

Resolutions adopted by MLKCLC in 2006

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Supporting King County Transit Now - 7/19/06
Supporting a fair contract for state employees - 8/2/06

Resolution in support of Hispanic Legislative Day - Adopted 1/18/06

WHEREAS the Latino/Hispanic community is now the largest minority group in the nation at 21.5% of the U.S. population and 8.5% of the state population, which is expected to double in the next 20 years; and
WHEREAS a group of Latino/Hispanic leaders and community advocates came together in late 2005 to organize our First Annual Hispanic Legislative Day to be held on Wednesday, February 8, 2006; and
WHEREAS the Hispanic Legislative Day will address the challenges that affect the Latino community including: Health Care, Education, Economic Development, Housing, Farm Worker Issues and Immigration Issues; be it therefore
RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council support the Hispanic Legislative Day by informing and encouraging participation of all its affiliates at this historic event; and be it further
RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council will have the same consideration for our other constituency groups.

Resolution in support of Washington-built ferries - Adopted 2/14/06

WHEREAS the MLKCLC is aware of a ferry design offered to the State of Washington that meets the requirements of the legislation passed on May 9, 2001 for the construction of new ferries and meets or exceeds the safety requirements as outlined by the Washington State Ferry System on December 3, for a 130-car/1200 passenger ferry; and
WHEREAS the MLKCLC further declares that efforts to replace these vessels must be accomplished in a timely manner to protect the traveling/community public from the vagaries of aging vessels and the need to upgrade shipboard security to counter the current and escalating terrorist threat; and

WHEREAS in the interest of accelerating the construction process of these ferries, retiring the 78-year old ferries currently in service with the Washington State Ferry System and putting union members to work in King and Pierce Counties, J.M. Martinac Shipbuilding Corp. has agreed to share the design of these ferries with Todd Pacific Shipyards, the only other shipyard qualified to build ferries for the State of Washington; be it therefore

RESOLVED in the interest of the safety of the traveling public and the creation of living-wage jobs, the MLKCLC supports the ferry design and the accelerated construction of these ferries by union labor in Washington State.

Resolution in support of comprehensive immigration reform - Adopted 3/15/06

WHEREAS we believe in the dignity of all workers and all King County residents, regardless of immigration status, and recognize the importance of their many contributions to the labor movement and the social, religious, cultural and economic life of King County; and

WHEREAS a significant proportion of King County's residents immigrated from abroad, making immigration reform of crucial importance to this region; and

WHEREAS the United States urgently needs legislation to correct the failings of our immigration system, to recognize the crucial contributions immigrants make to our nation, to enable employers to legally hire needed immigrant workers, to protect all workers, regardless of immigration status, from mistreatment by employers, to facilitate family reunification, and to restore civil rights and civil liberties to all; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would restore the rule of law, enhance the security of the United States, reflect the core values of this nation, including fairness, equality of opportunity, and individual justice while resulting in realistic, enforceable laws; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would help build healthy families and communities in our city by bringing immigrants out of the shadows, and minimize the criminalization of undocumented workers, which has severe local consequences on our region; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would give undocumented immigrants who have been living and working in the United States a path to permanent legal status and citizenship; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would extend equal protection to all workers in the United States, regardless of immigration status; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would work to eliminate the tremendous backlog in family immigration in order to effectively reunite families and would create legal and orderly processes for people who want to come to the United States to work; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would support our region's commitment to the full integration of newcomers by providing immigrants with quality English instruction, the tools necessary for meaningful citizenship, and opportunities to move up the economic ladder; and

WHEREAS comprehensive immigration reform would help immigrant workers to exercise their right to organize free of fear and intimidation and to bargain collectively; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes the elements listed here; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO immediately forwards this resolution to the Washington State Labor Council for endorsement and forwards a copy to the Mayor of Seattle, the Seattle City Council, the King County Executive, the King County Council and US Senators Murray and Cantwell.

Resolution regarding state workers' retirement - Adopted 3/15/06

WHEREAS Washington State continues to have a retirement system that does not provide a sufficient pension with a defined benefit commensurate with the services provided by educational employees across the state; and

WHEREAS educational employees should be able to retire at an appropriate age, with a defined benefit and COLA that allows for a continuing reasonable standard of living; and WHEREAS Washington's plan 2 and 3 public employee pension systems fails to reward a career of service, and instead offers full retirement eligibility only based on reaching an arbitrary age; and

WHEREAS many of Washington's public employees will have to work up to 45 years to be qualified for full retirement; and

WHEREAS Washington State has one of the lowest-cost public employee pension systems in the nation; and

WHEREAS each of Washington's neighboring states provides full retirement eligibility at an age earlier than Washington; and

WHEREAS many public employees serve in positions that no reasonable person would expect persons age 65 to perform; and

WHEREAS repealing the current gain-sharing benefit would result in the largest ever public employee benefit takeaway in Washington State history; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council adopt the following priorities and ask that these priorities be adopted by its affiliated labor organizations:

- Pursue improvements in public pension benefits to provide increased equity for all Washington State education employees.
- Oppose the repeal of gain-sharing unless comparable benefit improvements are established.
- Support a Rule of 90, which would allow TRS, PERS and SERS Plans II and III members to retire, without penalty, if their years of service and age add up to 90.

Resolution supporting UNITEHERE's struggle at the 13 Coins - Adopted 3/15/06

WHEREAS the 13 Coins restaurants located at Boren Avenue in Seattle and International Boulevard in Seatac have been sold; and

WHEREAS the 13 Coins restaurants have been Union restaurants for decades; and

WHEREAS the new owners of the 13 Coins have failed to respond to inquiries made by UNITE HERE! Local 8 for more than 2 months; and

WHEREAS the new owners of the 13 Coins do not guarantee employees their positions, but instead force them to reapply for their jobs; and

WHEREAS the new owners of the 13 Coins are promoting a new medical plan and new wage rates completely ignoring the existing collective bargaining agreement; and

WHEREAS this behavior suggests that the new owners of the 13 Coins intend to bust the Union; and

WHEREAS Union brothers and sisters working at the 13 Coins strongly oppose these developments and fear for their livelihood as their wages, benefits, and Union rights are under attack; and

WHEREAS UNITE HERE! Local 8 has called for a boycott of the 13 Coins restaurants; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO endorses UNITE HERE! Local 8's boycott of the 13 Coins and agrees to begin proceedings to place it on the Council's Do Not Patronize list; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO commits to support UNITE HERE! Local 8 in their campaign to keep the 13 Coins Union; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO immediately forwards this resolution to the Washington State Labor Council for endorsement and forwards a copy to the Mayor of Seattle, the Seattle City Council, the King County Executive, and the King County Council.

Resolution supporting the "Hotel Workers Rising" campaign - Adopted 3/15/06

WHEREAS today 80% of the jobs in the U.S. and Canada are in the service sector; and

WHEREAS the majority of these jobs are in Hotels and Restaurants; and

WHEREAS Hotel and Restaurant jobs are often low wage jobs with insufficient benefits; and

WHEREAS the overwhelming number of immigrants and women who make up this industry are not rewarded for their hard work at a level that allows them to provide for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS Manufacturing jobs that once created the middle-class have been moved overseas, leaving behind a country without living-wage jobs; and

WHEREAS today the hotel industry is dominated by multimillion dollar national and international corporations that enjoy healthy profits and can afford to treat their workers better; and

WHEREAS Hotel workers are uniting across North America to send a message to hotel companies that they are determined to make their jobs safer, middle-class jobs on which they can support their families; and

WHEREAS in an effort to reestablish living wage jobs throughout North America, UNITEHERE! has formed an international campaign named "Hotel Workers Rising – Lifting One Another Above the Poverty Line"; and

WHEREAS "Hotel Workers Rising" is an effort to organize large parts of the non-Union workers in the hotel industry and thereby increase collective strength and the standard of living of both Union and non-Union workers in this industry; and

WHEREAS UNITEHERE! Local 8 in King County is involved in the "Hotel Workers Rising" campaign and is reaching out for the support of their Union brothers and sisters in the labor movement; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO endorses UNITE HERE!'s "Hotel Workers Rising" Campaign; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO commits to support UNITE HERE! Local 8 in their "Hotel Workers Rising" campaign; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council, AFL-CIO immediately forwards this resolution to the Washington State Labor Council for endorsement and forwards a copy to the Mayor of Seattle, the Seattle City Council, the King County Executive, and the King County Council.

Resolution regarding the downtown development plan - Adopted 3/15/06

WHEREAS the Seattle Mayor and City Council are planning to revise the Downtown Seattle Development Plan, allowing taller and more densely-situated buildings; and WHEREAS these zoning changes made by the City Council will help property owners and developers in the form of increased profits; and

WHEREAS all Seattleites, regardless of their income, deserve to share in the prosperity of the City and experience public benefit for zoning changes; and

WHEREAS extensive rezoning projects have significant impacts on the livability of the city and the community for decades to come, especially on low- and moderate-income residents who are most vulnerable to zoning code changes; and

WHEREAS the public has the right and responsibility to ask for basic accountability; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Council support changes in the downtown development plan that promote livability and mitigate the impacts to low- and moderate-income citizens. We encourage changes that protect and generate significantly more low-income and affordable housing (e.g., the money raised through the bonus system follow the Housing Levy Distribution requirements), contribute to living wage jobs, emphasize neighborhood amenities, include environmental and transit provisions, address increased human service needs, and preserve historic buildings; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Council inform Mayor Nickels and the City Council of its position and encourage its members to lobby the City Council for changes that will guarantee no net loss of and more creation of low-income and affordable housing downtown and city-wide and contribute to good jobs and smart growth in downtown and city-wide; and be it finally resolved

RESOLVED that we will urge the Mayor and City Council to adopt the use of developer impact fees allowed under the growth management act and other cost-sharing tools to ensure that developers benefiting from the added densities allowed in the new downtown plan also will pay their fair share of the enormous public cost accompanying such growth.

Resolution supporting payday loan industry reform - Adopted 4/5/06

WHEREAS everyone in our state, regardless of their income, has a right to fair and reasonable consumer protections when they borrow money; and

WHEREAS the payday lending industry engages in predatory loan practices, targeting low income communities and people of color, charging consumers unfair and unreasonable fees and interest rates (according to the state's own studies, the typical

loan carries a 390% annual percentage rate of interest) driving people in our state deeply into debt; and
WHEREAS low and middle-income workers are targets of payday lenders, and predatory payday loans threaten the economic well-being of our members, their families and other workers of the labor movement; and
WHEREAS the payday lending industry in Washington has grown by 113% since 2000 in the dollar amounts of loans made, and issued over 3 million loans in 2004 totaling over \$1.6 billion; and
WHEREAS national experts on predatory lending identify nine signs of a predatory payday loan and Washington's law authorizes lenders to engage in eight out of nine of these abusive practices; be it therefore
RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council finds that a lack of fair and reasonable consumer protections on payday loans threatens the financial well-being of union members and the people of Washington state; and be it further
RESOLVED that the MLKCLC supports the passage of payday lending reform legislation to provide fair and reasonable consumer protections for Washington payday consumers; and be it further
RESOLVED that MLKCLC supports reforms such as longer minimum loan periods and installment payments for consumers, caps on annual percentage rates of interest, banning payday lending through the internet to prevent out of state lenders from getting around Washington law, and further banning mandatory arbitration clauses in payday lending contracts; and be it finally
RESOLVED that MLKCLC forwards this resolution to the Washington State Labor Council for endorsement and legislative prioritization.

Resolution supporting censure of President Bush - Adopted 5/17/06

WHEREAS Senator Feingold's March 13, 2006 resolution accuses President Bush of violating the Constitution and the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act; and
WHEREAS it read in part, "Resolved that the United States Senate does hereby censure George W. Bush, President of the United States, and does condemn his unlawful authorization of wiretaps of Americans within the United States without obtaining the court orders required;" and
WHEREAS we do support wiretapping terrorists to protect our national security within the boundaries of the current law; and
WHEREAS a basic tenet of a democracy is the rule of law; and
WHEREAS the President's actions have exceeded the boundaries of the existing law; and
WHEREAS the method censure has been chosen because it demands an open debate and expression on the Senate's judgment on the President's actions; therefore be it
RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King Jr. County Labor Council ask Senators Murray and Cantwell to support Senator Feingold's Censure Resolution, thereby upholding our Constitution and their oath of office, in the manner intended by our founders, when a president commits such flagrant abuse of power; and be it further
RESOLVED that the MLKCLC will forward this resolution to the Washington State Labor Council for consideration of adoption at their August convention if the matter is still germane.

Resolution supporting No More Deaths and humanitarian aid - Adopted 6/7/06

WHEREAS two college students, Shanti Sellz and Daniel Strauss, were arrested by the US Border Patrol in 2005 for attempting to medically evacuate three people in critical condition from the 105 degree heat of the Sonoran Desert south of Tucson, Arizona; and

WHEREAS Shanti and Daniel had consulted several medical professionals who, after learning the symptoms of the three ill people, recommended medical evacuation to a clinic in Tucson; and

WHEREAS Shanti and Daniel are now being prosecuted as felons by the federal government, and could face up to fifteen years in prison; and

WHEREAS Shanti and Daniel were performing this work as volunteers of the No More Deaths Coalition, a largely faith-based network of churches, unions and other community organizations in Southern Arizona; and

WHEREAS the laws under which Shanti and Daniel are being prosecuted were not originally intended for use against humanitarian aid workers; and

WHEREAS this persecution of human solidarity is an example of what all the workers on this continent will soon experience if anti-immigration proposals now before the US Congress are implemented; and

WHEREAS Shanti Sellz and Daniel Strauss will be in Seattle on June 25th and 26th, 2006, accompanied by Gemma Lopez Limon, an internationally-renowned expert on child labor and immigration from the University of Mexicali, and will be speaking about their story, and their ongoing work at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, June 26th at an event at the Seattle Labor Temple sponsored by LCLAA; and

WHEREAS humanitarian aid is never a crime; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council hereby fully endorses the June 26th event at the Labor Temple, the campaign to defend Shanti and Daniel, and the work of the No More Deaths Coalition; and be it further

RESOLVED that we commit to turning affiliates out to the event at the Labor Temple on Monday, June 26th at 6:00 P.M. in support of Shanti, Daniel and No More Deaths; and be it further

RESOLVED that we commit the following donation of \$150 from our organization to the No More Deaths Coalition for use in their campaign to defend Shanti and Daniel and to continue their humanitarian work in the field, even should the dark day arrive when such work is considered illegal; and be it further

RESOLVED that we call upon US attorney Paul Charlton to drop the charges against Shanti and Daniel, and send a written statement strongly urging him to do so; and be it finally

RESOLVED that we, the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council will forward this resolution and recommend adoption of the same to all of our affiliates and to the Washington State Labor Council.

Resolution supporting the estate tax - Adopted 6/21/06

WHEREAS, at a time when a succession of tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy have bled the nation of revenue to meet social and infrastructure needs, many in Congress are seriously considering legislation to eviscerate the federal estate tax; and

WHEREAS the estate tax is the single most progressive tax in our otherwise regressive tax system, exempting the vast majority of estates, but raising many billions of dollars from the estates of the super-rich; and

WHEREAS so-called "compromise" proposals are being floated in both the House and the Senate which amount to virtual repeal, and which would drain many billions of dollars of revenue needed to fund programs that benefit working families; be it therefore RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council calls upon our state's U.S. Representatives and Senators Cantwell and Murray to reject any and all such "compromises," and to bend every effort to keep the estate tax intact.

Resolution supporting King County's Transit Now proposal - Adopted 7/19/06

WHEREAS King County Executive Ron Sims has proposed a one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) increase in the sales tax in King County to support an increase in bus service; and

WHEREAS this proposed increase would add an additional twenty percent (20%) in Metro Transit Service keeping up with growth over the next ten years; and

WHEREAS this additional funding would provide new and expanded transit service throughout King County; and

WHEREAS an estimated additional 60,000 riders will be added to the current 335,000 riders per day on buses that will arrive more frequently, travel faster, and be more environmentally friendly; and

WHEREAS Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system will be implemented in five key travel corridors providing more frequent all-day service, faster trips, more comfortable vehicles and stations, advanced customer information, and traffic signal priority for buses; and

WHEREAS improvements will be made on approximately 35 major Metro routes where ridership is heaviest as well as creating new service in residential areas in East and South King County; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council endorses Transit Now and urges our affiliated locals to do so as well.

Resolution supporting a fair contract for state employees - Adopted 8/2/06

WHEREAS the unions representing state employees in higher education, community colleges and general government are currently engaged in contract negotiations with representatives of the Governor's office and the state universities; and

WHEREAS the outcome of the negotiations will not only impact the lives and well being of the affected state employees, but also their ability to provide quality services to working and poor people throughout the state; and

WHEREAS the strength of the labor movement is undermined whenever union jobs are contracted out to non-union employers, whether this occurs in the public or private sector; and

WHEREAS management insists on playing hardball on the issue of contracting out protections and has refused to bargain in good faith; and

WHEREAS since 1999, raises for state employees have been few and far between, and have not kept up with inflation and the dramatic increase in the cost of their health care

insurance, and have left some employees' pay more than 25% below prevailing wages;
and

WHEREAS a resolution of support from the Washington State Labor Council and its affiliates has been submitted to the 2006 Convention in Wenatchee which reflects the importance of union support throughout the State, reflects solidarity and has an instrumental role in winning full collective bargaining rights for state employees and is crucial to the success of state workers in winning strong contracts that raise the bar for everyone in the labor movement; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the MLKCLC supports the demands of state employees for fair compensation, affordable health care and protection against contracting out of state jobs; and be it further

RESOLVED that the MLKCLC urges its affiliates to actively participate in efforts by state employee unions to win a fair contract through lobbying efforts, informational picketing, take the labor council banner to the AFSCME actions in MLK County and community outreach; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the MLKCLC and its affiliates make it clear to elected state officials and our legislators that the state's hardball negotiating tactics are completely unacceptable and that support for state employee collective bargaining must be shown not only in words at election time but in deeds at the bargaining table and the floor of the legislature supporting a fair contract for state employees and strong protection against contracting out of state jobs.