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Vol. XLII, No. 2 **MAR-APR 2017**  **Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO** 

The Right to Work

By U.S. Representative Donald Norcross (D-NJ)

joined the IBEW as an electrician's apprentice in 1979, and spent the following decades wiring buildings, lighting bridges, and fighting for the rights of my fellow workers. I felt the dignity of working with my hands, and I saw the benefits of union membership. Hard work provided me with the pay and benefits to support a growing family and the opportunity to help others do the same.

We're not just

fighting for the

right to work –

America's unions

are fighting

for the right to

respect.



U.S. Representative Donald Norcross (D-NJ)

As a business agent. I fought for fair contracts, safe workplaces and higher wages. As the president of the Southern New Jersey AFL-CIO Labor Council for seventeen years, I forged relationships with businesses and governments to cre-

ate jobs and put my union brothers and sisters to work. And now, as the only electrician in Congress, I'm fighting to defend Davis-Bacon, create jobs, and defeat a national "right-to-work" law.

As Americans, we are guaranteed the right to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness — and we already have the right to work. When corporate bil-

lionaires push "right to work," what they're really saying is that the right to work is all we have, regardless of the pay or the conditions. They're saying we have the right to work for less, in less safe conditions, with less secure retirements. They're saying we're on our own - and they're wrong.

So-called "right-to-work" states rank among those with the lowest union mem-

bership, and as this egregious law spreads across the country, union membership nationally steadily declines. Workers in right-to-work states make an average of about \$1,500 less a year, they pay more for health insurance coverage, and they have less secure retire-

ment benefits.

The consequences of this corporate union busting have been devastating for all workers. Despite these clear facts. 28 states have passed phony "rightto-work" laws to limit unionizing — including two new states just this vear.

They're selling a fake bill of goods to working-

class Americans who have real frustrations and fears. Unfair trade agreements and greedy corporate boards have outsourced their jobs and slashed their wages to the point they're desperate for change at any cost – even giving up their rights.

With more than half the country having passed these anti-worker laws, union **CONTINUED ON PAGE 6** 



See our special Do Buy list on page 2, for non-perishable, union-made products to support the NALC and its partners in their 25th Annual Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive.

Stamp Out Hunger<sup>®</sup> Food Drive, to be held this year on Saturday, May 13

# Union-Made Non Perishable Foods to Support "Stamp Out Hunger"

Millions of Americans live from one day to the next uncertain where their next meal will come from—a sad statistic that helps to reinforce the importance of the annual national Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive, to be held this year on Saturday, May 13.

Last year, letter carriers collected more than 80 million pounds of food, well above the previous record of 77 million pounds.

Signing on as national food drive partners this year are the U.S. Postal Service, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), United Way Worldwide, AFL-CIO, AARP Foundation, Valpak and Valassis.

# **FILL THE BAG**

- **NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS**
- Campbell's soups
- Marie Callender's Soups
- College Inn Soups
- Healthy Choice Soups
- > V-8

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- > Gatorade
- Arizona iced tea
- Chef Boyardee–brand products
- ≻ Tuna Helper
- Chicken Helper
- Hamburger Helper
- Suddenly Salad
- Betty Crocker Specialty Potatoes
- ➤ Heinz ketchup
- Roberts Shamrock-brand corned meats
- Kraft Mac and Cheese
- Kraft Velveeta
  - 25th Anniversary NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

OF LETTER CARRIERS



- > Hunt's tomatoes
- ≻ Hunt's pizza sau<mark>ce</mark>
- ≻ Jell-0
- Peter Pan peanut butter
- > Welch's Jams/Jellies
- > Lucky Leaf applesauce
- Musselman applesauce
- Hanover beans (pork and baked)
- Honest John canned foods
- Del Monte Canned Vegetables
- > Betty Crocker Pancake Mix
- > Bisquick
- > Classico Pasta Sauces
- > Prego Italian Sauces
- > New World Pasta
- San Giorgio Pasta

#### CEREAL

- Cheerios/ Frosted Cheerios/ Honey Nut
- > Lucky Charms
- ➤ Golden Grahams
- ≻ Kix
- Cinnamon Toast Crunch
- Betty Crocker Cake Mixes
- Betty Crocker Muffin Mixes
- Betty Crocker Variety Bars



# RECEIPT

Date: March-April 2017 Store: Your Union Grocery

# Fill the Bag with Union-Made Product to Stamp Out Hunger

Thank You for Buying Union!

# CRACKERS AND COOKIES

- Town House Crackers
- Cheez-It
- Keebler Graham Crackers
  - Club Crackers
- > Zesta Crackers
- Chips Deluxe
- Pecan Sandies
- Soft Batch
- Rainbow Chips Deluxe
- Barnum Animal Crackers

Editors note: As with all Do-Buy lists, this is only a small sampling of available unionmade products. Some products may be made non-union, check the packaging for details.

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# WALK IN MY SHOES Kelsea Husley, Wife of LiUNA Local 110 Member

Right-to-work is wrong for Missouri. My name is Kelsea Husley, and I know first-hand what it is like living and working in a right-to-work state.

In 2013, just before we got married, my husband Nicholas was laid off from his job at an aircraft manufacturing and repair facility where he worked as a painter. He was a member of the Teamsters Local 600 at the time. About a month later, he found a job in Indiana—a right-to-work state. In Indiana, we experienced what right-towork is, and it is sickening. Nicholas was working long hours and he was making about half of what he makes now in Missouri.



Luckily, after about a year, Nicholas found a new job in Missouri, and became a member of SMART Local 1823. After another layoff and more searching, Nicholas found a new job and is now a member of LIUNA Local 110. His new job has good wages, insurance and benefits.

But how long would that last if Missouri became a right-to-work state? I really didn't want to find out. But on November 8, 2016, when they announced that Eric Greitens had won the Gubernatorial election, I knew it wouldn't take long for the Republicans to pass right-to-work legislation.

I was terrified. All Nicholas and I wanted was to live the American dream. And with one swipe of a pen, Greitens could take that all away from us. I felt like I had to do something. So, I started trying to educate everyone I could about the law, and what it would do to working families.

I started a Facebook page, 'Missouri Wives and Families Against Right-to-Work' (https://www.facebook.com/stoprtwinmo/) which has quickly grown to more than 1,750 followers.

Of course, the legislation was introduced and passed. Governor Greitens signed it into to law in early February. But, we haven't given up yet. The Missouri AFL-ClO and the NAACP filed a petition for a referendum. They will need to gather signatures by August to get the referendum on the ballot. If they succeed, the voters will get to have a say in November 2018, so I plan on continuing to grow my Facebook page to educate as many people as possible about right-to-work, and I will volunteer to help get signatures and register voters. Right-to-work is wrong for my family, it is wrong for your family and it is wrong for Missouri.

#### **WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**

In 150 words or less—accompanied by a picture of you at work...Help us walk in your shoes. We're open to all union members, active, retired, laid off.

"We want rank and file members to help us to illustrate the rich, diverse tapestry of hard working men and women who make up the American labor movement. They are proud of their work and proud of the contributions they make to their communities," explains Union Label Department President Richard Kline. "We want to demonstrate to American consumers and businesses that union labor gives added value in quality and reliability to products and services that are bought and sold."

The pictures and stories we get will be published in the Label Letter and posted on the Department's website—and perhaps in posters and other promotional materials. E-mail a Walk in Your Shoes to: unionlabel@unionlabel.org; or send by regular mail to:

#### Walk In My Shoes

c/o Union Label & Service Trades Dept. (AFL-CIO) 815 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005 ■

# Spotlight the Label

UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE AND AGRI-CULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA



The United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) is one of the largest and most diverse unions in North America, with members in virtually every sector of the economy.

UAW-represented workplaces range from multinational corporations, small manufacturers and state and local governments to colleges and universities, hospitals and private non-profit organizations.

The UAW has more than 400,000 active members and more than 580,000 retired members in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

There are more than 600 local unions in the UAW. The UAW currently has 1,150 contracts with some 1,600 employers in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

A unique strength of the UAW is the solidarity between its active and retired members. A solid majority of the union's retirees stay actively involved in the life of their union, participating in retiree chapters and playing a vital role in the UAW's community action program.

Since its founding in 1935, the UAW has consistently developed innovative partnerships with employers and negotiated industryleading wages and benefits for its members.

# **Put a Union Label On It!**

Labor Leader Re-elected DNC Vice-Chair



Maria Elena Durazo

"Now, more than ever, we need Maria Elena's leadership in the DNC leadership." — Richard Trumka, President AFL-CIO

Maria Elena Durazo, general vice president for Immigration, Civil Rights and Diversity with UNITE HERE, was re-elected to serve as vice chair on the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in late February. Durazo has served as vice chair since 2013.

In a statement endorsing Durazo's candidacy, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said, "Maria Elena has spent her life organizing workers and building the labor movement from the ground up. Now, more than ever, we need Maria Elena's leadership in the DNC leadership. Throughout her life, she has been instrumental in organizing workers to raise wages and win union representation. Through grassroots campaigns she helped to change the political landscape of California from red to blue."

In a statement after her election, Durazo said, "I am humbled and honored to have been elected for a second term as Vice-Chair by the members of the DNC. This election sends a powerful message that the Democratic Party will move ahead as a real champion for working people everywhere. Now, it's time to come together and get to work!"



# Union-Made, Union-Owned Carwash

This story was adapted from a story originally published by the LA County Fed

In late February, 17 carwash workers opened the first union worker-owned cooperative carwash in Los Angeles. The carwasheros took ownership when the previous owner abandoned her business in the middle of the night, leaving behind unpaid bills and the workers to fend for themselves. In 2012, Vermont Gage Carwash, LLC, made history becoming the first union carwash in Los Angeles. With the opening of the new worker-owned cooperative, these workers made history by becoming the first worker-owners, all while retaining their United Steelworkers Local 675 contract and union membership.



After bruising losses by Democrats around the country in November, many political pundits have said that the Party needs to reinvent itself. But Durazo believes that, "working people don't need a Democratic Party that speaks for them, they need a Democratic Party in which they can speak for themselves. Too many people are spending too much time looking at everything that has gone wrong. I am focused on what has been done right and how we can build on it."

#### FORMER OBAMA LABOR SECRETARY ELECTED TO HEAD POST AT DNC

In a close race, former Obama Labor Secretary Tom Perez was elected a chair of the DNC. Perez narrowly beat out Minnesota Representative Keith Ellison for the post with a 235 to 200 vote. Upon winning the new chairman immediately appointed Ellison as deputy chair.

"Perez was good for workers as Secretary of Labor," said Rich Kline, Union Label and Service Trades Department president. "I'm optimistic that he can bring those same working family values to the post at the DNC."

Kline went on to say, "Durazo and Perez both have tangible track records representing the labor movement and can help refocus the message of the Democratic Party."

### ARE YOU ON OUR E-MAIL LIST?

Have you joined our blast e-mail list? Have you visited us on facebook or twitter? The Union Label Department is active on social media, posting union news and product information we believe is important to union members. If you haven't already, find us on facebook, and make sure you sign up for our email list on our website at unionlabel.org to receive important news right in your inbox.

# Union Favorability High Despite Opposition

nion favorability is at the highest it has been in a decade according to the Pew Research Center which reports that 60 percent of Americans are in favor of unions.

"About six-in-ten adults have a favorable view of labor unions," the analysis stated. Why then are the membership numbers down?

According to Economic Policy Institute Media Relations Director Dan Crawford, membership "isn't declining because people don't want to join unions—it's declining because of conscious policy choices to cut into workers' bargaining power."

Crawford attributes the high favorability and low membership rates — the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that union membership sits at just 10.7 percent down .04 percent from 2015 — to laws that could be preventing workers from seeking out union representation.

"We've seen it time and again," said Rich Kline, Union Label and Service Trades Department president. "Right-to-work has been a huge hindrance to workers trying to unionize. It is why we are seeing more and more Republican legislatures introducing and passing these union busting laws. And now, with Republicans holding all three federal branches, it is why we are seeing the calls for a national right-to-work law. If union membership were so bad for workers, why do corporations spend so much money to keep them out of their workplaces?"

#### **IT'S NOT ALL DOOM AND GLOOM**

Not all states have declining union membership though. Colorado saw increases in its numbers from 8.4 percent of the workforce in 2015 to 9.8 percent last year. The Colorado AFL-CIO says that increase equates to about 44,000 more members.

"This increase in Colorado union membership means that our state is moving in the right direction, but there is still more to do," said Colorado AFL-CIO Executive Director Sam Gilchrist said in a statement.

Ohio and New Jersey also bucked the national trend with modest increases in union membership last year. In Ohio, the membership rate there was 12.4 percent, up 0.1 percentage points from 2015. And in New Jersey, the BLS reports that union membership increased to 16.1 percent, up from 15.4 percent in 2015.

Tim Burga, president of the Ohio AFL-CIO, also attributed the low national membership numbers to "continued attacks on working people across the country."

In a press release, Burga said that the relative stability of Ohio's union membership can be attributed to their success in "fending off the worst of these attacks."

According to *The Plain Dealer*, efforts to make Ohio a right-to-work state have never fully developed.

New Jersey AFL-CIO president Charlie Wowkanech reacted to reports that his state had continued to grow its union membership in 2016 despite the downward trend nationwide. "During these turbulent and unpredictable times, workers are realizing that the key to stability lies in a strong and collective voice. Despite the attacks that we will face from the Trump administration, when working people stand together, we can have an impactful voice.

"We are extremely proud that New Jersey unions are leading the way and continuing to build a movement of solidarity that will ensure all working people can improve their lives, wages, and standards of living.

"While there is still much work to be done, we thank our affiliates for continuing to demonstrate the resolve to build the labor movement for current and future generations."

Union membership still pays. According to a BLS Report on full-time wage and salary workers, union members had median usual weekly earnings of \$1,004 in 2016, while those who were not union members had median weekly earnings of \$802. ■

# **Two GOP Representatives Attack Official Time Through Retirement, Bonuses**

Two Congressmen have introduced legislation that would leverage pension and benefits in order to curb the use of official time by federal employee union representatives. H.R. 1364: Official Time Reform Act of 2017, introduced by Representative Jody Hice (R-GA), would forbid any days "spent principally on official time"—defined as 80 percent of the day—from counting towards an employee's retirement under the Civil Service Retirement System or the Federal Employees Retirement System.

"This legislation is a blatant attempt to bust federal employee unions and silence the voice of workers in decisions that impact not only their jobs, but services the American people rely on," said National President of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) J. David Cox.

Cox, in a letter sent to Congress, said that limits on use of official time should be left up to the individual agencies, not imposed by Congress.

"Federal managers and their employees are fully competent to negotiate the terms of official time, when it is needed, how much is needed, and where it should be used to address unique agency and workplace issues," AFGE's letter stated.

Democratic lawmakers objected to the bill, saying that it showed a fundamental misunderstanding of what official time is.

This is not the first time Rep. Hice has attempted to bar official time.

In addition to H.R. 1364, North Carolina Representative Virginia Foxx also submitted legislation that would amend Title 5 of the U.S. code aiming at penalizing official time. H.R. 1385 seeks to prevent federal employees from receiving recruitment, relocation or retention bonuses if they spend more than 80 percent of their time on official time.

Democrats also uniformly opposed this legislation.

"Representative Foxx's amendment compounds the punitive measures imposed on union Representatives," said Ranking member Elijah Cummings (D-MD). "If the goal is to discourage individuals from serving as union representatives, this amendment and the underlying bill will accomplish that.

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# **RIGHT TO RESPECT**

Continued from page 1

members now stand at a pivotal crossroad. We can submit to corporate interests or recommit to fighting for our rights.

When they claim to be fighting for the "right to work," we must point out how low their bar is. The dignity of a job is critical, but it doesn't amount to much if you can't feed your family and provide for their future. We're not just fighting for the right to work – America's unions are fighting for the right to respect.

The sense of respect that comes from having a career that gets you ahead, that leaves you and your family better off, that makes you proud to go to work. Anyone can run in a hamster wheel, and too many of us have fallen behind. What we need is a fair deal that gets American families ahead in life.

I'm inspired by the workers who joined together to kill a "right-to-work" bill in New Hampshire. We must follow their lead and unite in solidarity to defeat these corporate anti-worker bills at every level of government. We must redouble our efforts and communicate our core values to all workers.

President Trump promised to fight for American workers – and now we must hold him and every elected official accountable to their promises. Write the president, call your representatives, demand action from your state's leaders, and march in the streets if that's what it takes.

Tell them: we have the right to work; we want the right to respect.

# Security Guards Vote Yes At Sands Bethlehem Casino

For the first time ever, a property owned by billionaire Sheldon Adelson will have union members working on the floor. Security Guards at The Sands Bethlehem Casino, located in Northampton County, Pennsylvania on the grounds of the old Bethlehem Steel Mill. Workers there voted 70-6 to join the Security Police Fire Professionals of America. The contract gives 146 workers an 8% wage increase, and sets up a seniority system and grievance process. The vote was the result of five years of work by organizers and a year of negotiating between the Sands Corp and the union.

No Adelson-owned property has ever gone union before. In fact, the Las Vegas Culinary Union has unsuccessfully tried to organize the Venetian Las Vegas since it opened in 1999. Adelson fought that effort all the way to the Supreme Court, but, although he lost, there is still no union at the Venetian. Union leaders say that Adelson's willingness and ability to wage scorched-earth legal and public campaigns against unions — not his generosity — are what have kept unions out of his properties.



But Bethlehem Casino is in USW country. Many in the town have a history of union membership. So, when workers were having problems with a supervisor they decided to walk out. "We're walking out. We're gonna walk out, on the job in protest," one worker said to 30-year USW member and union leader George Bonser who was then working as a security guard at the Sands.

Bosner told them, "you guys can't walk out. You guys walk out, you're done." The others then asked Bosner what to do, "I'm thinking. You gotta get a union! I'll never forget that. I was like, well, here we go."

Bonser, who no longer works at the Sands, assisted with the unionization effort. ■

# Congress Rolls Back Fair Pay, Safety Rules

Although labor and its allies were able to successfully beat back Andy Puzder's nomination as Labor Secretary, workers will still suffer.

In early February, members in the House of Representatives passed a resolution to repeal federal disclosure requirements included in President Obama's Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces rule, which required that federal contractors disclose and correct serious safety violations. Failure to correct issues would result in the companies inability to compete for government contracts.

In a 49 to 48 result, the Senate voted along party lines to eliminate the regulation.

Several other worker safety regulations are also in the Republican crosshairs.

Deborah Berkowitz, a senior policy advisor at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) said that the repeal "sends a signal that Congress and the administration is listening to big business and their lobbyists and they are not standing up for the interests of the American workers."

On the same day the Senate voted, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass) released a staff report, "Breach of Contract: How Federal Contractors Fail American Workers on the Taxpayer's Dime" that states that 66 of the federal government's 100 largest contractors have at some point violated federal wage and hour laws. As well, the report states that more than a third of the 100 largest OSHA penalties since 2015 were imposed on federal contractors.

Warren criticized the Republican-led effort saying that, "instead of creating jobs or raising wages, they're trying to make it easier for companies that get big-time, taxpayer-funded government contracts to steal wages from their employees and injure their workers without admitting responsibility."

With additional repeals of Obama era protections expected, and anticipated federal budget cuts, Berkowitz says that she expects that we will see a "radical departure from the commitment to protecting workers."

# AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS MAR.-APR. }}}

# HOSPITALITY, TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

#### **SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!**

Please support the workers in these hotels by continuing to boycott the following properties:

- → ANCHORAGE, AK: Hilton; Sheraton
- → Hilton LAX—This includes the Crowne Plaza Hotel LAX, Yokoso Sushi Bar, the Landing Restaurant, Century Taproom, and the Boulevard Market Cafe.
- → CALIFORNIA: Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, Hyatt Regency Sacramento, Hyatt Fisherman's Wharf San Francisco, Hilton Long Beach, Le Meridien San Diego
- → RHODE ISLAND: Renaissance Providence Downtown Hotel

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→ SEATTLE: Grand Hyatt Seattle and Hyatt at Olive 8 Seattle

# FOOD

SUBMITTED BY United Steelworkers (USW)

#### → PALERMO PIZZA

SUBMITTED BY Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM)

→ Mondelez International Snack Foods (made in Mexico)

# LEGAL

#### SUBMITTED BY American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees

→ Gleason, Dunn, Walsh & O'Shea

→ Mcdonald, Lamond, Canzoneri and Hickernell

# TOB LNOUT BUT

When some labor disputes with businesses cannot be resolved, the AFL-CIO supports its affiliates by endorsing their boycotts. A boycott is an act of solidarity by voluntarily abstaining from the purchase or use of a product or service.

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# POLICY GUIDELINE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF AFFILIATES' BOYCOTTS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has developed policy guidelines that regulate how the federation endorses boycotts undertaken by its affiliates. To get AFL-CIO sanction, boycotts should be directed at primary employers.

#### **THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE PROVISIONS:**

- → All requests to the national AFL-CIO for endorsement must be made by a national or international union.
- → Any affiliated union with a contract in force with the same primary employer will be contacted by the AFL-CIO to determine whether there is an objection to the federation's endorsement.
- → Affiliates will be asked to provide the AFL-CIO with background information on the dispute in a confidential information survey. Prior to endorsement of the boycott, the executive officers, or their designees, will meet with the national union's officers, or their designees, to discuss the union's strategic plan and timetable for the boycott, or other appropriate tactics, and to discuss the federation's role.
- The national or international union initiating the boycott is primarily responsible for all boycott activities; the AFL-CIO will provide supplemental support.
- Boycotts will be carried on the AFL-CIO national boycott list for a period of one year, and the endorsement will expire automatically at the end of that time. National and international unions may request one-year extensions of the listings for actions where an organizing or bargaining campaign is actively in place.

(These guidelines were adopted by the AFL-CIO Executive Council in April 2011.)

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# Workers and Their Unions Have Plenty to Protest



The body politic is crawling with dissent. Town meetings with legislators are uproarious with citizens of all political persuasions who are deeply concerned about their healthcare, Medicare and Medicaid. Scientists are marching in defense of unbiased inquiry. Educators are protesting privatization schemes. Environmentalists protest and publicize the threat to our water, our air,

our land and the planet at large. Women have and are protesting misogyny, legal restrictions and workplace inequities.

Union members, including those who voted for Donald Trump and Mike Pence and their Republican allies in the Congress, governors' offices and in state legislatures, have plenty to protest, too.

Bills in the Senate and House, (H.R. 785 and S. 545), originating from determined anti-union legislators, call for a National Right-to-Work Law. The objective is to destroy the ability of unions to protect their members' interests. President Trump said during the election campaign that he favors right-to-work (for less). Vice President Pence was anti-union as governor of Indiana and hawkish on right to work. Republican-controlled legislatures press for right-to-work (for less) where they haven't already got it. A Repeal Davis-Bacon Act bill (H.R 743) is pending in the House. A similar measure is under consideration in the Senate (S. 244). A successful repeal would strip away the prevailing wage provision that enables unionized construction contractors to compete effectively for federal contracts. Voter's remorse will be the least of the ills suffered if Davis-Bacon repeal passes into law. Good paying jobs with benefits will disappear as non-union contractors jump in with low bids.

#### UNION ACTIVISM AND EDUCATION MUST COUNTER ANTI-WORKER PROGRAM

What can be done? In-plant, job-site and community education on the issues and importance of union representation is required. The cost of freeloading coworkers should be made plain where right-to-work laws already are in effect and where they might be in the future. The benefit of the prevailing wage rule to working families and their communities should be widely advertised.

Education may forestall some of the negative impact of right wing reactionary attacks on workers' rights, attacks which will harm workers no matter for whom they voted.

People are looking for value. Union membership provides value to union members, employers and society. The Labor Movement needs to do a better job in convincing America that it provides value.