2025 United Steelworkers Constitutional Convention

RESOLUTIONS

STEELWORKERS ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVE RETIREES (SOAR)

Resolution No. 8

WHEREAS, maintaining close ties with retired USW members, their spouses and their families is an essential part of making our union stronger; and

WHEREAS, the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), an affiliate organization for retired members and like-minded activists, established in 1985, offers its members a unique opportunity to advocate for their shared social, economic, educational, legislative and political priorities; and

WHEREAS, SOAR has established itself as an integral part of the USW; and

WHEREAS, SOAR has celebrated 40 years of activism, its power comes from the size and diversity of its membership, making the need to increase SOAR membership fundamental to its success; and

WHEREAS, SOAR's current President William Pienta, a former district director, has brought his energy and commitment to social justice to the organization; his vision and leadership guides SOAR and helped spur its recent growth; and

WHEREAS, SOAR remains an important source of support for retirees, assisting them in matters relating to pension benefits, health insurance questions and numerous quality-of-life issues; and

WHEREAS, SOAR encourages negotiating committees to consider the needs of retirees and surviving spouses at the bargaining table; and

WHEREAS, collective action is the only way to affect meaningful change, and SOAR members recognize the need for solidarity: marching with their USW brothers, sisters and siblings on picket lines, providing assistance to USW families burdened by work stoppages, participating in rallies, filling buses, and joining USW members in legislative and political battles; and

WHEREAS, SOAR activists in both the United States and Canada working with numerous outside political, labor, civil and human rights organizations, and internally with the USW's Rapid Response Network, continue to leave their mark on political and legislative issues that affect both retirees and working families. Their work is crucial in fighting to strengthen pension protections, protecting healthcare rights, combatting devastating cuts to the social safety net – including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security – and drawing attention to voter suppression laws that would disproportionately disenfranchise young people, minorities and retirees.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. We will offer our full and unwavering support to all SOAR members. Maintaining links between working members and retirees makes both the USW and SOAR greater organizations. We will notify our members who are aged 45 and older that SOAR membership is open to them, their families, and others who share our interests.

2. We will continue to honor the memory of former USWA International President Lynn R. Williams and remain grateful for his vision and dynamic leadership that led to the creation of SOAR.

3. We will assist SOAR in its goal of expanding its membership. We will encourage local unions to support SOAR by providing first-year membership in SOAR to all retirees and making it a priority to negotiate the check-off of SOAR membership dues.

4. We will seek more ways to involve SOAR membership in organizing, corporate campaigns, legislative battles and other issues impacting our union.

5. We pledge to recognize the commonality of interest between active members and retirees, considering the needs of retired USW members in all our bargaining, social and political efforts. We will work together to combat threats to healthcare, retirement security and other necessary programs that affect active and retired members.

6. We will encourage SOAR to continue its political work, backing candidates at all levels of government who support the rights and interests of working people and retirees, and engaging with issues that impact USW members and retired USW members alike.

As passed at the USW Constitutional Convention held in Las Vegas, NV, April 10th, 2025.