

Climate Change, Jobs and Justice

Raleigh Area Local 1078

-FR 5-

Whereas, climate change is responsible for catastrophic events such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, the current flooding in Louisiana, forest fires in California, and extreme drought in parts of the South and Southwest. According to NASA "In 136 years of modern record-keeping, July 2016 was the warmest July according to a monthly analysis of global temperatures by scientists at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS)." These temperatures are a threat to both humans and agriculture. Along with melting glaciers they contribute to the ominous rise of sea levels and the certain flooding of our coastlines, and

Whereas, the extreme temperatures create dangerous conditions for those who transport mail and other postal workers who deliver mail. Extreme weather conditions impede service to our customers, and

Whereas, the USPS has pledged to diminish its carbon footprint by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020. The USPS vehicle fleet has alternative fuel vehicles that include hybrids that can increase the use of electric power while electric cars are being added to the fleet, and

Whereas, the APWU has passed a resolution (238 A-2014) condemning the American Legislative Council (ALEC) for its draft legislation that calls for curriculum that essentially ignores scientific findings regarding climate change and insists on action as if there were no evidence of climate change, curriculum which supports their corporate positions designed to maximize their profits, and

Whereas, the APWU has passed a resolution (237-2014) opposing the Keystone XL Pipeline and called on the United States to reduce its reliance on the world's dirtiest and most environmentally destructive form of oil, the "tar sands" and that we call for the advancement of labor-intensive, green, renewable energy requiring jobs in its manufacture, construction and installation that will far exceed those of the fossil fuel industry, and

Whereas, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka has said "Scientists tell us we are headed evermore swiftly toward irreversible climate change with catastrophic consequences for human civilization. And far from being a threat only in a distant future, climate change is happening now. That demands action! The carbon emissions from coal, from oil and natural gas, agriculture and so many other human activities have caused global warming, and we have to act to cut those emissions, and act now," and

Whereas, over 30 labor organizations in the US, including international unions, state federations, and Central Labor Councils, have gone on record concerning climate change, protecting the environment and protecting jobs, and

Whereas, irresponsible employers have created serious environmental problems in the communities where they operate, even as they have treated their workers unjustly, and such environmental irresponsibility threatens the long-term viability of community health and jobs, and

Whereas, the discussion of a Just Transition from the use of fossil fuels to clean and sustainable sources of energy by labor, environmentalists and social justice activists is moving towards a common understanding that it includes the creation of green jobs with living wages and union protections; the inclusion, in the new sustainable jobs, of sectors of the workforce that have historically been excluded; protections of communities impacted by environmental harm or the loss of jobs; and a democratic economy without wealth and income inequality, with local power, and free of the control of the 1%, and

Whereas, environmental groups such as the Sierra Club understand that a strong public Postal Service is our democratic right and have joined the Grand Alliance in the fight to keep our national treasure out of the hands of the privatizers, it is incumbent upon us to join their fight to protect the people and the planet from the ravages of climate change, and

Whereas, the Labor Network for Sustainability is a coalition of labor activists, union locals and state federations that has come together for the purposes of 1) environmental protection, and in particular addressing climate change; 2) economic fairness, in particular addressing income inequality and jobs; and 3) social justice, in particular eliminating prejudice and defending human and civil rights and democracy, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the APWU through its Research & Education and Communications Departments educate the membership on the current and pending dangers of climate change and how we as a union, along with our various communities, can use our power to require governments at the local, state and federal level to prevent corporations from continuing their destructive practices that contribute to climate change, and

RESOLVED that the national union encourage locals and state organizations to participate in coalitions in their areas that fight for environmental justice and the mitigation of the effects of climate change, and

RESOLVED that the APWU participate in the work of the Labor Network for Sustainability and its Labor Convergence on Climate project, and

RESOLVED that appropriate APWU officers and activist will monitor the USPS' Sustainability program.

Previously Adopted ___ Adopted ___ Not Adopted ___ Referred ___ Other ___

