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Recognizing the central role of labor organizing and labor unions in the history of Philadelphia, their ongoing importance to the wellbeing of working-class families, and condemning the Trump Administration's continued pursuit of anti-labor and anti-worker policies.

WHEREAS, The first labor union in the United States of America, the Federal Society of Journeymen Cordwainers, was formed in Philadelphia in 1794 to challenge exploitation and fight for fair wages before being ordered to dissolve by the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, The Industrial Revolution transformed both society and the workplace, creating unprecedented wealth but failing to deliver fair compensation or improve working conditions for the laborers who toiled in hazardous environments, reinforcing the critical need for organized labor to protect the working class; and

WHEREAS, In 1835, Philadelphia witnessed the first ever general strike in American history, where 20,000 workers stood united for two weeks, securing the ten-hour workday, lunch breaks, and higher wages, proving the power of collective action; and

WHEREAS, Despite continued union efforts across the nation, workers who sought to improve their lives and conditions were subjected to violence, intimidation, and even death, illustrating the high cost of standing up for justice and fairness; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia remained at the forefront of the labor movement in the 19th and 20th centuries, with figures like "Mother" Mary Harris Jones.Mother Jones arrived in Philadelphia to support over 45,000 workers on strike in Kensington's textile industry. Soonafter, she led thousands of workers - including children - on a march to New York to advocate for the end of child labor, now known as the March of the Mill Children; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1900's, Philadelphia's Longshoremen's union, the Industrial Workers of the World Local 8, under the leadership of Ben Fletcher, became one of the most racially integrated unions in the country; and

WHEREAS, The Municipal Workers Union, galvanized by the firing of 260 municipal workers in 1938, led to Philadelphia's historic Garbage Strike, resulting in the first American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) chapter recognized by a major city and a major victory for workers' rights. This local, Local 222, was the precursor to what is now known as AFSCME DC 33; and

WHEREAS, The rise of transformational, working-class leaders such as Alice Nelson Krechman, Samuel Staten Sr., and many others, as well as the work of countless working-class Philadelphians, allowed our City to cement itself as the definition of a "union town" committed to meeting the needs of the multi-racial working class; and

WHEREAS, The continued importance of unions is reflected in the wages and benefits they provide working families. Union members' wages are 11.2% higher than their non-union counterparts - underscoring the tangible

impact that organized labor has on the well-being of working people; and

WHEREAS, The Trump Administration's March 27th, 2025 Executive Order, Exclusions from Federal Labor-Management Relations Programs, is a direct assault on the collective bargaining rights of approximately 67% of the federal workforce, an unprecedented attack on workers that threatens to unravel decades of progress; and

WHEREAS, This executive order, along with a series of other anti-worker policies pushed forward by the Trump Administration, threatens not only the livelihood of federal employees, but also the well-being of working-class families in Philadelphia, and by extension, the fabric of our entire City, which has long depended on the strength and solidarity of unions; and

WHEREAS, As a City with a rich history of labor activism, it is incumbent upon Philadelphia-an iconic symbol of American democracy and workers' rights-to stand in firm opposition to these federal attacks on labor, recognizing the essential role unions play in lifting up families and strengthening communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize the central role of labor organizing and labor unions in the history of Philadelphia, their ongoing importance to the wellbeing of working-class families, and condemn the Trump Administration's continued pursuit of anti-labor and anti-worker policies.



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