RESOLUTION 2020-03

Adjustment in Business Enterprise Staffing and Operation

WHEREAS, Ohio’s Business Enterprise Program provides business opportunities for approximately ninety blind licensees in this state; and

WHEREAS, this program is funded by the service charge paid by these blind licensees through their business profits and the federal match money that these funds draw down; and

WHEREAS, the covid 19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on these small businesses, greatly reducing the amount of profits and service charge collected and drastically reducing the budget for the operation of the program; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired is the State Licensing Agency for this program, and the funds collected are used in part to pay the staff that work for this agency to manage the program; and

WHEREAS, these funds are also needed to provide daily operation of the program to keep the businesses running, and, if these funds are used to pay the staff, not enough money will be left to meet the needs of the program’s businesses such as maintenance and repair of equipment and growth of the program; and

WHEREAS, the intent of this program is to provide employment opportunities for blind businesspeople, not primarily to cover the payroll of mostly sighted state employees; and

WHEREAS, the number of employees has remained unchanged over the years even though the number of Business Enterprise facilities has decreased, thus creating an oppressive burden on the program to pay superfluous staff: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio in Convention assembled this 7th day of November, 2020, that this organization urge the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired to work with the Ohio Vendors Representative Committee to reduce the number of staff working for this agency as a part of the Business Enterprise Program through attrition and other means, thus reducing the burden of staff payroll on the program, allowing for more funds to be available for the current and future needs of the blind businesspeople to run their businesses more effectively and to expand the program to provide more opportunity for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization demand that the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired also work conscientiously with the Ohio Vendors Representative Committee to ensure that all funds collected be used efficiently and effectively to assist the blind licensees and to strengthen the program during this pandemic.