

## **Democratic Socialists of America**

The National Political Committee of DSA, as instructed by the November 2005 convention, reasserts its belief that shortening the work-week is a valid goal and a policy worth advocating that will decrease unemployment while addressing the problem of alienated labor. We affirm the following perspective adopted by the NPC on June 12, 2005:

### **WORK TIME REDUCTION RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, prolonged periods of economic growth in the advanced capitalist countries have not resulted in sustained full employment, and;

WHEREAS, a tripling of worker productivity in the past half century has led neither to the elimination of poverty nor to the widespread enjoyment of functional leisure, and;

WHEREAS, the United States, in particular, suffers from a cruel mal-distribution of work time, where millions of white- and blue-collar workers work long hours while millions of others are condemned to unemployment and underemployment, without adequate unemployment compensation or a social safety net; and

WHEREAS, overwork remains a serious health and safety issue for many workers, exacerbating problems of heart disease, stress, work-related injuries, illnesses and disorders, and sleep deprivation, and;

WHEREAS, overwork is a major contributing factor of family breakdown, child neglect, lack of community and democratic participation and volunteerism, and;

WHEREAS mandatory overtime is a form of “involuntary servitude,” and;

WHEREAS, long hours of work place the heaviest burdens on working women, especially single mothers, who are also responsible for organizing family life and child rearing, and;

WHEREAS, employers seeking to avoid the added costs that accompany offering essential benefits to workers have resorted to replacing full-time employment with jobs that are less-than-full-time. and;

WHEREAS, the legal workweek has remained constant for some seven decades, in spite of massive increases in worker productivity, and;

WHEREAS, the historic mission of the socialist movement is the emancipation of the working class from alienated labor, and;

WHEREAS, Karl Marx identified shorter work time as a prerequisite for humanity if it was to progress from “the realm of necessity” to “the realm of freedom,” and;

WHEREAS, reducing the hours of work while making wages adequate to raise a family is among the oldest and most enduring socialist and labor issues, especially in the United States, where the 8 hour day was a centerpiece of socialists’ and labor agitation; and;

WHEREAS, shorter work time remains a priority for many member parties of the Socialist International, therefore;

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA**

REAFFIRMS its commitment to work time reduction and the establishment of a shorter work week as the legal standard for full time employment in the United States, and;

REAFFIRMS its belief that shorter work time is an important part of a full employment, antipoverty policy for the United States, and;

REAFFIRMS, pursuant to this belief, the establishment of every worker’s right to meaningful employment compensated by a living-wage income, and;

ADVOCATES that the legal establishment of this shortened workweek come at no loss of

current nominal income to any worker, and that incomes currently below a living standard be raised to meet such standard, within the context of this shorter workweek, and;

ADVOCATES legal mandate that overtime pay rates commence after the final hour of this shorter workweek, and;

ADVOCATES the legal prohibition of mandatory overtime, and the statutory declaration that mandatory overtime is “involuntary servitude,” and;

ENCOURAGES DSA locals and organizing committees to participate in work time reduction campaigns and efforts to expand public awareness of this issue, and;

ENCOURAGES all DSA commissions to examine the benefits and implications that the shorter work time issue might have regarding their core issues and missions.