

Resolution Title: Support for Drivers' Licenses for New York State Immigrants
Submitted by: Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

Whereas, many NYSUT locals serve immigrant communities, including students enrolled at CUNY and SUNY; and

Whereas, NYSUT has been a supporter of immigrant rights and equal rights for all immigrants regardless of status; and

Whereas, hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers in New York State are currently in danger of losing drivers' licenses due to a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) policy which will suspend, non-renew and not grant new licenses to immigrants who cannot provide a valid social security number or prove immigration status; and

Whereas, immigrants and especially college students frequently work in jobs that require the operation of motor vehicles and the loss of a license may cause the loss of a job or the ability to get one thus disrupting lives and education; and

Whereas, making licenses accessible to immigrants saves all drivers money by reducing the number of uninsured drivers, thus lowering insurance rates and improving road safety since all drivers must pass road tests; and

Whereas, in May 2005 President Bush signed an emergency war and tsunami relief appropriation bill, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, to which was appended the REAL ID Act of 2005 without debate on its merits, its impact or its relevance to the issues of the war and tsunami relief; and

Whereas, the REAL ID Act will prevent many immigrants from obtaining drivers' licenses since it imposes federal standards that exceed guidelines for states wishing to have their drivers' licenses accepted as federal ID; and

Whereas, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that the Act will cost \$100 million over five years, imposing an unfunded requirement on States; and

Whereas, the State of New York is not required to implement the driver's license provisions of the REAL ID Act of 2005 because of the opt-out provision; and

Whereas, the New York City Council in December, 2005 overwhelmingly passed Resolution 1009A, which urges the state to opt out of the driver's license provisions of the REAL ID Act; and

Whereas, current DMV policy poses harm to immigrant workers, their families and communities and to the trade unions to which they belong; and

Whereas, everyone who lives in New York State, who can establish his or her identity, should be able to obtain a driver's license regardless of immigration status, thus improving security; therefore be it

Resolved, that NYSUT lobby the Governor and Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to revise the current state policy to insure that immigrants, regardless of immigration status, be able to obtain drivers' licenses if they meet road safety requirements and have proof of identity; and be it further

Resolved, that NYSUT urge the legislature to opt out of compliance with the driver's license provisions of the REAL ID ACT of 2005; and be it further

Resolved, that NYSUT seek the support of the New York State AFL-CIO for this opt out provision; and be it further

Resolved, that NYSUT encourage the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to lobby Congress to repeal the driver's license provisions of the REAL ID.