

Resolution #80A-25-06

A Generational Fight for Our Freedoms

American democracy is cracking under intense attack from authoritarian forces. The authoritarian right is attempting to repeal the advances made in our democracy throughout the 20th century and – with it – all of our victories for organized labor, the civil rights movement, women, the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants, the poor, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

There is a growing authoritarian social movement of millions of people united on the basis of revenge, resentment and turning back the clock supported by the wealthiest people in the world, which has now secured a controlling role in the federal government.

Part of the authoritarian plan involves destroying labor unions. Labor unions are a proven instrument for stopping authoritarian efforts. In a highly segregated society, the labor movement is a place where people come together across otherwise often impenetrable barriers to work together. Workers unite across societal differences to fight corporate greed. Union members understand that bad bosses must be fought and that a dictator is a bad boss with way too much power.

For all these reasons, authoritarians have to break unions in order to succeed in their project. They will come for us in many ways: direct attack, co-optation, destroying labor rights, cutting off dues, even jailing our leaders. We see all of these attacks underway today, with presidential actions that eliminated collective bargaining rights altogether for nearly a million workers, unilaterally ended dues deduction, and severely limited the ability of federal employee unions to fulfill their representational duties. Shockingly, David Huerta, the President of SEIU California and SEIU-United Service Workers West, was wrongfully arrested while protecting the rights of his members.

Breaking unions is just one part of the playbook that includes dividing Americans, weakening our grassroots-led institutions, demonizing vulnerable communities, spreading disinformation, attacking the press, destroying checks and balances, abusing executive power, stoking violence, corrupting elections and squashing dissent. Where immigrants are not safe, workers cannot be safe. Where trans rights are under attack, labor rights will follow.

We are here because of failed neoliberal economic models, corporate greed and the fifty-year class war. Our economic and political systems are rigged by the wealthy. Even as CWA's political action has made a difference in advancing the interests of the working class on countless occasions, the corruption enabled by the massive corporate money that dominates politics has prevented sustained progress for worker interests, in Washington, D.C., state capitols and cities across the country. We must hold the line.

We must educate our members, increase our union membership, grow our independent political strength, and take an active part in building the broad multiracial working class resistance to authoritarianism. We cannot put our heads in the sand and hope that this authoritarian movement just blows over in the next few years. Previous generations fought too hard for American democracy –

against British monarchy, chattel slavery and European fascism – to have our country fall to authoritarianism now. CWA members must do our part in the coalition to stop authoritarianism.

Resolved: CWA commits to resist authoritarian rule and the destruction of our American democracy.

Resolved: CWA recognizes that defeating authoritarianism must be a primary objective of our union.

Resolved: CWA will take action to create a bold, proactive and aggressive anti-authoritarian program in our union. We will lead, not just wait for others to do so.

Resolved: We will institute widespread popular education of our members on how to recognize authoritarianism and how to fight it, and work with other unions and partner organizations to expand the reach of this critical information.

Resolved: We will encourage all our members to join the fight to defend the First Amendment Constitutional right to a free press, the right of media workers to report, and the freedoms of speech and assembly.

Resolved: We will prepare our union to respond to any attacks on our basic rights that threaten our union and the labor movement.

Resolved: CWA will uphold our commitments to defend human rights for all in the workplace and the world. We pledge to protect the first targets of human rights attacks – including trans people and immigrants – as we know these attacks are integrally linked to attacks on our labor rights.

Resolved: CWA will live our commitment to movement building and actively participate in pro-democracy coalition building and anti-authoritarian organizing in our communities.

Resolved: We will continue to build independent political power for working people and we will defend fair and free elections from interference.

Resolved: We will prepare to use every necessary tool to fight authoritarianism.