

Resolution #11 -- RWU Resolution in Support of Single Payer Universal Health Care

Whereas, railroad workers, their families and their unions are waging an increasingly difficult struggle to win or keep good health care coverage. Every rail union at every contract deadline must battle and sacrifice merely to sustain health care benefits. The rising costs of health insurance are blocking rail workers' progress in wages and other areas. All of our unions face a health care crisis; and

Whereas, the crisis extends far beyond union members. More than 45 million people in the U.S. are currently without health care insurance. More than 75 million went without for some length of time within the last two (2) years; and millions more have inadequate coverage or are at risk of losing their coverage. Women, people of color and immigrants are denied care at disproportionate rates, while the elderly and many others must choose between the necessities and life sustaining drugs and care. Unorganized employers, such as Wal-Mart dump their responsibilities for health care onto public programs; and

Whereas, the U.S. health system continues to treat health care as a commodity distributed according to the ability to pay, rather than a social service to be distributed according to human need. Insurance companies and HMOs compete not by increasing quality or lowering costs, but by avoiding covering those with the greatest need; and

Whereas, economic necessity and moral conscience compel us to seek a better way;

Therefore, be it Resolved that Railroad Workers United (RWU) at its Founding Convention in Dearborn, Michigan, April 11, 2008 supports a single payer program as provided for in Congressman John Conyers' bill HR 676, 'Expanded and Improved Medicare for All,' since a single payer health care program is the only affordable option for universal, comprehensive coverage; and

Be it Further Resolved that Railroad Workers United advocate within our local unions and communities to build a groundswell of popular support and action for single payer universal health care and HR 676 until we make what is morally right for our nation into what is also politically possible; and

Be it finally Resolved that RWU send a copy of this resolution to Congressman Conyers, to all rail labor national representatives, to the AFL-CIO Executive Committee, and to the news media.

The above Resolution was adopted by those members assembled at the RWU Convention, April 11, 2008.