S. tours of labor leaders from the Philippines.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_______________________  ☐ Referred to_____________

38. NATIONAL LABOR NETWORK FOR CEASEFIRE STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH CAMPUSS PROTESTERS, DEMANDS THEIR RIGHTS TO PROTEST AND FREE SPEECH BE RESPECTED

Committee recommends referral to Executive Council.

WHEREAS, unions formed the National Labor Network for Ceasefire out of a shared call for a ceasefire in Gaza, the safe return of Hamas’ hostages, and safe passage for urgently needed humanitarian aid to those displaced, starved and injured by Israel’s campaign in Gaza. We see that demand broadly reflected in campus protests; and

WHEREAS, as trade unionists, we can never support efforts to repress, intimidate or deploy state-sanctioned violence against those exercising their democratic rights of free speech and who protest, strike or demand justice; and

WHEREAS, the repressive response of certain university administrators and local police to these protests is also a labor rights issue. Faculty, student workers and other campus workers—many of whom belong to our unions—are among those who have been arrested and forcibly removed from the protests, or suspended from their work. University staff have been ordered to clear protests led by students, their fellow workers and union members:

RESOLVED, that the AFT expresses its solidarity with those students, faculty and other academic workers across the United States who have faced a repressive and violent crackdown of their protests of the war in Gaza; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT demands that campus administrators cease their campaign of threats, suspensions and expulsions against peaceful protesters and cease using law
enforcement agencies to disrupt and attack them. Academic freedom, free speech, the right to assemble and the right to protest are fundamental rights, and they must be respected on campuses and across the country. The time for peace is now.

☐ Adopted ☐ Adopted as Amended ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by ___________________________ ☐ Referred to ___________

33. SELL STATE OF ISRAEL BOND

Committee ruled out of order because it would violate the AFT Constitution.

WHEREAS, the AFT holds only one bond of a foreign government, which is the state of Israel, and
WHEREAS, the AFT’s state of Israel bond is valued at $150,000:
RESOLVED, that the AFT will redeem its state of Israel bond and shall purchase no further bonds from the state of Israel.

☐ Adopted ☐ Adopted as Amended ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by ___________________________ ☐ Referred to ___________

34. AFT DIVESTMENT FROM STATE OF ISRAEL BOND

Committee ruled out of order because it would violate the AFT Constitution.

WHEREAS, over 35,500 Palestinians have been killed since Oct. 7, 2023; and
WHEREAS, among Palestinians killed by Israeli forces in their current offensive in Gaza, civilians are disproportionately and overwhelmingly represented, particularly Palestinian children who total almost half of all Palestinian deaths; and
WHEREAS, the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions has issued an urgent global call to action, calling on unions everywhere to end funding to Israel; and
WHEREAS, U.S. labor’s condemnation of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza created by Israel and subsequent calls for cease-fire includes over 200 locals from the United Auto Workers, Service Employees International Union, American Association of University Professors, United Steelworkers, Teamsters, UNITE HERE, AFL-CIO, Higher
Education Labor United, Industrial Workers of the World, National Education Association and many more; and

WHEREAS, Israeli military attacks have since October 2023 destroyed or damaged all 12 Palestinian universities that were operating in 2023 in Gaza and 80 percent of schools, leaving at least 625,000 children currently without access to education, a condition described by Palestinian and international scholars as "scholasticide"; and

WHEREAS, Israeli forces have killed more than 480 healthcare workers since October 2023, destroyed most hospitals and healthcare centers in Gaza, leaving only 10 out of 36 hospitals "somewhat functional" and only 20 out of 80 of the primary healthcare centers still operational, with 75 percent of hospitals and 100 percent of primary healthcare centers in the North of Wadi Gaza nonfunctional; and

WHEREAS, as educators and healthcare workers, we condemn the destruction of schools and healthcare facilities in any and every part of the world; and

WHEREAS, The AFT holds only one bond of a foreign government, which is the state of Israel, a country internationally accused of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide; and

WHEREAS, The AFT's state of Israel bond, which helps fund Israel's scholasticide and genocide, and pays for Israel's long-standing occupation of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the apartheid regime against Palestinians everywhere is valued at $150,000:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will redeem its state of Israel bond and will purchase no further bonds from foreign governments.

☐ Adopted ☐ Adopted as Amended ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________ ☐ Referred to_____________

36. STOP ENABLING GENOCIDE: HALT U.S. MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL

Precluded by recommendation of concurrence with Resolution #30.

WHEREAS, the AFT has long championed human rights in Central and South America, Southeast Asia, China, Russia and many other parts of the globe. As educators, paraprofessionals, nurses, and those who serve our youth and communities, responding to and advocating for the communities we serve extends beyond the walls of a classroom, school, school bus or hospital. We are more tightly connected across the planet than ever before; our jobs and our union are called to
address world crises that extend beyond local, state or national borders. This is especially true of the unprecedented humanitarian crisis facing Palestinian civilians and children from Israel's invasion and occupation of Gaza; and

WHEREAS, the International Court of Justice in January issued an interim ruling\(^1\) that Israel is plausibly committing genocide, ordering them to stop genocidal acts and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in Gaza.\(^2\) Francesca Albanese, the U.N. special rapporteur on human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, issued a report on an “Anatomy of a Genocide”\(^3\) that says she believes Israel has committed “acts of genocide in Gaza.” She presented her report to U.N. member states in Geneva;\(^4\) and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution on Friday, April 5, condemning Israel’s treatment of civilians in Gaza and demanding a halt in all arms sales to Israel.\(^5\) Canada, the Netherlands, Japan, Spain and Belgium have all announced their intention to stop shipping weapons to Israel;\(^6\) and

WHEREAS, a coalition of a dozen labor unions and liberal organizations, including the National Education Association, Service Employees International Union, MoveOn and NextGen America sent a letter to the White House on April 11, 2024, demanding that President Biden end military aid to Israel until its government lifts restrictions on humanitarian aid to Gaza. The letter calls on President Biden to enforce the Foreign Assistance Act, which bars military support from going to any nation that restricts the delivery of humanitarian aid;\(^7\) and

WHEREAS, the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) released a statement in March 2024 on the astronomical human toll of

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\(^1\) “World Court orders Israel to take actions to address Gaza Famine,” Middle East Monitor. 28 March 2024. https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240328-world-court-orders-israel-to-take-action-to-address-gaza-famine/


Israel's invasion and occupation in Gaza, especially on Palestinian children. The report stated that, “more children have been killed there in recent months than in four years of conflict worldwide.” As of March 2024, 12,300 children had died in Gaza in the last four months, compared with 12,193 globally between 2019 and 2022;⁸ and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini cited the recent Gaza health authority data as “staggering” and stated, “This war is a war on children. It is a war on their childhood and their future.”⁹ As a result of this war, in Gaza, “a child is killed every 15 minutes, one out of every 100 children in Gaza”;¹⁰ and

WHEREAS, this war has been utterly devastating for Palestinians; as of March 2024, more than 35,000 people in Gaza¹¹ have died—70 percent of whom are women and children—and more than 70,000 people have been injured since October, the local health ministry said in its latest report.”¹² A report from the World Bank, the European Union and the United Nations issued in early April states that, “Palestinians in Gaza now make up 80 percent of all people facing famine or severe hunger worldwide”¹³.

WHEREAS, international concerns for Israeli abuses of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank predate Oct. 7, 2023, going back decades. Just in the span of 2008 and the first half of 2023, over 6,000 Palestinians have been killed in confrontations “in the context of the occupation and conflict” with “… many incidents raising concerns over violation of international law and lack of accountability.”¹⁴ Between 2000 and 2019, more than 10,000 Palestinian children were arrested,

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⁹ Ibid.


detained, abused and prosecuted by Israeli security forces in the Israeli military court system;¹⁵ and

WHEREAS, American tax dollars have been and are being used to kill tens of thousands of Palestinians. The U.S. is the Israeli government’s No. 1 supplier of military weapons, accounting for 68 percent of Israel’s foreign-sourced weaponry.¹⁶ Not only does the U.S. have a 10-year agreement to provide Israel with $38 billion in military aid over 10 years (Reuters Staff 2024),¹⁷ they also supply Israel with another half billion dollars to replenish their missile defense system;¹⁸ and

WHEREAS, according to Robert Tait of the Guardian, “Israel has been the biggest recipient of American financial support to a foreign country since the second world war, receiving by 2023 a cumulative sum of $158bn, in current inflation-adjusted prices”; and

WHEREAS, since October 2023, the Biden administration has bypassed Congress to send $253.5 million worth of weapons to Israel to execute their war in Gaza.¹⁹ Our nation’s policy of arming the Israeli government has made us complicit in carrying out genocide. Time is of the essence. This policy must end now:

RESOLVED, that as long as Israel continues to block substantive and meaningful aid to Gaza, the AFT calls for the U.S. to halt military aid to Israel; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will vigorously advocate to President Biden, Vice President Harris and members of Congress to immediately end U.S. military aid to Israel.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by__________  ☐ Referred to__________
37. AFT SUPPORTS THE CALL FOR DIVESTMENT FROM EXPLOITATION AND GENOCIDE

Committee ruled out of order because it would violate the law.

WHEREAS, since Oct. 7, 2023, 1 thousands of innocent lives have been lost in Gaza, Israel and the West Bank; and

WHEREAS, the state of Israel has created a dire humanitarian crisis and famine conditions in Gaza by committing the following:

- enacted collective punishment on the Palestinians;
- carpet-bombed Gaza, including residential buildings, hospitals, U.N. schools, evacuation routes and religious institutions;
- killed thousands of children;
- used internationally banned white phosphorus against civilians; forcibly displaced over 1.7 million people; and imposed a deadly blockade on Gaza; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations has found that Israel is committing war crimes by its bombing and blockade of Gaza, and the International Criminal Court is considering issuing arrest warrants for war crimes committed by some of Israel’s top officials, including Benjamin Netanyahu; and

WHEREAS, Israel’s military campaign would not be possible without the political, financial and military support given by the United States, including $3.8 billion per year and the additional $14 billion that was approved by the U.S. Congress; and

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6 https://www.savethechildren.net/what-we-do/emergencies/gaza-emergency
7 https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/10/12/israel-white-phosphorus-used-gaza-lebanon
8 https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-20/ty-article/1-7-million-palestinians-displaced-from-their-homes-in-gaza-un-says/0000018b-ee55-d6a0-a7ff-ee779f3f0000
10 https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/04/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-starvation-icc.html
11 https://www.axios.com/2024/05/02/israel-icc-warrants-us-senators-meeting
WHEREAS, free speech is being severely suppressed in universities and workplaces, empowered by governmental institutions, by falsely conflating anti-Zionism with antisemitism; and

WHEREAS, students across the country are calling for their universities to divest from companies involved in Israeli war crimes and being expelled, harassed, silenced and physically attacked for supporting Palestine; and

WHEREAS, multiple companies, churches, and recently two California cities have divested from companies involved in Israeli war crimes; and

WHEREAS, labor unions across the country have joined the call for a cease-fire and are increasingly considering divestment; and

WHEREAS, many parallels have been made between the movement for a Free Palestine and the movement against apartheid in South Africa. In response to the global movement to end apartheid in South Africa, in 1990 the AFT passed a resolution supporting economic sanctions and a policy of disinvestment in companies that continue to invest in [South Africa] ; and

WHEREAS, the AFT, has a history of taking principled stances on pressing issues and, therefore, passed a resolution in 2022 calling on pension fund managers to "divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in workers and communities"; and

WHEREAS in January 2024, the AFT executive council passed a resolution calling for a cease-fire in Gaza and for the end of the Israel-Hamas war and promoting steps toward a two-state solution for Israeli and Palestinian self-determination; and

WHEREAS, AFT's 1.75 million workers participate in public and private pension plans totaling roughly $5.8 trillion that include companies that have been identified as contributing to various human rights violations, militarization and even genocide. For example:
1. Boeing’s products have enabled deaths and devastation in communities around the globe, including Palestine.

2. General Dynamics has been accused of assisting in the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border and providing unlawful surveillance of immigrant communities.

3. Caterpillar Inc. stands accused of providing the giant bulldozers that have been and continue to be responsible for the illegal home demolitions of thousands of Palestinians and the infamous murder of American Rachel Corrie.

4. Palantir Technologies Inc. provides data analysis for police departments and government agencies and stands accused of enabling wholesale violations of human and civil rights.

5. Valero Energy is known for poisoning communities, endangering the climate and providing jet fuel for Israeli warplanes:

RESOLVED, that the AFT recognizes the rights of all people, and especially children, to dignity, freedom, safety and peace; and AFT members do not want to benefit in any way from profits derived from exploitation and genocide; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will call on teachers’ pension fund managers to divest these funds of investments in companies that consistently, knowingly, and directly facilitate and enable human rights violations and violations of international law as part of prolonged military occupations, apartheid and genocide; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will call on all members to support this call for divestment.

[Checkboxes for Adopted, Adopted as Amended, Defeated, Tabled, Precluded, Referred]
Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, public workers provide the services Americans need; and

WHEREAS, public employee wages and benefits increasingly have fallen behind the private sector since the 2008 Great Recession—a fact that was exacerbated when the global pandemic began in March 2020; and

WHEREAS, public sector workers have retired and left public service in record numbers in the past decade; and

WHEREAS, the majority of work in federal, state and local governments is done by knowledge workers who often incur student debt to qualify to work in their public profession. In May 2020, entry-level jobs requiring a postsecondary education comprised over 63 percent of state government jobs and 61 percent of local government jobs, compared with 35 percent of private sector employment; and

WHEREAS, vacant government positions continue to be unfilled due to a lack of qualified candidates or a lack of awareness of government employment by those seeking work, causing important public services to be discontinued or to fall dramatically behind so that citizens lose faith in the government; and

WHEREAS, it's become clear that without dramatic changes in how the public sector operates, in this very tight labor market where unemployment is at historic lows, our democracy is challenged with a lack of resources and workers to maintain our system of government; and

WHEREAS, according to Harvard research, there are 27 million “hidden workers” who are working one or more part-time jobs, unemployed for a long time but seeking employment or willing to work under the right circumstances, who might be attracted to public work:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will educate locals on these issues and on solutions, including how union leaders and management

can work together to ensure that government work becomes a “destination” employment opportunity for workers, and that new hires can begin building careers in public service that transform communities and strengthen our democracy; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue efforts to work with the federal government to expand avenues for underemployed and unemployed people in the “hidden workforce” to seek employment in government service; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will help locals work with management to attract a new workforce to the public sector, to build a better life for themselves and to help strengthen our communities; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will develop resources to support affiliate work addressing inadequate compensation in the government sector through collective bargaining and publicizing the comparative research and analysis that makes this point; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will research and lift up critical employment benefits such as pensions, paid parental leave, child care and student debt relief that may make working for the people in government service more attractive; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will assist locals in an in-depth examination of the root causes of high vacancy rates in all levels of public service and work to address them to fill positions; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will adopt the report “Making Democracy Work: Real Solutions for Recruiting and Retaining Public Employees,” and recommendations made by the AFT Public Employees Short Staffing Task Force; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT Public Employees Program and Policy Council will build on the work of the Short Staffing Task Force to develop a comprehensive strategy to address government employee shortages.

☐ Adopted     ☐ Adopted as Amended     ☐ Defeated     ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_________________________________     ☐ Referred to_____________
with a value of more than $37 billion, equal to approximately 2.5 percent of state tax collections in 2022;¹ and

WHEREAS, the majority of these revenue reductions represent a significant step away from fiscal responsibility that will leave states ill-equipped to deal with future downturns in the economy; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the revenue cuts made in 2022 and 2023, 31 additional tax and revenue cuts were made that phase in, in 2025, totaling an additional $1.4 billion; and

WHEREAS, tax cuts have an initial value that is much smaller than their subsequent value in future years; and

WHEREAS, according to analysis done by the Albert Shanker Institute, 39 states devote a smaller share of their economic resources to public schools than they did before the Great Recession leaving about 60 percent of U.S. public school students in districts that are "chronically underfunded";² and

WHEREAS, the government workforce at every level is underfunded further exacerbating the problem of filling vacancies to run our government systems. In 2008, there were 19.7 million people working in state and local government. If that workforce had grown at the same rate as the population, it would have totaled 21.6 million in 2022; instead employment fell to 19.3 million;³ and

WHEREAS, states have not maintained the same level of investment in public higher education than they did prior to the Great Recession, fueling increases in tuition and an expansion of adjunct faculty; and

WHEREAS public hospitals that serve both teaching and safety net purposes face chronic funding issues:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support affiliates as they educate and lobby state legislatures to stop the race to significantly reduce or eliminate state income taxes; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will continue to support efforts such as combined reporting to prevent corporations from using subsidiaries in states with particular tax shelters to avoid paying taxes rightfully owed from operations in another state; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support affiliates as they educate and lobby state legislatures to adopt worldwide combined reporting for corporate income tax to prevent offshoring of tax revenue; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT and our affiliates will work to

¹ Taken from NCSL and AFT research. Baseline 2022 number is from: https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2022/econ/state/historical-tables.html
³ This data includes education workers: https://cepr.net/report/trends-in-state -and-local-government-employment/
eliminate tax haven states and countries where corporations
shelter income from taxation; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will remain actively involved in Public
Services International to advocate for a fair and equitable tax
administration program around the world to fund quality public
services.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to_____________

57. AFFIRMING THE FIRST RESPONDER STATUS OF
OPEN WATER LIFEGUARDS

[Committee recommends concurrence.]

WHEREAS, every day AFT public employees make a difference in
the lives of others through service to their communities; and

WHEREAS, the AFT fights for that better quality of life, and for the
real solutions that get us there—at the bargaining table or ballot box,
in our places of employment, and on our streets; and

WHEREAS, AFT members have long taken an active role in
shaping their future—in their workplaces, their communities and the
halls of power; and

WHEREAS, "Emergency Response Provider"; 6 U.S.C. 101(6)
clearly states that emergency response providers include by example
all federal, state, local government and non-government public fire, law
enforcement, emergency response, EMS and hospital agencies and
"related personnel agencies and authorities"; and

WHEREAS, "Emergency Response Employees"; 42 U.S.C. 30FF-
133(a) states that emergency response employees are defined by their
duties, which include responding and attending to a victim, treating a
victim, assisting a victim and transporting a victim; and

WHEREAS, the Homeland Security Act of 2002 defines the term
"first responders" as "individuals who, in the early stages of an incident,
are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property,
evidence, and the environment; and

WHEREAS, Current federal law, clearly without exception, allows
for open water lifeguards to qualify as first responders/emergency
response providers; and

WHEREAS, the AFT counts among its many public employee
members open water lifeguards acting as first responders/emergency
response providers without the designation:
RESOLVED, that the AFT will affirm that open water lifeguards qualify as first responders and emergency response providers, and recognizes the essential, lifesaving work performed by these brave individuals; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support House Concurrent Resolution 41 being offered in the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to_____________

58. IN SUPPORT OF JUST, RESPECTFUL AND SAFE PUBLIC SAFETY PRACTICES FOR ALL

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, as public school educators, it is our responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of all students and to promote equity and justice for all students, families and communities we serve; and

WHEREAS, the relationship between the police and the public in the United States is complex and multifaceted, such that, in some communities, there is a strong sense of trust and cooperation between the police and residents, while in others, there is a history of mistrust and tension; and

WHEREAS, in some communities, residents experience interaction with police whose tactics are too aggressive, which leads to feelings of intimidation and fear in the neighborhoods where they live; and

WHEREAS, such violence undermines the trust between communities of color and law enforcement, and creates fear and trauma for students, families and educators; and

WHEREAS, incidents of police violence have been shown to negatively affect the mental well-being of society overall, including students and the educators who serve them; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that exposure to police violence can have negative impacts on students’ mental and physical health, academic performance and overall well-being:

RESOLVED, that the AFT condemns all forms of police violence, particularly against Black individuals; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT demands that the United States Justice Department immediately and thoroughly investigate the proliferation of elite, barely supervised anti-crime tactical units in local police departments across the nation; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT stands firm against those who,
through legislation and educational policies, seek to erase our nation’s history and our collective memories, resulting in widespread miseducation about the systemic barriers to safety, security, advancement and achievement; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT encourages ongoing education and dialogue within our schools and communities to raise awareness about the impact of police violence and to work together to build a more just and equitable society for all; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT supports consistent, ongoing professional development on racial competence for every public employee working with and in our schools and their surrounding communities.

60. SWATTING

Committee recommends concurrence.

WHEREAS, swatting is a dangerous and malicious practice in which false reports of emergencies are made to law enforcement with the intent of prompting a large-scale police response, often involving SWAT teams; and

WHEREAS, swatting incidents have been on the rise, posing significant threats to public safety, causing unnecessary panic, and diverting valuable resources away from genuine emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the safety and well-being of students, educators and staff in our schools are of paramount importance; and

WHEREAS, our nation’s school districts must take proactive measures to prevent and respond to potential swatting incidents in order to ensure a secure learning environment:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will call for a collaboration of enforcement agencies and relevant stakeholders for the purpose of developing and updating comprehensive guidelines and procedures aimed at preventing and responding to swatting incidents in schools; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will advocate for legislation imposing severe penalties on adults who are found guilty of engaging in swatting activities, with a focus on deterring such malicious behavior; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will encourage the development of a reporting mechanism for the purpose of compiling information about swatting incidents and the effectiveness of prevention
59. OPPOSITION TO THE TRADING OF CALIFORNIA’S WATER SUPPLY ON WALL STREET

Committee recommends non-concurrence.

WHEREAS, in 2020, Wall Street began trading water futures, specifically in California, as a commodity. The country’s first water market launched on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange on Dec. 7, 2020, with $1.1 billion in contracts tied to water prices in California, according to Bloomberg News; and

WHEREAS, the United States is the second biggest consumer of water in the world, with California accounting for 9 percent of the nation's daily consumption. The size of California’s water market is four times larger than any other state; and

WHEREAS, the market allows farmers, hedge funds and municipalities to hedge bets on the future price of water and water availability in the American West. The new trading scheme was announced in September 2020, prompted by the region's worsening heat, drought and wildfires fueled by climate change. We must also consider the effects of population growth and pollution; and

WHEREAS, the California State Constitution requires that the water be used “reasonably” for a “beneficial use;” and

WHEREAS, some experts say treating water as a tradable commodity puts a basic human right into the hands of financial institutions and investors, a dangerous arrangement as climate change alters precipitation patterns and increases water scarcity; and

WHEREAS, the CFT has an obligation to address social justice, racial justice, and climate issues that could put its members as well as the general population in the State of California at risk; and

WHEREAS, water is a life-sustaining natural resource that is necessary for the survival of the human race; it should not be treated as a common commodity, like that of gold or oil; and

WHEREAS, if the trading of water on Wall Street continues unopposed, we may find that this natural resource becomes more at risk and less plentiful for poor people, working people, people of color, and people living in less affluent communities; and

WHEREAS, if the trading of water continues unopposed in the state of California, it may become a trend, and other drought-affected and
agricultural states throughout the United States could begin to do the same; and

WHEREAS, the world has already seen these types of blatant racial differences in Flint, Mich., the Navajo Nation and, most recently, northeastern Oregon. The move to sell water futures in California stands as a foreboding indicator of the transformation of water from a basic right into a limited-access luxury. It is a frightening expansion of a reality that already exists for poor, Black and brown, and Native American communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, the CFT represents communities that will be affected by the trading of water futures:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will publicly oppose the commodification of water in the state of California; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will work with legislators and other public figures to address the concerns of this resolution; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will commit to making its members aware of the commodification of water in the state of California; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will consider running a public campaign against the current trading of water futures in the state of California.
64. RECOGNITION FOR BEA LUMPKIN

WHEREAS, Beatrice “Bea” Lumpkin began her career in the labor movement nearly 90 years ago with a factory job at age 14, and helped organize for the Metal and Machinery Workers Industrial Union, a part of the newly formed Congress of Industrial Organizations; and

WHEREAS, upon her college graduation, Bea Lumpkin became an organizer for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America; and

WHEREAS, she and her second husband, Frank Lumpkin, who led the Wisconsin Steel Save Our Jobs Committee, moved to Gary, Ind., and she worked first as a journalist and later as a member of the United Steelworkers; and

WHEREAS, Bea Lumpkin took part in historic civil rights struggles in Chicago, marching with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Marquette Park, and working as an ally of the Black Panther Party; and

WHEREAS, she was a founding member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women in 1974, the year after Roe v. Wade confirmed a woman’s constitutional right to an abortion; and

WHEREAS, she returned to school and became a math teacher both in Chicago Public Schools and at Malcolm X College, where she served as an inspiration to many students; and

WHEREAS, Bea Lumpkin has continued to maintain her activism as a retiree on many fronts, including the Chicago Teachers Union Retiree Committee, the Illinois Alliance for Retired Americans, and the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, where she has focused on intergenerational work with youth activists; and

WHEREAS, she has continued to expand her activism in new fields with such critical work as the Chicago Teachers Union Climate Justice Committee and its fight against metal scrap company General Iron:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will salute our sister Bea Lumpkin for her lifetime of tireless struggle on behalf of workers and other oppressed people and for a better world for all; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will designate Bea Lumpkin as the esteemed recipient of an AFT lifetime achievement award.
62. IN SUPPORT OF SCREENINGS/TRAINING ON ELDER ABUSE

Committee recommends concurrence as amended below:

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization expects the global population of older adults to approximate 22 percent by 2050, a percentage that continues to rise every year. Moreover, 1 in 10 older adults and many AFT members report having experienced elder mistreatment. However, only 1 in 1,000 older adults in emergency departments are diagnosed with elder mistreatment; and

WHEREAS, the Administration on Aging within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that 5 million adults experience abuse, neglect and self-neglect every year. And the National Institute on Aging reports hundreds of thousands of adults over the age of 60 experience some form of abuse, whether physical, financial or emotional exploitation. Healthcare costs from violence and abuse to older adults are estimated to be over $5.3 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, hospitals are not consistently screening for the detection of elder abuse. Medicare has required providers to perform certain routine screenings, but not yet mandated any screenings for elder abuse. Caregivers are not receiving consistent and adequate training on elder abuse; and when elder abuse is identified, there is not often the training on how to properly report it; and

WHEREAS, that the AFT, throughout our history, has committed to the defense of the most vulnerable members of our communities:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will renew its commitment to the senior population across the United States. The AFT will work with its partners in the labor movement to advocate for our aging population; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will commit to being a voice for older adults and to speaking for this population on a national level. The AFT will identify stakeholders to sit on the various councils and boards identified by or germane to the Elder Justice Act of 2010, and charge our local affiliates to improve elder care delivery through public policy advocacy and professional education, training, research in aging, and collaboration across all healthcare settings; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will use its influence with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to require screenings for elder abuse at Medicare wellness visits, and that employers provide the time needed for healthcare providers to perform these screenings and adequately follow up; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will support all those who do the work for the elderly, including in-home caregivers, by organizing those not yet represented by a union and building model language for local unions to propose in contract bargaining that will improve the standards of care for the aging and senior population.

☐ Adopted  ☐ Adopted as Amended  ☐ Defeated  ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by____________________  ☐ Referred to_____________
corporations to report their Scope 1 and Scope 2 carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, former Rep. Chris Stewart (R-Utah), who sat on the
House Appropriations Committee, stated a priority to block the SEC
from implementing this rule; and

WHEREAS, the fossil fuel industry, their allies in other industries and
their political allies are now reacting to significant progress being made
by the engagement efforts of institutional investors to force
corporations to reduce their carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature passed legislation to block the
state’s pension funds from using ESG criteria in making their
investment decisions; and

WHEREAS, regulators in Texas sent letters to 20 banks doing
business in Texas to force them to stop using the material risk from
climate change as part of the criteria for denying loans to fossil fuel
companies based on the risk they face from the damage they are doing
to the environment; and

WHEREAS, the American Legislative Exchange Council has
released a model policy, titled the State Government Employee
Retirement Protection Act, that forms the basis for legislation to block
any state or local pension fund in a state from using ESG criteria in
making investment decisions; and

WHEREAS, this draft legislation has already led leaders in several
fossil fuel-producing states to discuss policies that would bar the state
from doing business with any company that takes the risks associated
with climate change into consideration when making its business
decisions; and

WHEREAS, investment management firms such as Vanguard and
BlackRock, through their active engagement, have led many firms to
reduce their carbon footprint and reduce other ESG risks; and

WHEREAS, the attorneys general of 13 states, including Kentucky,
Indiana and Utah, have filed motions to the Federal Energy Regulatory
Commission to stop Vanguard from purchasing shares in publicly
traded utilities because they might use their ownership stake to
encourage these utilities to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels and
reduce their overall carbon footprint; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia and Florida dropped BlackRock Inc. funds
from their portfolios over the asset manager’s embrace of ESG
investing; and

WHEREAS, using ESG criteria in investment decisions has
repeatedly shown material benefit to the returns of pension
investments; and

WHEREAS, investment management advisory firms are rapidly
developing tools to measure the material impact of climate and other
ESG risks to guide institutional investors to both decarbonize their
portfolios and increase their direct investment in climate solutions; and
WHEREAS, these advisory firms are also developing tools to measure the material risks associated with declining biodiversity and water scarcity; and
WHEREAS, many corporations have recognized the long-term risk of climate change and other ESG risks, such as human rights abuses embedded in their supply chains, and are actively seeking advice on how to measure their ESG risks and how to incorporate these risks into their business decisions:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support the proposed Securities and Exchange Commission regulation to require all publicly traded corporations to report their carbon emissions; and
RESOLVED, to oppose efforts to impair or reduce the authority and effectiveness of federal agencies to regulate those issues in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court’s Relentless, Inc. v. Department of Commerce decision; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will support CalSTRS’ and CalPERS’ efforts in the process of creating standardized metrics for measuring the material effects of ESG factors on investment returns; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will oppose legislation that would block pension fund investors from using ESG criteria in making investment decisions; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will oppose legislation that would penalize any companies for using ESG criteria to guide their business decisions.

65. SUPPLEMENTAL PENSION PLAN PROTECTIONS FOR EDUCATION WORKERS

Committee recommends referral to Executive Council.

WHEREAS, AFT members are routinely targeted by financial institutions trying to sell them supplemental pension plans; and
WHEREAS, AFT members in the public sector have employer-provided email addresses that are accessible to the public, including financial institution vendors; and
WHEREAS, there are multiple low-fee options for CFT members who choose to invest in a 403(b) or 457(b) plan (e.g., Fidelity, Vanguard and CalSTRS), but the vendors who contact AFT members frequently sell high-fee plans such as variable annuities with surrender charges; and
WHEREAS, the fees for these plans can be as much as five times as high as the fees on typical 401(k) plans; and
WHEREAS, the plans are often complex and impossible for nonprofessionals to understand, but are marketed in high-pressure sales pitches by salespeople earning high commissions; and
WHEREAS, the high fees associated with many of these plans are costing AFT members tens of thousands of dollars (or more) over their careers, and collectively cost all U.S. workers with these plans as much as $10 billion per year; and
WHEREAS, AFT members can become trapped in these plans as surrender fees make it financially unfeasible to leave; and
WHEREAS, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) has largely eliminated the sale of high-fee 401(k) products to private employees, but its protections do not extend to accounts used by public employees; and
WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 1949 (2012) provided a process by which “public education employers may select specific 403(b) products offered by four or more vendors through due diligence and [a] competitive review process;” and
WHEREAS, these issues also impact other government workers, nonprofit workers and clergy:

RESOLVED, that the AFT will research, educate and communicate to AFT members their options regarding supplemental pension plans; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will sustain these efforts until such time as our members enjoy the same or similar protections as private employees with 401(k) plans; and
RESOLVED, that the AFT will support and/or sponsor federal legislation that extends ERISA protections to public employees nationwide, or give public employees or K-12 school employees access to 401(k) plans, or provide a mechanism for locals to limit the plans available to their members to those that have been vetted by the local and their employers.

☐ Adopted ☐ Adopted as Amended ☐ Defeated ☐ Tabled
☐ Precluded by_______________________ ☐ Referred to_____________