

Resolution in Support of Climate Strikes

Whereas the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) made history in 2016 when it became the first statewide organization in the United States to adopt a Climate Justice Agenda.¹

And whereas Resolution 29 commits the CFT to educating members about climate change, pushing for green legislation, moving toward divestment in fossil fuels, and establishing a Climate Justice Task Force within CFT.

And whereas “facing a historic environmental crisis that threatens our survival,” the resolution calls upon the labor movement, as a historical force for progressive change, to “play a powerful role in calling for swift action to address the climate crisis and in producing tangible solutions that will ensure we are strengthening, not weakening, our middle class as we transition to a more sustainable economy”.

And whereas the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently issued a report arguing that, by the year 2030, carbon emissions must fall to 45% below 2010 levels. The UN Environment Executive Director said, “It’s like a deafening, piercing smoke alarm going off in the kitchen. We have to put out the fire”.

And whereas “school strikers are calling on everyone—young people, parents, workers, and all concerned citizens—to join massive climate strikes September 20 and a week of actions throughout the following week. Youth strikers are demanding emergency action to avoid climate breakdown. They are demanding that governments immediately provide a safe pathway to stay below 1.5 degrees of warming. They are demanding an end to the age of fossil fuels”.²

And whereas the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), representing 110,000 education workers, submitted a resolution to the National Educators Association (NEA) calling for a general strike to curtail climate change through a Green New Deal.³

Therefore be it resolved that the Berkeley Federation of Teachers (BFT) Executive Board commits to supporting the climate strikes on 9/20/2019, through actions including:

- Publicize the climate strike in San Francisco on 9/20/2019 to members in BFT newsletters and other email communications.⁴
- Discuss various options for BFT members to support students and participate in the climate strike and other educational/advocacy activities at each site.
- Encourage teachers to teach their students about climate change, climate strikes, and other activism and advocacy to support necessary policy and lifestyle changes.

- Share with students our own reasons for wanting to see urgent climate action. Tell them about Greta Thunberg's message of climate emergency,⁶ or show them one of her powerful speeches.^{7, 8, 9}

Be it further resolved that the BFT Executive Board advocates within CFT for a similar statewide call to action, and AFT for a similar nationwide call to action.

Be it finally resolved that the BFT Executive Board takes responsibility for implementing this motion.

Endnotes

1. www.cft.org/article/cft-becomes-first-us-union-adopt-climate-justice-agenda
2. [/www.labor4sustainability.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ClimateStrike.pdf](http://www.labor4sustainability.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ClimateStrike.pdf)
3. <https://www.labor4sustainability.org/articles/massachusetts-teachers-union-calls-for-strike-for-the-green-new-deal/>
4. <https://www.facebook.com/events/2857619404280511/>
5. <http://www.labor4sustainability.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ClimateStrike.pdf>
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/23/greta-thunberg-young-people-climate-strikes-20-september>
7. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg>
8. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2QxFM9y0tY>
9. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWsM9-_zrKo