

TROY AREA LABOR COUNCIL



TROY AREA LABOR COUNCIL AFL-CIO RESOLUTION TO CALL FOR US-CUBA COLLABORATION TO SAVE LIVES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

WHEREAS: the US has the highest number of Covid-19 cases and deaths in the world: over 14 million confirmed cases, one-fourth of the world's cases, and over 300 thousand deaths; and

WHEREAS: US deaths from Covid-19 fall disproportionately on Black, Latino and Indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS: in New York State deaths from Covid-19 also fall disproportionately on communities of color, Blacks and Native Americans have three times the number of cases and hospitalizations than whites; and

WHEREAS: by nature a pandemic is global and Covid-19 cases has topped 65 million, and continues to grow; and

WHEREAS: now is the time to call for international cooperation and solidarity in the face of this pandemic to save lives; and

WHEREAS: Cuba has a record of saving 80% of their patients in critical and serious condition and where worldwide, some 80% of Covid-19 patients in critical condition are dying; and

WHEREAS: Cuba has 1.2 deaths/100,000 and the US has over 83.6 deaths/100,000 people, and

WHEREAS: Cuba has a long history of providing international medical aid and healthcare to the peoples of the world, especially in developing countries, under the banner of healthcare is a human right; and

WHEREAS: Cuba's Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade was decisive in the fight against the Ebola epidemic in West Africa and has stepped forward in many epidemics around the world, including dengue fever, HIV/AIDS, swine flu and hepatitis; and

WHEREAS: since the outbreak of Covid-19, Cuba has sent 37 medical brigades equipped with Cuban pharmaceuticals to 30 countries with requests of similar assistance from more countries; and

WHEREAS: Cuba offers treatment regimens for patients and prevention protocols for health workers including clinical trials of Interferon Alpha 2B Recombinant, now in standard use in China and Cuba and more than 42 countries have expressed an interest in acquiring this pharmaceutical to include in its treatment in some of the worst cases of Covid-19; and

WHEREAS: Interferon Alpha 2B Recombinant is not available in the US because of the 60-year-old US blockade against Cuba;

and WHEREAS: the US blockade has severely restricted collaboration on scientific and medical research that interferes with the potential of saving lives in the face of this pandemic; and

WHEREAS: there has been a precedence of medical collaboration between Cuba's Center for Molecular Immunology and Buffalo's Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in developing CIMAvax, the Cuban lung cancer vaccine, and the collaboration between Cuba and the University of Illinois on infant mortality in Chicago;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Troy Area Labor Council AFL-CIO calls on the Congress of the United States and the President to lift restrictions on access to Cuban medical expertise, including medical experts and workers and the importation of Interferon Alpha 2B Recombinant for clinical trials, in order to more effectively combat the Covid-19 pandemic and to save lives. Furthermore, we call on our federal government to cease its attempts to stop other countries from accepting Cuban medical brigades and assistance and to stop ongoing US measures that prevent Cuba from accessing and importing medical equipment and medicines to confront Covid-19.

Adopted unanimously at the December 16, 2020 meeting.