

## (13)

**SUPPORTING HUMANE IMMIGRATION POLICIES**

**WHEREAS:** The Gilded Age of America, 1880 through the mid-1920's, not only brought growth of industry it also brought the "Great Wave" of immigrants seeking good jobs and a better way of life; and

**WHEREAS:** The historical contributions and the earliest Labor disputes that built our Labor Movement came from immigrant workers, fighting for their rights and justice in their workplaces such as; and

- 1619 One of the earliest labor strikes on American soil was organized and staged by Polish workers and artisans in Jamestown
- 1877 National uprising of railroad workers 10 Irish coal miners ("Molly Maguires") hanged in Pennsylvania; and nine more subsequently were hanged
- 1909 Unorganized immigrant steelworkers went on strike in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, and won all demands
- 1912 Bread and Roses strike begun by immigrant women in Lawrence, Massachusetts, ended with 23,000 men, women and children on strike and with as many as 20,000 on the picket line; and

**WHEREAS:** Immigrants come to the U.S. for the very same reasons prior immigrants who came before them; for economic opportunities, a chance to join relatives already in this country, to flee high homicide rates, gang activity, and persecution; and

**WHEREAS:** Our federal immigration policy promotes anti-immigrant sentiment at all levels of government and is transforming our humanitarian immigration policies into inhuman policies that criminalize immigration, identify immigrants and asylum seekers as criminals, and dehumanize these seekers of justice and freedom; and

**WHEREAS:** The current Administration's immigration policies slash channels for permanent immigration and the worker visa programs; and

**WHEREAS:** The deportation of immigrants and the raids on companies has led to a labor shortage that is causing crops to rot in American fields and orchards;

and are creating a climate of fear where workers across this country are too afraid to stand up for their rights, report wage theft, dangerous working conditions and other workplace issues; and

**WHEREAS:** The Administration's zero tolerance policies stripped children from the arms of their parents, housed children in cages, cause irreparable emotional harm, and charged asylum seekers with acts of crime; and

**WHEREAS:** American unions are committed to working together with our community partners, including civil rights, human rights and immigrant rights organizations on the side of justice to ensure all working people, receive fair wages and benefits, have safer workplaces and increase labor standards for all workers; and

**WHEREAS:** In 2013, the AFL-CIO and Chamber of Commerce came to an agreement around several principles of immigration reform and joined together to lobby Congress on the importance of quickly passing a broad and humane immigration reform package that benefited both future immigrants and American Workers; and

**WHEREAS:** The legislation, called "the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act", passed the U.S. Senate in June of 2013 by a bi-partisan vote of 68-32, but the Speaker of the House, John Boehner, refused to take the issue up in the US House, leaving us with the unsustainable state of affairs we are currently dealing with.

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Ohio AFL-CIO will continue to advocate and promote policies that ensure all workers- regardless of their accents and origins receive fair wages and benefits, have safe working conditions and increase labor standards for all workers.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Ohio AFL-CIO calls on President Trump and his Administration to show compassion to these seekers of justice and freedom by reversing this Administration's zero tolerance policies, the criminalization of immigration and the dehumanization of immigrants and asylum seekers.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:** The Ohio AFL-CIO will continue to work with their affiliates, constituency groups, community partners and others to urge passage of comprehensive immigration reforms that provide pathways to citizenship,

protections for those who come to our border looking for asylum and workplace protections for immigrant workers who work in American farm fields, orchards and factories.

**Submitted by: United Steelworkers District 1**