

*The following resolution passed and submitted by the Green Mountain Labor Council in support of: Making a Living on a Living Planet will be debated at the Vermont AFL-CIO's upcoming convention. It has yet to be passed by the VT AFL-CIO. Please send your comments to vslcafcio@gmail.com .*

**WHEREAS**, in September 2014 the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO joined seventy-five local and national unions participating in the 400,000-strong Peoples Climate March under the banner "Climate Crisis + Economic Crisis" Two Crises...One Solution! – far more than for any other climate protection action in history; and

**WHEREAS**, now it is time for all those in the labor movement who are concerned about climate change to follow up by linking up; and

**WHEREAS**, climate change represents a serious threat to working people, the labor movement, and society at large. According to AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka, "Scientists tell us we are headed ever more swiftly toward irreversible climate change—with catastrophic consequences for human civilization. We must have a stable climate to feed the planet, to ensure there is drinking water for our cities but not floodwaters at our doors. A stable climate is the foundation of our global civilization, of our global economy"; and

**WHEREAS**, we know what must be done. We have to shift to a lower carbon economy and fast. Nearly three decades of climate denial have us at the precipice. The time for slow, careful, cautious approaches is long past. The window for taking action grows smaller with each passing year; and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize that working people will suffer disproportionately from the current patterns of investment and neglect that do not prioritize good jobs, clean air, and healthy communities; and

**WHEREAS**, guaranteeing a Just Transition for workers and communities is a matter of elementary justice. It is unfair that workers who through no fault of their own happen to work in jobs that need to be eliminated to achieve a social good should bear the burden of that change by losing their jobs. Climate protection measures must also protect the current and future livelihoods of workers they affect. A labor plan for climate protection should insist from the outset that part of any transition away from fossil fuels includes protection for the wellbeing of workers whose jobs may be threatened, including guaranteeing full wages and benefits for those displaced, either for the retooling period, or if no longer needed, until retrained and/or able to find comparable work; and

**WHEREAS**, deepening our conversations about health and safety, on and off the job by providing space for working people to discuss our problems and develop a vision for alternatives is crucial in developing a worker-led environmental justice movement; and

**WHEREAS**, we must help the environmental movement emphasize a jobs program of its own, so as not to leave the jobs piece up to labor. Our labor movement should become a part of the solution to climate crisis, playing a leading role in building the movement to fight for a just transition to an ecologically sustainable society rather than leaving climate protection up to the environmental movement; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the energy of the environmental and environmental justice movements, without the collective power of workers institutions, it will not be enough to to mitigate the effects of climate change and other ecological calamities leading to economic collapse that could well become irreversible; ; and

**WHEREAS**, in the words of AFL-CIO Executive Vice-President Tefere Gebre, "You don't get justice by waiting for someone to give it to you - you have to go get it!"

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO will join in organizing a Labor Convergence on Climate to help build a labor path to a sustainable future for the planet and its people, while providing for a Just Transition for all workers and communities impacted.