

Resolution In Support Of A Long-Term Labor Strategy To Win Single Payer National Health Insurance

Approved March 7, 2010

Resolved, that the Labor Campaign for Single Payer use its communications network to solicit support from AFL-CIO union organizations to pass resolutions reflecting the basic tenets contained in the Maine AFL-CIO Resolution of October, 2009 that calls for the AFL-CIO to implement a strategy to achieve a single-payer summit that is open to all labor bodies

Proposed Resolution as adapted from Resolution passed
by Maine AFL-CIO Convention on Oct. 23, 2009

Whereas the National AFL-CIO unanimously passed Resolution 34 strongly endorsing a Medicare for All single payer health care system;

Whereas 39 State AFL-CIO Federations, 135 Central Labor Councils, and 580 different labor organizations have endorsed HR676;

Whereas we strongly believe that a Medicare for all national health insurance system with single payer financing is the only effective solution that will solve the healthcare crisis union members face at the bargaining table and that we face collectively as a society;

Whereas regardless of how the current healthcare reform effort concludes in Congress it will not come close to solving the current healthcare crisis;

Whereas historically, significant structural changes in this country have occurred when progressive forces have built powerful social movements that organize around a long term strategy that involves relentless rank & file education, organizing around basic fundamental principles, and committing to a long term approach to the issue;

Whereas we strongly believe that to win a single payer national health insurance system the labor movement needs to pursue that kind of strategy and work to build a broad based working class social movement and;

Whereas we believe that had we collectively pursued such a strategy after the last healthcare policy failure in Congress in the mid 1990s – by staking out a strong single payer position, educating our membership as deeply as possible, pushing for political support of single payer legislation and sticking with that approach for the last fifteen years – we would be in a much stronger position today to win meaningful healthcare reform;

Therefore, we call on the National AFL-CIO to convene a democratic strategic planning process to develop a long-term strategy to win Single Payer national health insurance. This process should:

1. Start with a Single Payer labor movement summit open to all labor bodies and rank & file single-payer activists
2. Involve all levels of union organizational structure including Central Labor Councils, Area and State Federations and rank & file single payer union activists in the planning process;
3. Do an assessment of how we've historically built powerful social movements in this country and put our best thinking forward about what would need to be done today to build a social movement powerful enough to win single payer;
4. Include a commitment of resources from the AFL-CIO of no less than the resources that have been devoted to the current health care reform effort; and
5. Include a commitment from the AFL-CIO to support state's efforts to pass single payer legislation.