WFSE union education
AFSCME Council 28

A GUIDE TO RESOLUTIONS

Why Resolutions?

Local unions vote on resolutions. Often a resolution is the form used to refer items to other constitutional or affiliated bodies. Within WFSE, local unions can send resolutions to:

- WFSE Convention
- WFSE Executive Board
- Any of the ten WFSE Policy Committees
- Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) Convention
- AFSCME Convention
- Central Labor Councils

What is a Resolution?

A resolution is similar to a motion – it is a statement of some action that a member or group of members want the organization to take. However, it is a motion in written form and is usually more formal than a motion made from the floor at a local union meeting.

A resolution once passed can establish the official position of an organization on a particular issue. Sometimes the action requested is general, such as: "Support Local 1700's fight for equal pay for women." Other times, the resolution might call for more specific action, such as: "Send a letter to the Nassau County Commissioners urging them to correct the inequities in their salary-setting practices."

<u>Writing Resolutions</u>

When you write a resolution, think through what action you want the group to take. Your action statement or statements will be in the section of the resolution beginning:

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED _____

_____ ."

This statement will be at the end of your resolution; however, before you write your resolution, it's important to plan ahead for what you want the group to do.

Once you have established the action you are seeking, you can plan on the statements you will include in your resolution to establish <u>why</u> the group <u>should</u> take this action or position. The "Whereas" statements do just that. To simplify it in your mind, think of the word "Whereas" as the word "Because".

For example: "<u>Whereas</u> Nassau County employees in jobs traditionally held by women receive less pay than employees in jobs traditionally held by men," can be read as "<u>Because</u> Nasseau County Employees…".

Another way to think of the word "Whereas," is to think of the statement, "In view of the fact." You build your resolution by listing your "because" statement or statements, "Whereases," and ending with your "What we should do about it" statements, or "Resolves."

Example:

WHEREAS (because of this) _____

_____and

WHEREAS (because of this) _____

_____

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (we should do this) _____

_____

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED (and this) _____

_____.

Of course, your resolutions will not have the words in parenthesis ("because of this" or "we should do this" or "and this") in them. There are shown in the example to help you understand what the different components of a resolution do.

<u>Long or Short?</u>

The length of your resolution will depend on what information you feel you need to give the group (the Whereases) and what action or actions you want the group to take (the Resolves).

A resolution on a simple or clear-cut issue may need only one "Whereas." A resolution on a more complex or controversial subject may require several "Whereases." Also, the action or actions you want the group to take will determine how many "Be it resolved" statements you include.

As in all writing, generally you should keep your resolution concise, clear, and as brief as possible. The longer the resolution is, the harder it may be for people to understand it. Also, the group may have to consider many resolutions. A long, wordy resolution may not get the consideration of the group that you want it to get.

Attached is a sample form for resolutions. Remember, you don't need to have three "Whereases" if one will be enough. Nor do you necessarily need more than one "Resolve." Use only what you need to give adequate background on the situation and to state the action or actions you want the group to take.

(RESOLUTION – Sample Form)

_____
(Topic)

WHEREAS _____

_____
_____, AND

WHEREAS _____

_____

_____

_____, AND

WHEREAS _____

_____

_____

_____

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED _____

_____

_____

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED _____

_____
_____.

_____
(Authorizing Body/Title)   (Date)