

## RESOLUTION 2015-08

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### 1 Member Engagement

2 **WHEREAS:** we are proud members of the American labor movement, and  
3 we understand that collective action gives us the power to  
4 ensure justice, fairness, and opportunity for all; and

5 **WHEREAS:** our union was founded 100 years ago to establish a voice for  
6 teachers as workers so they could combat factory-like  
7 conditions in our schools, advocate for fair pay and better  
8 working conditions, and stand up for greater autonomy as  
9 professionals and advocates for their students; and

10 **WHEREAS:** from our very beginning, our union has stood on the side of  
11 social justice, fighting racial discrimination, advocating for  
12 school desegregation, expelling our own segregated locals,  
13 advocating for equal pay and rights for women, defending the  
14 rights of those with disabilities, and securing bargaining  
15 protections for gay and transgender workers; and

16 **WHEREAS:** today nationally 1.6 million strong and 6,500 strong in  
17 Washington State, we are a union of professionals that  
18 champions fairness, democracy, economic opportunity, racial  
19 and social justice and high-quality education throughout  
20 education. We are committed to advancing those principles  
21 through community engagement, organizing, collective  
22 bargaining, and political activism, especially through the  
23 work our members do; and

24 **WHEREAS:** we are fighting a battle of immense proportions that threatens  
25 to destroy all we and others in the labor movement have  
26 worked for. This battle is ultimately over who holds the power  
27 in our economy and our democracy. It is a battle to reclaim  
28 the promise of America. This battle is taking place in the court  
29 system with cases such as *Friedrichs v California Teachers*  
30 *Association*, which directly attacks public sector unions; and

31 **WHEREAS:** to combat those who wish to undermine unions, we must  
32 strengthen the bond with all members. We must show them  
33 that workers are the union. We must engage in a collective  
34 conversation about the challenges we face, the aspirations we  
35 have, and the strategies we must implement. We must create  
36 the collective will and shared avenues for our members, along  
37 with community partners, to fight those obstacles and realize  
38 those aspirations; now, therefore be it

☐ *Adopted*

*Adopted as  
amended:*

☐ *By Committee*

☐ *By Convention*

☒ *By Executive  
Board*

☐ *Defeated*

☐ *Tabled*

39 **RESOLVED:** that we will seek to inform and engage all our members, elected officials,  
40 progressive allies, and the general public about the potential impact of the  
41 upcoming court decision, how it is part of a larger plan to destroy the labor  
42 movement in order to undermine the health of our democracy, and how it further  
43 tips the scales in favor of big corporations and the wealthy few; and, be it further  
44  
45 **RESOLVED:** that AFT Washington and its locals will engage our members in meaningful  
46 conversations about their role in the labor movement and as a result double the  
47 number of member activists to 10 %, triple the number of members who engage  
48 in union activities to 70% and – in this our 100<sup>th</sup> year – reach out and speak to  
49 100% of our members. And while less than 10% of our members are agency-fee  
50 payers, we will reach out to all of them, with the goal of their choosing to have  
51 their voices heard as union members; and, be it further  
52  
53 **RESOLVED:** that we will be accountable to each other, activists, and leaders on the local and  
54 state levels, to achieve these goals; and, be it further  
55  
56 **RESOLVED:** that through this journey of engaging with our members and potential members  
57 in Washington State, we will honor and build on the proud history of our union,  
58 counter the forces attacking our democracy and our labor movement, and  
59 continue to reclaim the promise of America for all of us; and, be it finally  
60  
61 **RESOLVED:** that this resolution will be sent to all AFT Washington locals to be considered for  
62 adoption and implementation.

Adopted in a meeting by the AFT Washington Executive Board on November 7, 2015.