

## **COVID-19 AND ESSENTIAL WORKERS**

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought into focus that essential workers do not have access to the rights and protections they both need and deserve, whether it be fair pay, access to health care or paid leave, adequate personal protective equipment, or a voice on the job; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that when those classified as essential workers and other workers are potentially exposed to SARS CoV-2, due to the nature of their work, they may facilitate the transmission of the virus among coworkers and in the communities that they serve; and

**WHEREAS**, essential workers, including Teamsters, have been the heroes that have made it possible for the United States and Canada to function during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, it is more important than ever before that workers who are risking their lives daily be afforded the rights and freedoms available to them without unnecessary hurdles, including the right to be represented by a union; and

**WHEREAS**, permanent reforms to protect public health and increase worker power will speed up the end of the pandemic, mitigate the risk of future outbreaks, and ensure the economic recovery benefits all working people and not just the wealthy few; and

**WHEREAS**, often times penalties for employers who violate safety and health rules in the workplace are either not enforced or are too low in cost; and

**WHEREAS**, there are many steps local, state, and federal government can take to provide policy that helps essential workers across the country.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, federal, state, and local governments should take all necessary steps to implement policies to ensure safe workplaces, including implementing strong, enforceable safety standards on the job with appropriate penalties for violators; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, workers in any industry and in either the private and public sector benefit from the ability to join together and bargain as equals with their employers over wages, benefits, and working conditions including workplace safety rules above any government-mandated minimum and must be allowed to do so freely; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, workers who are risking their life while on the job deserve adequate compensation, including additional hazard pay; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, essential workers put their families at risk every time they return home from their shift and the right to paid family and medical leave must be provided; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the pandemic has shown that too few essential workers have access to quality child care and affordable health care despite their service to their employer and their community and should be afforded these basic protections; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, every employer must provide necessary personal protective equipment and a work environment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical or mental harm; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that union members of joint labor management safety and health committees shall be fully supported and provided education to understand the union's role on the safety and health committee, be provided with a copy of the standard committee member code of conduct, and receive direction from their Teamster Local Union on the committee members' roles and responsibilities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the IBT strongly advocate for workers to receive vaccinations to reduce the risk of occupational transmission and community spread of COVID-19 by bargaining with employers to provide workers with the paid time off necessary to be vaccinated and paid time off, if necessary, due to side effects associated with being vaccinated.

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and its affiliates will continue to lobby, work with allied community and labor organizations, and identify supportive politicians to implement the above policy goals.