



Protect Workers' Rights: Repeal Right to Work

WHEREAS, So-called “right-to-work” (RTW) policies are deceptively presented as free-speech bills, but actually restrict the speech and economic advancement of workers and their families. Right-to-work laws foster disunity by encouraging workers to freeload on their union sisters and brothers. Today, 27 states have RTW laws on the books; and

WHEREAS, As RTW has spread across the country over the past three decades, income inequality has risen to historic levels. Declining unionization accounted for at least a third of the increase in income inequality since the 1980s. The weakening of collective bargaining has reduced wages, maintained the gender gap in wages and benefits, provided less access to pensions and has stagnated the economy for working people; and

WHEREAS, Anti-union organizations and the politicians they fund spend large sums of capital attempting to bring “right-to-work” laws into state, municipal and county jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, RTW states have a workplace death rate which is 51 percent higher than fair share states. Wages in states with right-to-work laws are, on average, \$3.27 per hour lower than non-“right-to-work” states; and

WHEREAS, The UWUA condemns the U.S. Supreme Courts’ *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31* decision. The loss of unions’ ability to collect fair share fees is designed to deliver a crippling blow to the labor movement and to public sector unions in particular; and

WHEREAS, President Trump has indicated he would sign a national “right-to-work” law if passed by Congress and has appointed individuals who want to restrict or eliminate public sector collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS, Corporate attacks are being met with a call to mobilize and fight back, including efforts by UWUA and affiliates to actively engage our unions’ members in order to not just survive but to thrive in RTW states and in the post-Janus era; and

WHEREAS, Anti-union assaults can be defeated through democracy. Last summer, Missouri’s RTW law was repealed through coordinated member and voter mobilization. Not only did opponents crush the law by a margin of more than two to one, the total vote on the issue — nearly 1.4 million — exceeded by more than a 100,000 the number of statewide ballots cast on behalf of all candidates in both party primaries that same day.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The UWUA will work to raise standards for our members and all workers by supporting changes to public policy that provide for the protection and expansion of worker rights. The repeal and prevention of “right-to-work” is a top priority for our union. The National UWUA and affiliates will continue to mobilize our members to participate in legislative and referendum campaigns to defeat and repeal RTW; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Our Union vigorously opposes the spread of RTW and will work to defeat any politician who endorses such legislation. Likewise, we will oppose judicial nominees who advocate undermining workers’ rights on the national, state and local levels; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, Engaging workers early and often is an effective method of inoculating workers against misleading RTW propaganda while also strengthening our unions. The National UWUA and our local unions commit to engaging in direct conversations with our membership on the importance of union participation, recognizing that it is our best tool to defeat RTW.