



2011 NYSUT RETIREE CONTIGUOUS E.D. MEETING

FINAL REPORT ON RESOLUTIONS

COMMITTEE

Joseph McLaughlin, Chair
George Altomare
Sandra Bliss
Rosemary Catanzariti
Ruth Dworkin
Richard Edwards
Marcella Fugle
Andrew Kavulich
Fredericka Macek
Deborah Peterson
Janice Scriber
Irwin Yellowitz

STAFF

Robert A. Carillo, Special Projects Coordinator
Kristan Connolly, Associate Legislative Relations Coordinator
Peter Savage, Legislative Representative
Christina Gasner, Sr. Administrative Assistant

October 26-27, 2011
NYSUT Headquarters
Latham, New York

Resolution 1

Solar Energy Credit

Whereas, educational programs and jobs have been harmed by the decrease in state aid; and

Whereas, solar energy is a clean, renewable resource; and

Whereas, solar energy can offer schools and other institutions the opportunity to save money by reducing energy costs and, equally important, achieve an additional revenue stream through solar renewable energy credits; and

Whereas, New York has failed in each of the last two years to enact legislation that would create a competitive energy environment such as exists in the neighboring states of New Jersey and Massachusetts; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT support legislation that would create solar renewable energy credits for New York and the opportunity for schools and other institutions to achieve the energy savings solar power would accomplish.

Resolution 2

Palliative Care

Whereas, during our lifetime, many of us will face life-threatening or life-altering illnesses or injuries or, perhaps, we will watch those we love face them. We need a system in place that can provide support, guidance and direction to those who are facing these challenges. This system is called palliative care; and

Whereas, palliative care is a medical specialty that provides coordinated, comprehensive care to alleviate pain and suffering for anyone who is given a life-threatening or life-altering diagnosis; it is care to provide comfort and support for the patient and for the patient's loved ones. Palliative care differs from hospice in that one is not required to have a six month or less prognosis, and curative treatment is allowed and provided; and

Whereas, palliative care, in practice, would be the medical equivalent of an IEP (Individualized Education Plan); it could be considered an IMP, an individual medical plan, for anyone with a serious or potentially serious medical diagnosis. Because seriously ill patients need a plan to help them locate appropriate services, provide the best treatment options and help them transition to the most appropriate environment, palliative care would help people navigate the system, as well as find pain relief, comfort and cure, if possible, right from the beginning. This care is routinely provided by a team that includes physicians, nurses, chaplains, social workers and others who work together with a patient's own doctor to provide an extra layer of support for the patient and for the patient's loved ones. Although many institutions provide palliative care, it is still a relatively new specialty; it therefore might be necessary to ask for it; and

Whereas, in January 2009, palliative care was included as a covered benefit in the single-payer bill, HR 676, Expanded and Improved Medicare for All, the Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act or (ACA), does not include it. Palliative care must be included in any bill that calls itself Healthcare Reform; and

Whereas, the United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that does not have a health care system, on the basis of equality, we must demand that quality health care be available to us all. Critically, chronically ill people just cannot wait; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT support and urge its national affiliates to support efforts to include palliative care in an expansion of the Health Reform Act passed in 2010; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NYSUT submit this resolution to the next conventions of its national affiliates to consider incorporating palliative care as part of their national policies.

Resolution 4

Supporting "Occupy Wall Street" Movement

Whereas, the "Occupy Wall Street" movement has resulted in hundreds of thousands of demonstrators gathering in New York City and in more than 190 other cities, towns and communities across the nation in recent weeks to protest corporate greed and its short and long-term detrimental effects on the national economy and America's working families and middle class; and

Whereas, the size and scope of these protests continue to grow and attract more demonstrators and gain increased support from labor unions, civic and community organizations, not-for-profit groups, veterans' groups, elected officials, clergy and a host of other organizations and individuals; and

Whereas, the calls of protesters condemning corporate greed and demanding that wealthy corporations, financial institutions and government invest more resources into efforts to create good jobs and provide fairer treatment for the 99 percent of Americans adversely affected by the economy are in keeping with the goals of the American labor movement; and

Whereas, such demands support measures such as NYSUT calling for passage of key provisions of President Obama's American Jobs Act, a millionaires' tax and a more equitable revision of the federal tax code to end or reduce corporate tax loopholes; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT continue its support of the "Occupy Wall Street" movement by participating in related demonstrations and protests and urging its members to do the same; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NYSUT continue its efforts to achieve an extension of a millionaires' tax to help fund public education, build new schools, hire and retain good teachers, lower class size and reduce the need for layoffs of educators and state and municipal public employees; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NYSUT and its national affiliates work to influence Congress to support key provisions of President Obama's American Jobs Act and also revise the federal tax code to make it more equitable for American taxpayers while holding corporations more accountable and more responsible for paying their fair share of taxes.

Resolution 5

Inflation Protection Equity for Optional Retirement Program Members

Whereas, the New York State Legislature has created different retirement systems that New York State and New York City public employees may choose to opt into, including New York State and Local employees retirement systems, the New York City Employees Retirement System, New York State and New York City Teachers Retirement Systems, and the Optional Retirement Program; and

Whereas, it is the New York State Legislature's intent to provide equity among New York State public retirement systems to the greatest extent practicable; and

Whereas, the Legislature has enacted a Cost of Living Adjustment to provide inflation protection for retirees in eight major New York State public retirement systems, including those mentioned above; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT study the issue of inflation protection equity for retirees in the Optional Retirement Program, and develop such specific legislative proposals as may be appropriate.

Resolution 6

Facilitating Retiree Councils' Contact with Their Members

Whereas, NYSUT retirees spent many years devoted to the service of their union; and

Whereas, NYSUT retirees continue in retirement to work in support of issues vital to both inservice members and retirees; and

Whereas, retirees have the freedom to choose how they spend their time and have therefore been referred to as the daytime union and also as the backbone of the union; and

Whereas, the means for immediate communication with members is vital to prompting e-mails, faxes, phone calls and letters to legislators in quick response to NYSUT issues; and

Whereas, Retiree Councils have politically astute members who could flood legislators' offices with communications on a given issue; and

Whereas, the most immediate communication with the largest number of retirees would be through e-mail; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT be urged to expedite the ability of Retiree Councils to use e-mail to contact their members through technical support and to provide each Retiree Council with an e-mail address at the appropriate Regional Office.