

(6)

Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis

WHEREAS: Racism is a social system with multiple dimensions — individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal, and systemic racism that is institutional or structural — and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and

WHEREAS: Race is a social construct with no biological basis; and

WHEREAS: Racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS: Systemic racism is a root cause of poverty and constricts economic mobility, negatively impacting health care, criminal justice, education, housing, employment, food and nutrition and many more issues that determine health outcomes; and

WHEREAS: At this critical inflection point in American history, African Americans are confronting two crises — the coronavirus pandemic and police brutality — that are disproportionately impacting their community and bringing racial injustice to the forefront with peaceful demonstrations in cities and small towns in every state and around the globe; and

WHEREAS: People of color from across Ohio and this nation have repeatedly called attention to these inequities and demanded action; and

WHEREAS: The Ohio Legislature and other county and municipal elected legislative bodies have considered or will consider resolutions to declare racism a public health crisis in their communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Ohio AFL-CIO and its affiliates recognize that structural and systemic racism is embedded and entrenched in every aspect of our nation, declares unequivocally that racism is a public health crisis and calls on Governor Mike DeWine and other state, county, and municipal elected officials to join in our declaration and enact equity in all state, county, and municipal policies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Ohio AFL-CIO and its affiliates commit to strengthening their alliances with groups, including but not limited to: Black Lives Matter, the Color of Change, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as well as faith-based and community-based organizations; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That the Ohio AFL-CIO and its affiliates commit to playing an active role in combatting systemic racism via such means to include, but not limited to:

lobbying elected legislative bodies, writing letters to publications and officials in support of this cause.

Submitted by: A. Philip Randolph Institute, Ohio Chapter