



Convention 2025 Delegate Actions

SUMMARY: Every two years, AFT-Wisconsin, as called for by our constitution, holds a convention. Any member in good standing can submit a resolution for consideration by the whole body. Delegates from our locals across the state—in PK-12, Higher Education, Wisconsin Technical College System, State Employees, Public Defenders, and others—have the opportunity to vote on resolutions that make it to the floor. The following resolutions were passed by the delegate session this year and will guide our work for 2025-27.

A short summary:

- AFT-Wisconsin resolved to support fully-funding our PK-12 public education system (defined as 2/3 support from the state of Wisconsin) and a referenda-free future for our public schools, pledging to only support candidates for elected office who will fight with us to secure that future.
- AFT-Wisconsin resolved to support a UW system regent meet-and-confer policy for faculty and staff unions and full collective bargaining rights for all UW workers, pledging to only support candidates for elected office who will fight for those rights.
- AFT-Wisconsin pledged to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives in the UW system and the WTCS, to call out any efforts by administration to undermine them or restrict services our students, in all their diversity, deserve to be successful.
- AFT-Wisconsin pledged itself to be a sanctuary union, standing with our immigrant siblings, refusing to cooperate with ICE, and protect all of our members and their families, regardless of immigration status.
- AFT-Wisconsin opposes AB446/SB445, and pledges not to endorse any candidates for office who support either bill.
- AFT-Wisconsin opposes AFT National's AI Academy and calls for the national union to disband it.

Two other resolutions (due to time constraints) did not make it to the floor but were moved through the resolutions committee to be prioritized by the AFT-Wisconsin executive board:

- AFT-Wisconsin pledges to find for fully funding our state public defenders and pledges not to endorse any candidates for public office unless they will fight with us in that effort
- AFT-Wisconsin pledges to work with locals in higher ed to expand Local 212's F.A.S.T. Fund.

Full text of resolutions follow below:

A Resolution in Support of Fully Funding Schools in Wisconsin

Whereas, public schools are an essential bedrock of our democracy, are essential in empowering our students to be engaged citizens and build capacities for productive work, and have an obligation to serve all of our kids equally,

Whereas, the state of Wisconsin does not adequately fund our public schools and has not done so for many years,

Whereas, the 2025-27 budget biennium failed to provide any general per pupil aid increase for the first time in decades,

Whereas, the legislature has cynically required school districts to engage in labor- and financially-intensive local referenda just to maintain the resources our students need to be successful,

Whereas, AFT-Wisconsin locals in Ashland, Superior, McFarland, and many other parts of the state have had to fight to win these referenda,

Be it hereby resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin will only support local and state-wide candidates for office who will fight with us for the full funding, defined as $\frac{2}{3}$ of public education funding coming from the state of Wisconsin, our kids deserve in every part of the state.

Be it further resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin and its members will fight for full funding and general per pupil aid increases indexed for inflation, for our public schools in the 2027-29 budget biennium, and a referenda free future for every one of our public school districts.

Submitted by Angie Bazan, President, McFarland Federation of Teachers; Janelle Seeger, President, Ashland Federation of Teachers; and Jon Shelton, President AFT Wisconsin



A Resolution in Support of Union Recognition and Collective Bargaining in the UW System

Whereas, our universities are essential bedrocks of our democracy that have an obligation to empower all students to be engaged and productive citizens,

Whereas, administrators from the UW system and our individual campuses have ignored faculty and staff voices and failed in their duty to advocate for the resources our students need,

Whereas, shared governance serves to provide faculty and staff prerogative over curricular matters and is not sufficient to advocate for and achieve good and equitable salaries, working conditions, and student learning conditions for all employees,

Whereas, decades of failure on the part of the legislature to fund the UW system have further empowered system and campus administrators to erode faculty and staff working conditions,

Whereas, the most recent biennial budget, agreed to by Republicans in the legislature and Gov. Evers, now allows politicians to micromanage our working conditions at the expense of our students,

Whereas, administrations across Wisconsin have refused or ignored our requests to meet, while falsely claiming that ACT 10 laws prohibit them from doing so,

Whereas, AFT Higher Education recognized the importance of union recognition in the UW system by supporting AFT-Wisconsin with only one of three grants in its Real Solutions for Higher Education nationwide campaign,

Be it hereby resolved, that the members of AFT-Wisconsin call on the Board of Regents to formally recognize our unions immediately and institutionalize the growing power our locals have built on campuses in the UW system by implementing set schedules for meet and confer sessions,



And be it further resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin will only endorse candidates for legislative or executive office who not only support but also prioritize legislation to guarantee collective bargaining rights for UW system faculty and staff

Submitted by Lauren Gantz, Co-President, SPARC; Neil Kraus, President, United Falcons of River Falls; Brandon Thomas, President, UW-Whitewater United; and Jon Shelton, President AFT-Wisconsin



A Resolution to Defend DEI on Wisconsin Campuses

Whereas, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives are fundamental to serving underrepresented and vulnerable members of our campus communities and achieving our goals as an institution of higher learning,

Whereas, DEI programming has been shown to support psychosocial development and overall well-being, foster participation and engagement, and improve academic success, as well as retention, persistence, and graduation rates among underrepresented and marginalized student populations,

Whereas, DEI initiatives, programs, staff, faculty, and facilities have been threatened, removed, curtailed, renamed, and defunded at educational institutions statewide by local/federal governments and political organizations,

Whereas, the Wisconsin state legislature and UW System President Jay Rothman leveraged cost-of-living pay raises for university employees, which were pre-appropriated, to eliminate DEI programs and limit our academic freedom without the consent of or input from academic workers,

Whereas, from Wisconsin's technical colleges to its colleges and universities, administrations and governing entities are unilaterally implementing unnecessary, overreaching preemptive actions to remove programming, resources, and structures that could be even remotely associated with DEI, at times with unrelated ulterior motives,

Whereas, the Wisconsin state legislature performed a "DEI audit" as a means to legitimize and normalize attacks on our institutions,

Whereas, the US Department of Education has launched bogus investigations of higher ed institutions to provide a pretext for further curtailing the academic freedom of academic workers,

Whereas, the US government and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has criminalized

migrant and international faculty, staff, and students on our campuses, and shown the propensity to detain, imprison, and deport people on our campuses without or despite due process,

Whereas, the disappearance of fundamental services and programs for academic workers and students is harming the working and learning conditions on our campus and preventing us from achieving strategic plans,

Whereas, in the current social and political climate, Diversity has been villainized and scapegoated, Equity attacked as unfair and prejudicial, and Inclusion characterized as biased and exclusionary. DEI initiatives are either poorly understood or purposely obfuscated by opponents who use them as a means to attack public education generally; therefore,

Whereas, the conditions above have occurred across all sectors of public employment.

Therefore, be it hereby resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin opposes all attempts to corruptly weaponize DEI to attack public education,

And be it further resolved, that we call on the convention to:

- 1) Stress the importance of serving the educational needs of underrepresented, disabled, marginalized, veteran, and racialized groups.
- 2) Demand that DEI initiatives, programs, and offices are preserved and maximally funded.
- 3) Publicize any attempts to undermine DEI initiatives, programs, and offices.
- 4) Support each other in organized campaigns to defend DEI initiatives, programs, and offices.
- 5) Commit to proactive DEI programming education of membership & the public and calling out related misinformation and its sources.

Submitted by: University of Wisconsin-Whitewater United President Brandon Thomas, Vice President David Simmons, Record-keeper and Treasurer Adam Paddock, L&S Steward Julien Grayer, and Member Steven Sahyun; United Falcons of UW River Falls President and AFT-WI Vice President of Higher Education Neil Kraus; Stevens Point Academic Representation Council Co-President Lauren Gantz and Co-President Jill Stukenberg; AFT Local 212 Milwaukee Area Technical College Federation President Lisa



Conley, Vice President Paraprofessionals Bargaining Unit Lynnett Harvey, Part-time Faculty Bargaining Unit Member & Communications Director Luz Sosa; and Jon Shelton, President, AFT-Wisconsin



A Resolution on Sanctuary Campuses/Schools

Whereas, AFT- W will continue to represent all of its membership, regardless of the member's race, citizenship or immigration status, religion, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, or disability; and will not be impeded or intimidated from exercising its responsibilities;

Whereas, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents are kidnapping immigrants and other residents of the U.S., whether they have dissented with the administration or not, on the flimsiest of pretexts, with no regard for the law, how long they've lived in the U.S, how dependent their families are upon them, or the ties they have with their communities;

Whereas, federal immigration agents are waging a campaign against the fundamental human rights of immigrants who have been captured and detained without just cause, who have been severed from contact with their legal representation, and who have been disappeared without the due process to which they are entitled under the law;

Whereas, AFT- W is committed to ensuring that our Union is a safe and welcoming place for all its members and their families regardless of their citizenship or immigration status;

Whereas, many cities such as Madison, WI, have declared themselves Sanctuary Cities, and universities such as Wesleyan University have declared themselves Sanctuary Campuses, where officials have vowed not to collaborate to volunteer the immigration status of their residents, workers, or students, or to cooperate with ICE;

Whereas, the working class has no borders and any attack on immigrants or the most vulnerable in our communities is an attack on each and every one of us.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

AFT-Wisconsin declares itself a "Sanctuary Union" that will protect the rights and safety of all of its members and their families, and will do everything within its power to ensure the safety and security of its members regardless of immigration status;

- We will not cooperate with ICE or local law enforcement in the prosecution or attempted deportation of students or staff for alleged immigration violations
- We will oppose our local administrations assisting or facilitating ICE



- We will oppose the use of the knowledge generated at our universities to aid and abet the deportation and detention machine
- We will advocate for, and work to collectively bargain for, strengthened workplace protections for immigrant and international members
- We will ensure that our members receive support when they need to attend a required meeting or a proceeding before a government agency
- We will continue to build alliances in the community with others engaged in similar work to protect communities and the undocumented, and participate in protests in response to ICE raids or employer collaboration for the sake of union-busting;
- We will support the continuation of DACA and of just immigration reform that provides a path to citizenship and does not include the militarization of our borders or the building of border walls
- We will not share any personal information from our members that may be used against them
- We will mobilize support for Sanctuary Unions, Sanctuary Cities, Sanctuary States, and Sanctuary Campuses

Be it further resolved:

AFT-Wisconsin stands in solidarity with all communities under attack. We understand that the time for unity is now, and that standing united with all workers, particularly the most vulnerable among us, is key to beating back attacks on our unions, our educational institutions, our communities, and our lives in the years to come.

AFT-Wisconsin encourages locals to declare themselves sanctuary unions in solidarity with AFT-Wisconsin.

Submitted by Barret Elward, Co-President, United Faculty and Academic Staff



A Resolution on AB446/SB445 - 2025

Whereas AFT Wisconsin (AFT-W) and its members stand firmly against all forms of bigotry, including antisemitism; and

Whereas AB446/SB445 would require the non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) to be used to identify illegal discrimination and determine whether to apply harsher criminal penalties in the state of Wisconsin; and

Whereas hate crimes statutes already exist in Wisconsin state law; and

Whereas AB446/SB445 would clearly infringe on First Amendment rights, despite claiming otherwise in the language of the bill; and

Whereas similar laws in other states have been used to silence criticism of the ongoing genocide perpetrated by the state of Israel; and

Whereas criticism of the state of Israel is not definitionally antisemitic; and

Whereas anti-Zionism is not equal to antisemitism; and

Whereas this law is based on recommended policy from the anti-union American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), and

Whereas Kenneth Stern, who drafted the IHRA definition, has stated that the definition should be used for statistical purposes only and not to define criminal conduct.

Therefore, be it resolved that AFT-W will continue to champion free speech and academic freedom by opposing these bills; and

Be it further resolved that AFT-W will encourage the Governor to veto any related final bill should it come across his desk and contact Wisconsin state legislators informing them of our opposition to this bill and asking them to support a task force on all hate crimes in the state of WI; and



Be it further resolved that AFT-W will not endorse, support, or campaign for candidates who support or vote for AB446/SB445 or other laws restricting free speech and academic freedom; and

Be it finally resolved that AFT-W members will contact their representatives and peers and inform them of the dangers of this bill.

Submitted by Barret Elward, Co-President, United Faculty and Academic Staff, Local 223



A Resolution on the “AI Academy”

Whereas, AFT National has partnered with war-profiteering, labor-exploiting corporations to create an “AI Academy”, and

Whereas, generative AI is, by design, used to surveil and discipline workers and steal their intellectual and creative output, and

Whereas, AI is “trained” by exploited workers, largely in the English-speaking global South, and

Whereas, the creation and use of these generative AI models is extremely resource intensive and damaging to the environment and to the populations whose water and energy power data centers, and

Whereas, those resources could be better used to mitigate rather than augment the harms caused by the AI industry, and

Whereas, we should not attach AFT’s name and credibility to these corporations.

Therefore, be it resolved that AFT National should disband the AI Academy and disavow any partnerships with these corporations.

Submitted by Barret Elward, Co-President, United Faculty and Academic Staff, Local 223



Two additional resolutions were endorsed by the resolutions committee and will be sent to the Executive Board to take under advisement:

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A Resolution in Support of Fair Working Conditions for Wisconsin Public Defenders

Whereas, the work of our public defenders in Wisconsin represent an essential bedrock of our democracy, help to mitigate social inequality, and provide the fair representation anyone accused of a criminal charge deserves;

Whereas, public defenders' offices across the state have been underfunded for decades;

Whereas, public defenders work tirelessly, often with overwhelming caseloads, to represent their clients;

Whereas, the 2025-27 biennial budget failed to adequately fund the public defenders' offices, and in fact funded prosecutors' offices at a much higher level than that of public defenders;

Whereas, the University of Wisconsin Law School has decided to terminate the director of the Public Defender Project while not cutting the law school's Prosecution Project in any way;

Be it hereby resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin recognizes and asserts the essential importance of funding state public defenders' offices at levels adequate to ensure our members have a sustainable workload and their clients are fairly represented;

And be it further resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin will not support any candidates for legislative or executive office who does not support adequately funding our state's public defenders and pledging to fight for it in the 2027-29 annual budget;

And be it finally resolved, that AFT-Wisconsin and its members will fight for the funding our public defender members and their clients deserve.

Submitted by Clayton Cavanaugh, President, Wisconsin Public Defenders United, and Jon Shelton, President, AFT-Wisconsin.



AFT-WISCONSIN DECLARATION OF OFFICIAL SUPPORT OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS TOGETHER (F.A.S.T.) FUND PROGRAMS

WHEREAS costs for rent, childcare, gas, food and utilities continue to skyrocket throughout the country; and

WHEREAS nearly 3 out of 5 college students report experiencing basic needs insecurity; and

WHEREAS the cost of college today is uniformly underestimated by institutions, while incomes remain stagnant, income inequality persists, and social safety nets are strained; and

WHEREAS the pandemic has magnified the negative impact of the above on college students; and

WHEREAS most college run emergency aid programs deduct the value of the aid payment from the student's financial aid package; and

WHEREAS FAST Funds are faculty run emergency aid funds with proven results; and

WHEREAS FAST Funds have helped students succeed by providing emergency grants to help them pay for rent, utilities, books, tuition, technology, medical bills, car payments, food and gas so they can stay in school and graduate; and

WHEREAS establishing faculty-run emergency programs is one way of involving members and retirees in ongoing union activity,

BE IT RESOLVED that the AMERICAN FEDERATION of TEACHERS (AFT)-WISCONSIN fully supports the establishment of more FAST Funds at Technical and Higher Education institutions throughout the state and that the AFT-WISCONSIN will actively help facilitate the development and growth of these faculty-run emergency aid programs within its Technical College and Higher Education locals over the next biennium.

Submitted by: Lisa Conley, President and Bara Omari, Executive Board member & Local 212 FAST Fund volunteer, Milwaukee Area Technical College Federation (AFT Local

212); Jon Shelton, President AFT-Wisconsin; Mike Lussenden, President AFT-Wisconsin Retiree Chapter