

Resolution 29

Defend the dignity and rights of immigrants

Submitted by the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, Local 1078

Socio-Political

Whereas, immigration is one of the defining political issues of our time. Millions of people are crossing national borders in the largest wave of global human migration since World War II. This modern migration has perplexed the world's most dominant powers — nations have militarized their borders to combat peaceful and unarmed civilians, and politicians now rise and fall on the basis of their appeal either to a progressive internationalism or to xenophobic hatred. The election of Donald Trump and the racist movement that supports him is the most important factor in the rise of racist and neo-fascist movements and leaders across the United States and Europe, including the anti-immigrant scapegoating behind Brexit in Britain. The bold leadership of immigrants and refugees has inspired millions of people around the world to take action for the first time and join the movement against Trump; and

Whereas, immigrant communities and youth are among the most dynamic force for progress in America to make real the promise of freedom, democracy and equality. The future of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), TPS (Temporary Protected Status), and the fate of all immigrant family and friends — including in detention centers right now — are not predetermined; our victory depends on our leadership and action. Now is the time for the movement that has fought and won important victories against Trump to come back into the streets, rise again to the level of the resistance in the initial weeks after Trump's inauguration and the immigrant rights movement of 2006, and deal a final blow to Trump's presidency. Our victory will resound worldwide; and

Whereas, defending victories that have already been won previously, such as DACA, is a powerful tactic to defending all immigrants, and defeating Trump and the racists. The fact that Trump delayed the ending of DACA for six months, giving Congress time to act, rather than outright abolishing the program, is a credit to the great strength and popularity of the Dreamers, immigrant youth whose bold leadership in the massive walkouts and marches won DACA in the first place. In 2006, millions across the country led by young immigrants, took to the streets and defeated the anti-immigrant bill HR 4437 within weeks. The sleeping giant awoke. We pledge to mobilize now, as we have before to defend DACA and force Congress to pass the Dream Act so that immigrant youth can gain a pathway to citizenship. We cannot rely on Congress to act on their own. We have seen the Democrats and Republicans use the Dream Act as a political football in every election campaign for over a decade. They still have not acted while DACA youth are losing their protected status every day. We have no time to waste; and

Whereas, in November 2017, Trump announced the imminent ending of TPS protections. Immigrants with TPS were exempted from deportation after natural disasters devastated their countries or because of ongoing armed conflicts such as civil wars. The countries include El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Sudan, South Sudan, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nepal. So far Trump has officially announced the ending of TPS for 2,500 Nicaraguans, 60,000 Haitians, and 200,000 Salvadorans, leaving people from the other countries in limbo, deferring the decision to some future time. The tactics of delay, taking away the rights and status of immigrants, group by group, is meant to paralyze the movement by creating generalized fear that anyone could be next, and the false hope that some will be spared or that Congress alone will intervene to stop Trump. We cannot be governed by fears or false hopes. The movement must be clear that an attack on some is an attack on all and we have to act

decisively now to stop all deportations and enforce a new definition of citizenship: those who work here, go to school here, and contribute to this society are citizens and should have full citizenship rights; and **Whereas**, while reactionary governments are building walls and passing racist laws to keep out immigrants and refugees, there is an international movement breaking down the borders. Open borders is what hundreds of thousands of immigrants and refugees from the Middle East, Africa, Mexico, and Central America are doing every day, making dangerous journeys to get into Europe and the United States, to escape war, genocide, anti-gay persecution and unlivable conditions caused by global warming. A movement has sprung into action across Europe as people are defying threats of arrests to rescue refugees from the sea and helping them to safety, clashing with border police, and joining mass demonstrations for immigrant rights. In the weeks after Trump's inauguration, the movement mobilized and shut down airports across the United States, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, and defeating the first Muslim ban. Organizing community defense to block ICE raids has prevented ICE arrests. Mass demonstrations at detention centers, immigration court hearings, and at 'routine' ICE check-ins have stopped deportations and freed people from detention; and **Whereas**, Chaldean and Muslim communities are building community defense against ICE with the direct action to free the hundreds of Iraqi refugees who were rounded up by ICE on June 11, 2017, to be deported to Iraq to their certain death. Trump hoped this would be a quick operation that could add to his deportation numbers. Protestors, mostly family members of those detained, activists, and other community members boldly confronted the police and ICE, blocking the bus for over an hour as they attempted to take them to detention centers. People driving by supported by honking and some joining the protest and helping to block traffic. The bus ultimately sped away, but their brave stand created a national scandal for Trump and a standard for what it means to stop deportations. The movement's resistance in courts and in the streets has secured several legal victories, temporarily halting all Chaldean and Iraqi deportations, which has been crucial to give family members and movement supporters time to mobilize more support and legal defense. Several people have been released from detention and a federal judge has ordered bond hearings for many of the people still detained. But we do not rely solely on the legal process. Their struggle represents the struggle of all immigrants fighting for freedom under the inhumane conditions and mental torture of indefinite captivity, who are stuck in the vice grip of the immigration court system. Collective action like the action and bringing the power of the movement into the courtroom is the way to stop mass deportations; and

Whereas, the strength of the Resistance Movement in California has won crucial victories and California has now become the first sanctuary state in the country. Trump and ICE are lashing out by threatening large raids further into immigrant communities, including wholesale raids on businesses and franchises such as 7-Eleven stores. Community defense and action alert networks are essential to keeping communities genuinely safe for immigrants regardless of status;

Therefore, be it resolved, that:

1. The CFT reaffirms our defense of DACA and support for the federal Dream Act.
2. The CFT defends TPS
3. The CFT supports full citizenship rights for all immigrants regardless of immigration status.
4. The CFT supports open borders and asylum for all refugees, and opposes the Muslim ban and wall.
5. The CFT calls for an end to deportations, the release of Iraqi refugees and all immigrants in detention, and shutting down detention centers.
6. The CFT defends sanctuary campuses, sanctuary cities and California as a sanctuary state and supports mobilizations and legal action to stop ICE raids and deportations.

7. The CFT calls for the Supreme Court decision in *Jennings vs. Rodriguez* to be overturned.

Therefore, be it finally resolved that CFT will submit this resolution to the AFT for adoption at the next national convention.