



Building Our Future

WHEREAS, The way we generate power is fundamentally changing and requires that we plan now for how current utility workers will navigate the shifts as well as for those coming online in renewable-energy sectors. If we are to retain and create good union jobs, then the UWUA and its members must lead the way in implementing the safe and responsible generation, transmission and use of wind and solar energies, as well as battery storage technology. Likewise, we must prepare current and future members as technology, health and environmental considerations and privatization transform the water and wastewater industries; and

WHEREAS, In the post deregulation era, utilities no longer provide sufficient training for their workers. UWUA created the Power for America Training Trust Fund (P4A) to fill the void and ensure that our members are the safest and most skilled workers in the industry and will remain so far into the future. Union-provided training helps to develop good union members, which is especially important in right-to-work states. Emerging energy technologies will continue to grow and the UWUA has positioned itself to be at the forefront of training the workforce for the clean energy economy, now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, To meet new demands, UWUA's P4A created a DOL-Certified Apprenticeship Program for Renewables Specialists. Partnering with the Michigan State Utility Workers Council (MSUWC) and Consumers Energy, P4A began developing a DOL registered program to train UWUA members to become renewables specialists and creating opportunities to work on wind turbines, solar farms and battery storage units; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing that offshore wind is poised to be the next major clean energy resource, the UWUA supported a variety of workforce development strategies targeted at this growing sector, including union training and apprenticeship programs. The UWUA has taken a leading role in shaping legislation to support offshore wind jobs training; and

WHEREAS, We amplify our strength and power when we forge alliances with other labor unions, community groups and organizations with which we share values and goals. UWUA locals have successfully built coalitions in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Michigan to work with the wind industry and elected officials to guarantee that these new jobs are union jobs; and

WHEREAS, This spring, the UWUA affiliated with The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers. The agreement will allow both unions to share our strengths and to magnify our reach and impact on important issues affecting our unions while advancing our joint priorities; and

WHEREAS, As our employers are increasingly multi-national, particularly in the water and renewable energy sectors, international labor solidarity is imperative. The continued globalization of the economy often serves as a pretext for restricting workers' rights and for degrading pay, benefits and working conditions. Workers are threatened by employers with relocation, outsourcing and downsizing and by thwarting the effective exercise of union rights. The UWUA continues to strengthen and expand our ties to unions the world over. In many of our recent contract and organizing campaigns, the UWUA has benefited from the support of IndustriALL, a global union federation based in Geneva, Switzerland. We are also building solidarity in the Americas through our membership in the North American Union Solidarity Project; and

WHEREAS, We must organize or die. Since 1996, deregulation, restructuring, and changes in the utility industry have lowered union density in the industry by more than 20 percent. Organizing new workers gives us the power to negotiate good contracts, wages, benefits, retirement and working conditions. In today's anti-worker environment, the UWUA must increase organizing. Since the last constitutional convention four years ago, the UWUA has brought in more than 3,000 new members. We are targeting clerical, technical and professional employees who have traditionally not been organized and have set up numerous meetings with our locals who represent call center workers, electric workers, natural gas workers, water workers, sewer workers, nuclear workers, contractors, both in the public and private sector; and

WHEREAS, We have a responsibility to encourage and mentor the next generation of labor leaders. Shortly before the 29th UWUA Constitutional Convention, the Young Workers Initiative Committee (YWIC) was formed to address the challenges of the pending generational transition. As our veteran leaders retire, the future of our union must be

placed in the hands of younger, energetic and capable new leadership. The UWUA has also strengthened the Human Rights Committee and created the Women's Caucus to ensure that our diversifying membership is fully represented at every level.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The UWUA urges Congress to pass the bi-partisan Clean Energy Standard Act of 2019 (H.R. 2597). Working with the offices of Senator Tina Smith and Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, the UWUA has helped to shape legislation that would create a first-ever, tech-neutral national clean energy standard that provides incentives and rewards to move toward energy generation with lower carbon emissions. Rather than choosing winners and losers, the bill is grounded in science and recognizes that all forms of generation will be present — and needed — through the rest of this century to improving emissions without unfairly burdening any given generation source; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The UWUA and affiliated locals, through P4A, will continue to train and retrain current members and the next generation of utility workers by encouraging ever greater employer participation and continuing to offer training courses that keep us at the forefront of the evolving utility sector; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Political freedom and economic justice cannot be secured without a free and thriving labor movement. The UWUA and its affiliates will engage in international solidarity and support the transformation of global rules and institutions that contribute to a more equitable and just world. As part of the American labor movement, UWUA supports a worldwide campaign to pressure international institutions to recognize the human values essential to economic development and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The UWUA will build on our new organizing successes and strategies at the National and local levels, including the use of volunteer member organizers; negotiating neutrality, access to the property and card check agreements; and targeting utility job titles that we have not traditionally represented. The UWUA calls on Congress to pass the Protect the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act) a comprehensive labor reform bill that would reverse decades of policies designed to crush labor unions; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, The Young Workers Initiative Committee, the Human Rights Committee, the Women's Caucus, the National Safety Committee, and the Veterans Committee continue to be a national priority for UWUA as they stand ready to serve as advisors to local unions in creating and expanding local union programs.