

Resolution in Support of Rail Labor for Single Payer

Whereas: The United States is the only country in the developed world that does not guarantee access to basic health care for residents, ranking 26th in infant mortality and 31st in life expectancy with nearly 28 million Americans having no coverage at all, and millions more having such meager coverage that a single major medical event will push them into financial ruin; and

Whereas: These high costs have helped to sustain a climate of concessionary bargaining, suppressing cost of living wage increases, creating bitter work environments, triggering attacks on rail labor and shifting more and more of the costs onto the backs of workers; and

Whereas: All other industrialized countries provide comprehensive coverage to all citizens as a fundamental human right, putting U.S. manufacturing employers and workers at a global competitive disadvantage; and

Whereas: The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has been supported as a preliminary step because it improves access to healthcare for millions of Americans. We recognize that recent attempts to “repeal and replace” are thinly disguised attempts to deprive 22 million Americans of their healthcare in order to finance tax cuts for the 1%, and undermine public health programs. However, even under the ACA, 28 million remain uninsured, and profit continues to drive healthcare policy; and

Whereas: Medicare for All is not only the most ethical option on the table, but also the most pragmatic and economically sustainable. Senator Sanders Medicare for All Act of 2017 is a game changer, and support for the House bill, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act (H.R. 676, endorsed by over 1,000 national, regional, and local unions, state labor federations and central labor councils) has surged; and

Whereas: A single-payer, Medicare for All healthcare program would save American railroaders on average around \$130 per month, with no more co-pays, deductibles, or hospital bills – while also saving Railroads on average in the neighborhood of \$1200 per month; and

Whereas: The American labor movement has fought for more than a century, and will continue to fight to make healthcare a right in the United States; and

Whereas: The BMWED of the IBT, fighting along its allies, is advocating within the labor movement for comprehensive, single-payer national healthcare reform and is calling for the labor movement to lead the fight for healthcare justice; so

Therefore Be It Resolved: That _____ commits to advocating, educating and organizing for healthcare justice and for a Medicare for All system that will make healthcare a birthright for everyone in America; and

Therefore Be It Resolved: That _____ encourages all rail craft labor unions to embark on a systematic program to educate its members about the nature of the healthcare crisis, the importance of the single-payer solution and the benefits of taking healthcare off the bargaining table by making it a right for everyone in America; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That _____ supports and urges our federal and state legislators to enact legislation that embodies the principles of a single payer Medicare-for-All system; and that we urge our union and community allies to make such legislation a priority in all state and federal electoral efforts.