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AFT Resolution

AGAINST DEPORTATION

WHEREAS, members of the American Federation of Teachers are proud to serve some of the most ethnically diverse bodies of students in the world, many in cities where 1 in 5 residents are born outside of the United States, with residents from more than 140 countries and who speak more than 100 languages; and

WHEREAS, the AFT is dedicated to the welfare and bright future of all students and members of our communities; and

WHEREAS, deadly, unchecked violence and economic distress in Central America and Mexico have resulted in the world's highest murder rates in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and Honduras, causing a refugee crisis, with hundreds of thousands of people displaced, the majority of whom are women and children; and

WHEREAS, many families and children do not have access to legal counsel, forcing them to navigate the complex immigration system alone; and

WHEREAS, there have been 83 documented murders of individuals who were deported back to Central American countries from the United States since January 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Homeland Security has been conducting immigration enforcement “field operations,” commonly known as “raids,” taking into immigration custody families, adults and children seeking to build their life in the United States; and

WHEREAS, DHS announced that it would be targeting Central American families and children through “Operation Border Guardian,” which so far has taken 336 people from their homes nationwide, including children; and

WHEREAS, in some states, like Georgia and North Carolina, Immigration and Customs Enforcement is targeting undocumented high school students for detention and deportation, as part of Operation Border Guardian, including eight students who are still in immigration detention; and

WHEREAS, in North Carolina, teachers have reported that there have been drastic decreases in attendance—up to 20 percent in some cases—due to Latino and immigrant children staying home in fear of being apprehended by ICE; and

WHEREAS, DHS and ICE raids perpetuate pervasive fear within neighborhoods and schools, sow distrust between local law enforcement and immigrant communities, and invite human and civil rights violations; and

WHEREAS, there are parents and students suffering the consequences of harsh immigration enforcement tactics, including Jose Juan Federico

Moreno, a father of five children who has had to take sanctuary in a Chicago church to avoid deportation; and

WHEREAS, teachers cannot achieve their mission of educating their students when there is widespread fear and anxiety in the community:

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers hereby condemns the use of immigration raids or “field operations,” urges the Department of Homeland Security to end Operation Border Guardian and any other field operations targeting students and their families, and supports the detained students in Georgia and North Carolina, asking that they be released from immigration custody; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will provide trainings to members on how to create a classroom environment and curriculum that is welcoming to all students, including undocumented youth; informational trainings on understanding DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents); and training on college counseling for undocumented students; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT supports the fight of Jose Juan Federico Moreno and his children, and urges the Chicago office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to consider the suffering of his family and stop his deportation; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT will support community organizations that are counseling undocumented youth and providing information about people’s rights during immigration enforcement raids, and make this information available to teachers and students; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT hereby asks the governing body of each city to reaffirm its status as a welcoming city and its commitment to become or remain a place of safety and refuge for refugees from around the world, insisting that law enforcement and city officials

shall not participate in, cooperate in or facilitate planned raids to apprehend families fleeing violence; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT hereby requests its membership to assist the public, in whatever legal means available, in its fight to prevent raids and deportations of refugee seekers.

(2016)

Please note that a newer resolution, or portion of a resolution, may have superseded an earlier resolution on the same subject. As a result, with the exception of resolutions adopted at our most recent AFT convention, resolutions do not necessarily reflect current AFT policies.

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