

# RESOLUTION 43

## I AM 2018

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO is the labor center for American workers and a tireless fighter for economic justice and civil, labor and human rights for workers across the globe; and

WHEREAS, in the current environment, it is more important than ever for labor to stand strong with all members of our community in the continuing fight for economic, social and racial justice; and

WHEREAS, April 4, 2018 will mark 50 years since the tragic assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, where he was standing shoulder to shoulder with striking AFSCME-represented sanitation workers who were seeking respect, dignity, economic justice and safe and humane working conditions; the sanitation workers' slogan—"I Am a Man"—became the rallying cry for this workers' movement; and

WHEREAS, much progress has been made during the past 50 years, but much more remains to be done—the struggle for justice inseparably binds the labor and civil rights movements; as Dr. King said to civil rights leaders, "Our needs are identical with labor's needs: Decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old-age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children, and respect in the community"; and

WHEREAS, the 50th anniversary of the strike and Dr. King's murder is more than a commemoration of a historical moment and the honoring of true American heroes; it is a sober reminder of the important work ahead of us. Indeed, the concentration of wealth and power that Dr. King identified as the driver of injustice in its many forms is more severe today than at the time of his death. The revival of a "Poor Peoples' Campaign" is not an indulgence in nostalgia, but an essential activity in the fight for justice for all workers and poor people from diverse backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2018, labor and our allies across the spectrum of social and economic justice movements will come together in Memphis to renew our commitment to Dr. King's dream;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the labor movement embraces the legacy of Dr. King and its responsibility to honor the strikers, and commits to redoubling our efforts on behalf of all working people. The AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions stand in support of the "I AM 2018" activities, including the April 2018 events in Memphis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO are urged to provide financial and other support for the "I AM 2018" program.