

2020

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

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VERMONT STATE GRANGE

To be considered at VSG Annual Session

Oct. 17, 2020

AGRICULTURE/ENVIRONMENT

Resolution # 1 Community Food Security Plan and Food Security Act

Submitted by: Milton Grange #522

WHEREAS: with the recent pandemic, the effects of global warming, with millions of people living in refugee camps due to war and political strife (worldwide, there are more displaced people living in refugee camps since WWII), food production and processing has been drastically affected, and

WHEREAS: during the recent pandemic, some crops ready for harvesting were plowed under, dairy farmers have been asked to cut production, and some have dumped or are dumping milk, plus a lack of local or migrant workers and transportation, and

WHEREAS: laborers in food processing facilities have been infected by the virus, resulting in the closing of plants, affecting the availability of and the cost of food products, and this, along with a record number of people being unemployed caused by travel restrictions, and

WHEREAS: the lack of fair distribution of food, made worse by hoarding and price increases, has impacted those who are homeless, unemployed, or do not receive a livable wage, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that once the initial food needs have been met, National, State, or Provincial governments offer simple guidelines to encourage fair food distribution. The focus should be on local communities to form a Food Security Committee, with Grange members to play an active part, to study a community's present and future food security needs, in order to be more prepared for future food insecurity situations, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that this resolution be sent, if passed as is or amended, to the National Grange to be acted upon.

HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Resolution # 2 Strive for Social and Racial Justice, Equality, and Compassion in Human Relations

Submitted by: Blue Mountain Grange #263

WHEREAS: the Grange has a goal of community with peace, liberty and justice for all, and

WHEREAS: Grangers strive for hard honest work, justice, equality and compassion, and

WHEREAS: allowing injustice to go unchallenged violates our mission, and

WHEREAS: the systematic fair treatment of people/members of all races, results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all, and

WHEREAS: it is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate behavior, systems, and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that the National, State, and local Granges recognize that the fight for civil rights and equality is as real today as when it was founded in 1867, just two years after the 13th Amendment to abolish slavery was passed, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the National State, and local Granges urge their members to take initiative in collaboration with other local and national organizations to fight for social justice against the harsh racial practices to which people of color are exposed.

Resolution # 3 School Superintendent Position Consolidation

Submitted by: Marble Valley Grange #567

WHEREAS: Vermont's fifteen career and technical centers provide Vermont students valuable quality education and preparation for jobs in real-world fields, and

WHEREAS: Vermont's student population continues its decades-long decline, and

WHEREAS: fewer students in the public school system means increased costs-per-pupil due to loss of economies of scale, and

WHEREAS: the biggest value for tax money is in direct instruction of students by qualified and dedicated classroom teachers, and

WHEREAS: students receive comparatively lesser benefit and taxpayers comparatively lesser value from the multitude of mid- and district-level administrators, and

WHEREAS: elected officials of both parties have stated that Vermonters are taxed sufficiently already and continually advise voters that they seek efficiency in delivery of needed public programs, and

WHEREAS: superintendents of schools throughout the United States are responsible for far larger districts with far more students and far greater budgets than are Vermont's 55 superintendents of school supervisory unions, and

WHEREAS: superintendents of schools are among the very highest-paid of Vermont public employees, and

WHEREAS: significant savings of public funds could be realized by assigning only one superintendent for all schools within each of the 15 career and technical center areas, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Vermont State Grange advocate for consolidation of the present 55 school superintendent positions into 15 school superintendent positions based on the existing 15 technical centers' catchment areas, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the Vermont State Grange encourage further streamlining and consolidation of school district central office administrative and non-direct-instructional staff positions.

Resolution # 4 Use of the Word "Minority"

Submitted by: Heart of Vermont Pomona Grange #34

WHEREAS: we must come together, as we are all human beings, and the National Grange theme is "Cultivating Connections", and

WHEREAS: the news media continues to use the "minority" word to describe any group of people, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Vermont State Grange support the fact that the word "minority" not be used when referring to people.

LEGISLATIVE

Resolution # 5 Rural Broadband Services

Submitted by: Blue Mountain Grange #263

WHEREAS: many rural communities across our state have faced slow or no Broadband services, and

WHEREAS: the COVID-19 virus caused students to rely even more on internet connections for schooling this past year, and

WHEREAS: many citizens have been forced to work from home, and others have chosen home-based businesses reliant on broadband connections, and

WHEREAS: roughly 39 percent of rural Americans lack access to high-speed broadband, compared with just 4 percent of urban Americans, according to a report from the FCC using 2016 figures, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: Vermont State Grange supports the formation of communications union districts (CUD) under the provisions of 30 V.S.A., Chapter 82 with the purpose of bringing high-speed Internet service (broadband) to underserved rural regions of Vermont, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: this is one alternative that can bring a reliable and affordable, high speed internet option to rural areas with no direct cost to towns and allows for funding to plan and conduct initial network engineering for even larger grants or very low interest loans, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: the Congressional Delegation be given a copy of this resolution for the express purpose of understanding our plight and our needs for continued funding from the federal level through the Federal Communications Commission as well as USDA Rural Development.

Resolution # 6 In Support of Vermont Technical College

Submitted by: The Vermont State Grange Executive Committee

WHEREAS: since 1806, the school we know as Vermont Technical College has been providing education, first as Orange County Grammar School, then training school teachers beginning in 1850, and officially becoming a state normal school in 1866, and

WHEREAS: the Randolph Normal School was designated by the Vermont Legislature as the location of the Vermont College of Agriculture in 1910, with technical courses added in 1957 at which time the school was renamed Vermont Agriculture and Technical Institute, later becoming Vermont Technical College in 1962, and

WHEREAS: through these past two centuries, this institution has provided indispensable service to generations of Vermonters, particularly in the fields of agriculture, nursing, and technical trades, and

WHEREAS: there has been a proposal to close this critically important institution (as well as campuses at Johnson and Lyndon), therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that the Vermont State Grange urges the Governor, the Vermont Legislature, and the Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges to ensure continued support of Vermont Technical College so that it can continue to provide essential educational opportunities to the citizens of Vermont.

Resolution # 7 Support for the United State Postal Service

Submitted by: Kingdom Pomona Grange #35

WHEREAS: the USPS is the federal agency that is required to prefund decades' worth of health benefits for its future retirees, and

WHEREAS: since 2007, this unfair mandate is responsible for more than 90 percent of USPS's financial losses and 100 percent of losses over the past six years and

WHEREAS: House Bill 2382 had at least 301 co-sponsors when it went to the Senate for consideration, and

WHEREAS: there is now companion legislation in the senate (S.2965) that was introduced by Senator Steve Daines (R-MT), therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that Title 5 of the United States Code be amended to repeal the requirement that the United State Postal Service must prepay future retirement benefits, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the offices of Senator Patrick Leahy and Senator Bernie Sanders be mailed a copy of this resolution.

Resolution # 8 Signs

Submitted by: Bomoseen Valley Grange #273 and New Horizon Pomona #33

WHEREAS: election signs and yard sale signs are put out by clubs and individuals, and

WHEREAS: it is a burden on the towns to remove them, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that these signs must be picked up when the event is over by whomever put them out, and a copy of this resolution be sent to the State.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Resolution # 9 Early Repair of Potholes

Submitted by: Lake View Grange #359

WHEREAS: the Vermont highways are always riddled with potholes, and

WHEREAS: these open sores on our roadways damage our vehicles, and

WHEREAS: the repair bills are very costly, and a new vehicle costs a fortune, and the patching of the small holes on our roadways are then lifted by the snowplows, and

WHEREAS: the water from melting snow and rain cause the small potholes to become gargantuan, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED: that the State Government be a watchdog for early repair of the potholes by the town highways prior to May 15th, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the State Grange forward this on to the proper governmental body in Montpelier.