



Feel the Power

Right to Work is Wrong for LIUNA's Public Employees

State Attacks

- Anti-union groups are pushing Right to Work (RTW) for the public sector in a number of states, including those generally thought of as labor-friendly states.
 - Illinois – Governor Rauner issued an Executive Order and sued the public unions to make the state's public sector right to work.
 - Oregon – a ballot initiative is pending to make the state's public workers RTW and adds a “members only” component, which would require the employer to give a non-member the same wages and benefits as a union member.
 - RTW Zones – other states like Delaware and Kentucky are trying to pass RTW zones in certain counties when the state won't pass RTW, although this action is clearly illegal.
- These actions follow Wisconsin stripping collective bargaining rights from public workers, resulting in a decrease of up to 80% of public sector union members there.

Court Attacks

- *Friedrichs v. CTA* – The U.S. Supreme Court will hear this case in its next term, which begins October 2015. The plaintiffs in the case want to make the entire U.S. public sector RTW, and even argue to eliminate public sector collective bargaining. It's likely that even if the Court does not go that far, that it will further chip away at public sector labor rights, possibly by requiring an annual opt-in by all members for any political or legislative spending.
- *Older cases* – The first U.S. Supreme Court case to uphold agency fees was *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* (1977); the Court held that agency fees were constitutional. The *Lehnert* case in 1991 again upheld agency fees. In 2012, however, the Court chipped away at agency fees in the *Knox* case, which held that public sector unions had to get an affirmative opt in from members for supplemental dues for political purposes. More recently, in 2014, the Court held in *Harris v. Quinn* that home health and child care workers could not be required to pay agency fees.
- So despite that fact that the *Abood* and *Lehnert* cases have upheld agency fees, more recent cases like *Knox* and *Harris* show that the Court is willing to chip away at our rights.

What You Can Do to Fight Back

- Educate members constantly on these fights.
- Organize, organize, organize!
- Reach out to all members about the value of our union.
- Talk to friends and family about the value of unions to our communities – we clean the parks, drive their children to school on the school bus, plow their roads, etc.

Laborers' International Union of North America

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