

Resolution in Support of Locked-Out BCTGM workers at American Crystal Sugar

September 19, 2012

Whereas: For over 50 years workers who are employed by American Crystal Sugar have been represented the Bakery Confectionary Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) in Iowa, Minnesota, and North Dakota; and

Whereas: On July 31, 2011, after having negotiated since May 2011, the 1,300 members of BCTGM firmly rejected the company's final offer which included significant increases to workers' health care costs, major changes to job security, including the right to outsource work, and the gutting of seniority rights; from this company who is the nation's largest sugar beet processor, with net revenues of \$1.2 billion for four straight years; and

Whereas: On August 1, 2011, workers arrived at work to find that American Crystal Sugar had locked them out of their jobs, and replaced these skilled workers with unskilled, cheap labor causing undue hardship on not only the workers but their families and the communities where they live; and

Whereas: This prolonged lockout is costing the Red River Valley in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa millions of dollars each month due to lost wages, growing demand for social services and severely curtailed spending by locked-out workers and their families; and

Whereas: The Company's CEO David Berg, has taken a hard line against any negotiations with the union, referring to the long standing collective bargaining agreement as a "cancerous tumor", replacing a profitable cooperative partnership among farmers, factory workers and managers with distrust, hard feelings, rising expenses and sinking profits; and

Whereas: The lockout is making no contribution whatsoever to the well-being of the people of the Red River Valley or of Iowa, Minnesota or North Dakota proving "an injury to one is an injury to all"; therefore be it

Resolved: The Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO stands in solidarity with the 1,300 members of the BCTGM and their families, honoring them for their courage and tenacity in resisting injustice and corporate greed and for their powerful commitment to dignity for workers. And be it further

Resolved: The Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO will encourage members and affiliates to **STAND AND BE COUNTED** by contributing to the MN AFL-CIO Lockout Action Fund. The fund will convert \$100 donations into things like a new school outfit of clothes, socks, under garments and shoes for a "locked out" kid, and possible food items like a grocery package of meat, potatoes, vegetables, and fruits for the family. Families with no children in school may receive a gas card, and the same possible types of groceries as families with kids in school. Funds may also be used to support the lockout in other ways. And be it further

Resolved: The Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO will distribute **STAND AND BE COUNTED** flyers and other printed materials to encourage contributions to Action and Relief Fund projects supporting BCTGM workers and their families. And be it finally

Resolved: The Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO will continue to ask affiliates and community partners to **STAND AND BE COUNTED** by sharing information about this project and others to support BCTGM members as they say, **"WE WILL NOT BE STARVED INTO SUBMISSION BY UNFAIR COMPANY DEMANDS!"**