

*UE150 13<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention, Aug 10-11, 2024*

## **RESOLUTION:**

# **Organize the South! Build the Southern Workers Assembly!**

WHEREAS, the current period is contradictory and dangerous – on the one hand, we’ve seen the growth of workers organizing, strikes, and other motion among rank and file workers to fight back. U.S. labor unions embarked on the highest number of strikes in 23 years in 2023 as they sought hefty wage increases, benefits and better working conditions for their members. United Autoworkers lead a powerful national strike movement against Ford, General Motors and Stellantis, resulting in record contract improvements, and later announced 30 million in investments to organize new foreign owned plants all across the South. Likewise, UE recently organized over 25,000 graduate worker members into our union, the largest growth in many decades.

WHEREAS, On the other, far right and fascist forces are also organizing and growing stronger, and engaging in increasingly violent attacks, especially against Black, brown, and other oppressed workers. Trump, Vance and the MAGA movement are scapegoating immigrant workers, leading to more violence.

WHEREAS, North and South Carolina are the least unionized states in the entire country. This allows the big multinational corporations to make super profits and not have to bargain with workers and their unions. Many corporations from all across the globe invest billions of dollars in building factories in the US South. Out of at least 40 auto factories, including parts plants in the US South most with over 1,000 workers, not a single one of these plants is unionized. 11 states of the US South had over 43% of all US Foreign Direct Investment, making the South a major region in the global economy. Governor Cooper is touting billions in new investments in the Electric Vehicle and battery industry, deeming NC part of the new “battery belt.”

WHEREAS, this is a continuation of racism from chattel slavery, and an attempt to keep the entire region, where a majority of the US Black workers live, at super low wages. The ban on collective bargaining rights was passed in NC in 1959 without a single Black person in the General Assembly to vote against it.

WHEREAS, the Southern Workers Assembly (SWA), since it’s founding outside the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, NC in 2012, is organized to bring forth the voice of workers, unions and labor organizations raising up the demands of workers and union rights, as a major part of the broader social justice movement. Otherwise, the demands of workers on the job for power, justice, dignity and better wages would have been nearly silent compared to the broader movement for overall change in society. The SWA has been building a rank-and-file movement to push labor activism and social movement unionism from the bottom up. Some national unions whose main memberships are outside of the South have contributed financial support.

WHEREAS, the Southern Workers Assembly has convened critical Southern Workers Schools and strategy meetings in the last few years to help develop leadership and consciousness of largely unorganized workers across the South, including the recent school in Charlotte on May 17-19, 2024.

WHEREAS, at the recent Southern Workers School, UE150 members participated in the formation of a regional campaign to fight for a Southern Workers Power Political Program against the backdrop of the 2024 election season, and beyond. This nine point political program grew out of collective discussions with workers across the South engaged in organizing their workplaces and building local workers assemblies. This includes fighting for the right to collectively bargaining and strike, Medicare for All, an end to racist violence and police abuse, defending and expanding the right to an abortion, among many others.

WHEREAS, UE150 members have been active in building Local Worker's Assemblies in the Triangle, Charlotte, Triad and Down East to speak-out about issues in different workplaces and to organize unified local actions to challenge unjust bosses and decision-makers. Other assemblies are in formation in Tidewater & Richmond, VA, Atlanta, GA, Tampa, FL

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THIS 13<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual UE local 150 CONVENTION:**

1. Continues our membership and affiliation with the Southern Workers Assembly and pay our annual membership dues of \$500;
2. Encourages our members in areas all across the state to participate in and help build Local Worker's Assemblies;
3. Encourages our chapters to circulate the Southern Workers Political Power Program to its members and create venues for collective discussion.
4. Educate our members about the significance of May Day, International Workers Day and help to lead the organizing for the May Day 2025 march and rally in North Carolina;
5. UE150 will designate two point people to participate in the Southern Workers Assembly Coordinating Committee, and another person to serve on the North Carolina SWA Coordinating Committee.
6. UE150 will encourage and support the Southern Workers Assembly in organizing a Southern Workers School to educate workers about the conditions across the South and share organizing strategies.

*Submitted by UE150 Executive Board*