

# UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA

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To All UWUA Members:

On June 27, 2018, the Supreme Court handed down a 5-4 decision in *Janus v. AFSCME, Council 31* that profoundly affects the future of workers' rights, democratic decision making in the workplace, and the preservation of good, middle-class jobs in public employment. Overturning 40 years of precedent, the Court elevated the objections of a minority over the democratically determined choices of the majority of workers and prohibited state and local government workers from negotiating collective bargaining agreements with fair share fee arrangements. In other words, this decision bars Unions from requiring public sector workers who benefit from Union representation to pay their fair share of that representation.

The *Janus* decision will directly affect thousands of UWUA-represented public sector workers. It will have profound implications for not just the [6.8 million state and local government workers covered by a union contract](#), but all workers, union and non-union, public sector and private sector.

The *Janus* decision is the result of litigation financed by a small group of foundations with ties to the largest and most powerful corporate lobbies. These billionaire-backed organizations finally got their decision, succeeding in advancing an agenda that weakens the bargaining power of workers. The likely result will be a reduction in state and local government workers' wages and job quality as well as in the critical public services they provide.

You may read claims that the *Janus* case is about the First Amendment or "liberty" or "freedom." This false rhetoric is meant to obscure the truth. *Janus* is about one thing—workers having less power on the job and the public affairs that directly affect our families, our communities and our future. The corporate interests and billionaires that funded this litigation could not care less about a water authority worker's purported freedom. What those special interests want is to silence our voice. These interests think that Union workers make too much money, have too many benefits and are too safe on the job. Their mission is to cut your pay, reduce your benefits and make your workplace less safe.

The *Janus* case is a blatantly political and well-funded plot to use the highest court in the land to further rig the economic rules against everyday working people. The five-member majority in the *Janus* case were all appointed by Republican presidents. These right-wing Justices consistently rule against workers, Unions and the middle-class. The Republican-appointed Justices serve the interests of big business and the right-wing

billionaires that are bent on destroying workers' rights in an effort reduce our members' hard fought standard of living. The *Janus* decision is a disgrace and a setback, but it is not the end of the story.

The UWUA and our brothers and sisters throughout the Labor Movement are effectively fighting back to win better contracts, organize new workers and elect worker friendly officeholders. The fate of UWUA and our members will not be decided by five corporate lackeys on the Supreme Court. It will be decided by our solidarity and power. No small group of men in black robes in Washington D. C. can take that away from us. Together we Fight!

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Mike Langford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent loop at the end of the last name.

D. Michael Langford  
UWUA National President