

Resolutions

RESOLUTION #18

Hazardous Workplace

Submitted by Delegate Michael Clemmons, IBEW Local 176

WHEREAS, the labor movement has a responsibility to address safety and health concerns of workers and has a responsibility to protect the environment; and

WHEREAS, the labor movement has played a primary role in the passage of national and state workplace safety, health, and environmental protection laws; and

WHEREAS, numerous high hazard facilities including refineries, petrochemical, chemical, and ethanol plants are located throughout Illinois that pose significant safety and health risks due to the sensitive nature of the products processed, handled, and produced there; and

WHEREAS, the current federal and state laws regulating these high hazard facilities have proven inefficient in eliminating dangerous accidents causing damage to the environment and serious injuries and death to workers at those facilities; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reported more than 500 accidents occurring at refineries alone since 1994 leading to fires, explosions, chemical releases, environmental impacts, personal injuries, and death; and

WHEREAS, most accidents occurring at high-hazard facilities could have been prevented with a properly trained and prepared workforce such as U.S. Department of Labor approved union construction apprenticeship programs that lead the country in training for the high hazard facility industry; and

WHEREAS, the labor movement is committed to a diverse, well-paid workforce that can support working families; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Building and Construction Trades have invested significant effort and resources into recruiting individuals from historically underrepresented populations in the construction industry and fiercely advocated for the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act in the 2019 Capital Bill; and

WHEREAS, approximately one-third of union construction apprentices in Illinois are minorities; and

WHEREAS, the union construction trades are committed to increase diversity in their workforce by utilizing the Illinois Works Program and creating similar programs for workers at high hazard facilities within the confines of the state's constitution; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that in order to eliminate dangerous accidents at high hazard facilities, the Illinois AFL-CIO shall work with the Illinois State General Assembly and the governor to pass legislation that will require workers at high hazard facilities to receive advanced safety training; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Illinois AFL-CIO supports legislation to ensure a more diverse workforce at high hazard facilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Illinois AFL-CIO shall support the Illinois Hazardous Materials Workforce Training Act and other legislation relating to the advanced safety training of workers at high hazard facilities; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Illinois AFL-CIO shall solicit support from all its affiliates to assist in future efforts to pass Illinois Hazardous Materials Workforce Training Act legislation.