

## AFL-CIO COUNCIL OF WASHINGTON STATE RESOLVES TO DEMAND AN END OF THE BLOCKADE OF CUBA

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At its [July 18-20 Convention](#), the Washington State Labor Council of the AFL-CIO passed a strongly worded resolution calling for an end to the U.S. economic blockade and travel restrictions on Cuba.

Here is the [full text](#) of the resolution, one of many such progressive resolutions passed at this important convention.

### RESOLUTION TO END THE U.S. BLOCKADE OF CUBA Resolution #27

WHEREAS, the U.S. blockade of Cuba has had devastating impacts on Cuba's workers, union members, and citizens, restricts U.S. citizens' freedom to travel to Cuba, and, if lifted, would create jobs for U.S. workers; and

WHEREAS, a number of labor and community leaders from Washington State have traveled to Cuba on study tours and have learned valuable lessons regarding universal health care and providing for those most in need; and

WHEREAS, following the Obama administration's partial moves to normalize U.S.-Cuban relations, now the Trump administration has expressed its intention to reverse this trend and tighten the blockade of Cuba once again; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO goes on record supporting an end to the travel restrictions and the trade and financial embargo against Cuba, and oppose efforts by the Trump administration to tighten the blockade; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO shall send this resolution to its affiliates, area Labor Councils, and to the AFL-CIO, urging the AFL-CIO to pass a similar resolution at their 2017 convention.

This is remarkable news in many ways.

First if all, it appears to have been the first instance of a state AFL-CIO passing a resolution calling for an end to the blockade and travel restrictions. Individual labor union leaders and smaller labor bodies have done so before, as have a large number of unions and union federations in other countries, but this is a U.S. first at this level of labor organization.

Secondly, the wording is very straightforward and uncompromising—no weasel words here!

The resolution uses the word "blockade" instead of embargo. The Cubans use the word "blockade" because for the past half century and then some, the U.S. government has not only prohibited its own corporations and citizens from trading with Cuba, but has also tried to block other countries to do so, even resorting to threats and sanctions against close U.S. allies and trading partners in the process. It also calls out Trump for threatening to reverse the modest advances in U.S. Cuba relations achieved during the Obama administration. Most importantly of all, it calls on other state labor councils and the national AFL-CIO to get on board the effort to end the U.S. blockade and travel restrictions, specifically mentioning the [upcoming AFL-CIO convention](#) to be held in St. Louis, Missouri, October 22 to 25.

Our sisters and brothers in Washington State have staked out a courageous position on Cuba; it now behooves all to do whatever we can to bring all of U.S. labor, including the national AFL-CIO on board!