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## Resolution Protesting Repression against Puerto Rican Teachers and Supporting the Strike

WHEREAS, the Federacion de Maestros de Puerto Rico (FMPR – Teachers' Federation of Puerto Rico), which with a membership of 42,000 represents the vast majority of teachers on the island, has faced more than two years of inconclusive contract negotiations with the Department of Education of Puerto Rico, including a lock-out of teachers and students throughout the island for two weeks in May 2006; and

WHEREAS, in September 2007 the FMPR voted to authorize a strike demanding a substantial raise in their salaries, teachers' participation in curriculum decisions and class size limits of 15 students; and

WHEREAS, on January 8 the Public Sector Labor Relations Commission of Puerto Rico decertified the union, alleging that the vote to authorize a strike violated anti-union Law 45, which outlaws strikes by public employees, even though the Constitution of Puerto Rico guarantees the right to strike; and

WHEREAS, the government of Puerto Rico has declared its intention to replace hundreds of public schools with charter schools, which would not be covered by a union contract; and

WHEREAS, the issues in Puerto Rico, such as privatization, the de-funding of public education, the use of anti-labor legislation similar to the Taylor Law and protracted contract negotiations are also critical for the San Francisco Labor Council, teachers and all trade unionists; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Labor Council defends the right of public employees to strike and has acted in solidarity with teachers at the forefront of struggles for labor rights and quality education in Oaxaca, New Orleans and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, unions of electrical workers, health workers, communications workers, university faculty and staff and others in Puerto Rico have joined in supporting the struggle of the FMPR; and

WHEREAS, preceding the strike, eight teachers were arrested and manhandled by police at the Luis Munoz Rivera High School in Utuado, where 17 teachers were fired last October for objecting to a unilateral change in the curriculum, and police are now visiting schools throughout the island questioning and seeking to intimidate union delegates,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the San Francisco Labor Council condemns this campaign against labor rights and the integrity of public education and gives its full support to the teachers in the FMPR and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that SF/LCLAA, an affiliate constituency group of the San Francisco Labor Council, organize an educational forum in support of the teachers in Puerto Rico and organize a solidarity protest at an early date outside the offices of the government of Puerto Rico in San Francisco and/or any location deemed appropriate.

Submitted by Frank Martin del Campo, LCLAA, and adopted by the San Francisco Labor Council on March 10, 2008.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Paulson", with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Tim Paulson  
Executive Director

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