

**VT AFL-CIO 2021 Convention**  
**Submitted By The Executive Board**  
**Resolution #2**

**THE VERMONT AFL-CIO SUPPORTS THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE**

- *The Vermont AFL-CIO Is Anti-Fascist!*
- *The Vermont AFL-CIO Opposes Gun Control!*

**Whereas** fascism is on the rise in the United States;

**Whereas** fascists, white supremacists, and individual extremists are already armed, and no new State or Federal gun control law is likely to reverse this fact;

**Whereas** armed fascists organizations, white supremacists, and individual extremists are responsible for numerous acts of violence committed against persons in various communities, labor allies, and individuals across this nation;

**Whereas** BIPOC, immigrant, working class, and low income communities are most at risk of attacks by fascists, white supremacists, and individual extremists;

**Whereas** armed fascist organizations, white supremacists, and individual extremists stormed the U.S. Capital on January 6, 2021;

**Whereas** the U.S. faced the real threat of a neo-fascist coup in 2020-2021;

**Whereas** this threat has not sufficiently subsided;

**Whereas** the events of 2020-2021 have shown democracy in the U.S. to be more precarious than at any other recent time in our modern history;

**Whereas** Unions and the working class must be able and ready to defend democracy, their communities, labor organizations, allies, and regular people in the event of attacks by fascists, white supremacists, and individual extremists;

**Whereas** Organized Labor must not rely on the armed wing of the Government to defend democracy, our communities, labor organizations, allies, and regular people in the event of a crisis or attack by fascists, white supremacists, or individual extremists;

**Whereas** the Vermont AFL-CIO looks to our long history, including but not limited to the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Paris Commune, Irish War of

Independence, the Battle of Blair Mountain, the Spanish Civil War, the anti-colonial struggle of the Vietnamese in Southeast Asia, the formation of the Black Panther Party, Nelson Mandela's and the ANC's resistance to the Apartheid State of South Africa, the Zapatista Uprising in Mexico, and events as they are unfolding today in Rojava as clear indication that Unions, working people, and communities are wise to retain and/or build the means to defend themselves;

**Whereas** Vermont was birthed through the militant actions of the Green Mountain Boys;

**Whereas** Organized Labor must and shall overcome and defeat fascist threats, and in fact struggle to achieve a more direct participatory democracy and more equitable economy;

**Whereas** Vermont has some of the lowest rates of anti-social violent crime in the nation, including crimes committed with firearms;

**Whereas** Vermont, despite having a high gun ownership rate and minimal gun control laws, has averaged less than a total of 11 murders a year (not all with firearms) over the last decade;

**Whereas** the Vermont Constitution states that “the people have a right to bear arms for the defense of themselves and the State – and as standing armies in time of peace are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up; and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to and governed by the civil power.”

**Let It Therefore Be Resolved** that the Vermont AFL-CIO, being anti-fascist, recognize a people's right to self-defense;

**Let It Further Be Resolved** that the Vermont AFL-CIO directs our elected Union leadership to defend our collective right to own firearms.

**Let It Further Be Resolved** that this Vermont AFL-CIO policy shall be communicated to the Government in Montpelier and to our Congressional Delegation in Washington DC;

**And Finally**, recognizing that this resolution, while reflecting that majority will of the 11,000 members of the Vermont AFL-CIO, as expressed by a democratic vote of our duly seated delegates at our 2021 Convention, may not be held in common with all affiliated Locals. We therefore recognize our affiliated locals autonomy to publically express views different from those contained in this resolution as long as those views remain anti-fascist in nature, and as long as the affiliate clearly indicates that any such counter views are those of the Local alone, and not that of the Vermont AFL-CIO as such.

###