

21

Expanding training and employment opportunities for older workers

- 1 WHEREAS those reaching 65 in 1990 can expect to live an additional 15 years for men and almost 19 years for women;
- 2 WHEREAS today's work force has approximately 12 million workers between the ages of 55-64 and more than 80 percent of those born in 1965 will reach the age of 65 in 2030, representing a significant resource to American productivity;
- 3 WHEREAS women are paid 70 cents for every dollar in wages earned by men;
- 4 WHEREAS technological changes continue to occur at an increasing pace in the work place and society in general;
- 5 WHEREAS unemployed older workers remain out of work longer than their younger counterparts; and 6 WHEREAS affirmative action is mandated by laws to effect equal opportunity for women and minorities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the 1995 White House Conference on Aging to support policies that:

- 7 Expand employment opportunities under a national full-employment policy based on real-income gains;
- 8 Raise the Federal minimum wage to recover its decade-long loss in purchasing power;
- 9 Preserve and expand funding for Title V of the Older Americans Act (OAA) which provides community service employment opportunities for low-income older persons;
- 10 Provide financial incentives to industry and tax credits to individuals that reward the upgrading of worker skills and abilities;
- 11 Ensure that employers and advocacy and labor organizations support workers in life-long skill development and training for tomorrow's work force;
- 12 Recommend that labor and industry work together to develop flexible approaches to work which provide incentives to older workers to remain in the labor force;
- 13 Urge post-secondary educational institutions to preserve and expand programs that provide older workers and midlife women returning to the labor force opportunities to continue their education, training, and skill development;

- 14 Encourage the development of older-adult work skills and values that will enable them to serve as mentors for all generations;
- 15 Ensure that older individuals are served by local, State, and Federal employment and training programs at least in proportion to their numbers in the populations;
- 16 Create and maintain a national or statewide job hot line to refer older workers to the local job-finding agency in their area to assist them in their job search;
- 17 Retain and strengthen the set-aside for older workers in employment and training program(s) that focus on placing workers in the private sector, and allow flexibility to include competitive bidding to permit groups such as area agencies on aging to implement employment and training-funded projects for older workers;
- 18 Age-based discriminatory hiring, training, upgrading, job assignment, early out, and firing practices must be rooted out through vigorous enforcement of protective status;
- 19 Develop incentives for employers to hire more older Americans, in view of the fact that over 5 million Americans 55 years or older are capable and willing to work but are unable to find suitable jobs.

