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Diversity in the Building Trades and All of Labor

Submitted by Delegate Robert Paddock, IUOE Local 150

WHEREAS, the Illinois AFL-CIO and the 22 Central Labor Councils are committed to reaching out in new and expanded ways to women, people of color, immigrants, members of the LGBTQ community, and community activists; and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO constituency groups include A. Philip Randolph Institute, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, and Pride at Work; and

WHEREAS, 1 of 5 African-American workers belongs to a union; and

WHEREAS, currently women make up 46% of union members nationwide, and are projected to be a majority by 2025; and

WHEREAS, labor's commitment to diversity at all levels and in all parts of our movement must be deep and enduring; and

WHEREAS, unions must create better policies to encourage labor to hire, retain, and promote people from underrepresented groups; and

WHEREAS, the labor movement must strive for inclusive workplaces where people from underrepresented groups feel comfortable sharing their concerns; and

WHEREAS, organized labor must be committed to advocating for social and economic justice to improve the economic status of underrepresented groups; and

WHEREAS, underrepresented groups must have access to high-paying quality jobs and leadership opportunities; and

WHEREAS, training is the key to a competitive workforce and for retaining high-quality jobs in the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, union members have a long tradition of skilled work, enhanced through apprenticeship and on the job training; and

WHEREAS, the state's building trades unions continuously review their apprenticeship programs and are actively working to build diversity in our apprenticeship programs; and

WHEREAS, the state's building trades unions are committed to ensuring people from underrepresented groups can successfully matriculate from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship programs; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2017 report from the Illinois Department of Labor, Illinois's apprenticeship programs are comprised of 69 percent Caucasian participants and 31 percent minority participants; and

WHEREAS, the Building and Construction Trades offer great employment opportunities for people from underrepresented groups; and

WHEREAS, in the construction industry Latinx workers suffer more wage and overtime violations than any other ethnic group; and

WHEREAS, in the construction industry evidence is overwhelming that unionized minority workers have higher economic status, wages, benefits, and working conditions; and

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WHEREAS, to have credibility with all workers, the unions must stand as a model of full inclusion; therefore be it

RESOLVED, more minorities should be sought to join the building trades, and every effort should be made to include minorities into positions of leadership within all unions; and be it further

RESOLVED, more people from underrepresented groups should successfully matriculate from pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, there must be more targeted bilingual organizing campaigns to ensure Latinxs understand their rights to organize; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Illinois AFL-CIO will protect and create on-ramps to the labor movement and pathways to leadership for women, people of color, immigrants, and members of the LGBTQ community.