



## **Resolution in Support of “Medicare for All” and California Single-Payer Healthcare**

**WHEREAS** every person in United States deserves high quality healthcare; and

**WHEREAS** employers spend on average nearly \$15,000 a year for each employee's family health insurance plan with the costs continuing to rise, placing an enormous financial burden on businesses, inhibiting new businesses from opening due to large startup costs, and leading growing numbers of employers to drop health coverage for employees; and

**WHEREAS** employer demands for reductions in their healthcare costs by shifting costs to employees in the form of higher deductibles, coinsurance, co-pays, and cuts in covered services or in-network providers is a leading cause of strikes and other labor disputes; and

**WHEREAS** removing health coverage from contract negotiations would enhance the opportunity for businesses and workers to negotiate higher wages, which would increase worker spending, putting more money into local economies as well as providing for more tax revenue for local communities; and

**WHEREAS** the number of Americans without health insurance before the Covid-19 pandemic was nearly 30 million, with more than 40 million Americans underinsured, and the number of Californians without health insurance was 2.7 million, with 12 million Californians underinsured, despite important gains made since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act; and

**WHEREAS** communities of color are disproportionately represented among the uninsured, underinsured, and subjected to medical debt, medical bankruptcies, and homelessness due to medical bills, which has an adverse impact on those families and the entire community; and

**WHEREAS** the current Covid-19 pandemic has led to loss of employer-sponsored health insurance, a severely strained healthcare system, widespread illness, and has taken a profound toll on our community's mental health, all of which is placing significant demands on our healthcare system, and

**WHEREAS** the Covid-19 pandemic further exposed the dangers of our fragmented, profit-driven healthcare system, which leads many Californians to delay seeking needed healthcare due to an inability to pay, leading to a sicker and poorer population in the long run; and

**WHEREAS** such a population is significantly more likely to develop serious illness if exposed to diseases like Covid-19 and will subsequently face higher mortality rates; and

**WHEREAS** the ever-increasing costs of healthcare, which are further elevated due to the pandemic, may challenge our already strapped state and municipal budgets; and

**WHEREAS** the “Medicare for All” and California single-payer healthcare would guarantee healthcare free at the point of service for every person in the United States and California, respectively, for all necessary medical care including prescription drugs; hospital, surgical, and outpatient services; primary and preventive care; emergency services; reproductive care; dental and vision care; and long-term care; and

**WHEREAS** the “Medicare for All” and California single-payer health care would provide coverage without copays, deductibles, or other out-of-pocket costs, and would slash bureaucracy, protect the doctor-patient relationship, and assure patients a free choice of doctors; and

**WHEREAS** the “Medicare for All” and California single-payer healthcare would would save millions in taxpayer dollars now spent on premiums that provide often inadequate health insurance coverage for government employees; and

**WHEREAS** recent polls show that a majority of Americans and Californians support Medicare for All; and

**WHEREAS** the present presidential administration has the policy to empower states, as laboratories of democracy, to use Affordable Care Act innovation waivers to develop locally tailored approaches to health coverage, including by removing barriers to states that seek to experiment with statewide universal healthcare approaches;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Berkeley Federation of Teachers (BFT) enthusiastically supports “Medicare for All” and calls on our federal legislators to work toward its immediate enactment, assuring healthcare for all residents of the United States.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the BFT expresses its enthusiastic support for California single-payer healthcare and calls upon our state legislators to work toward its immediate enactment.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the BFT informs and encourages members to support single payer health in California and nationwide through various actions as part of the NNU (National Nurses United) and CNA (California Nurses Association) campaigns.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the BFT calls on the California Federation of Teachers and American Federation of Teachers to mobilize members to action in support of passing single-payer healthcare in California and federally.