



Stepping UP

American Federation
of State, County and
Municipal Employees,
AFL-CIO

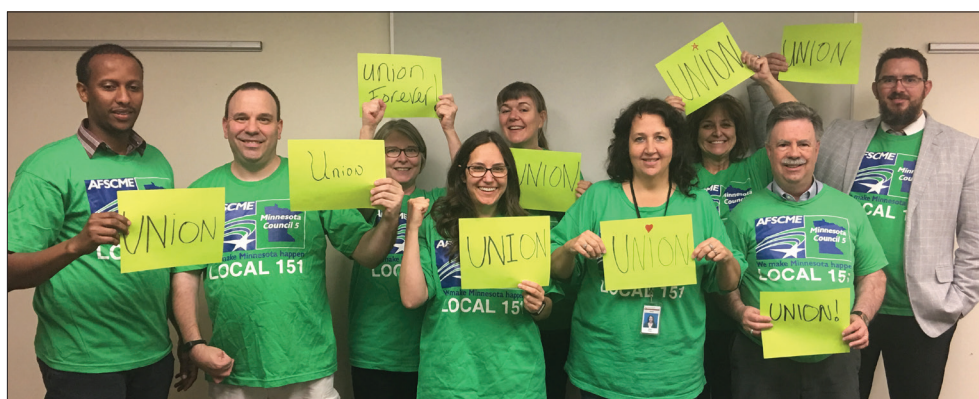
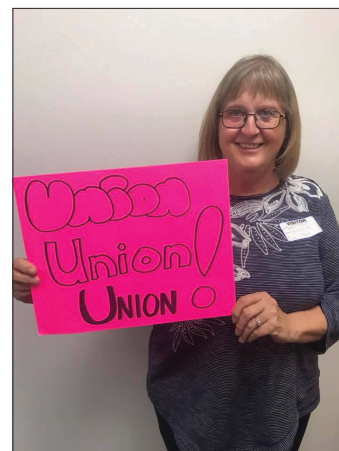
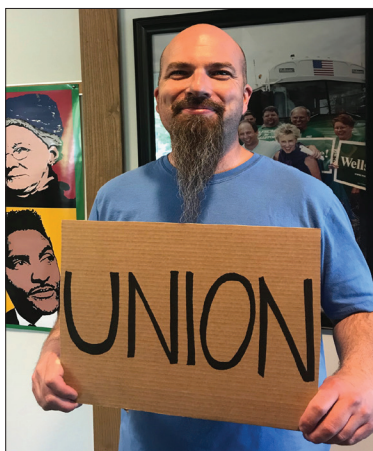
Volume 13, No. 4
July-August 2018

ONE STRONG, UNITED VOICE FOR MINNESOTA WORKERS



Workers flock to AFSCME post-Janus pages 4, 5

(Top) Local 744 member Fatmata Turay, who works at the Minneapolis Veterans Home, signs a PEOPLE card as member organizer Starr Suggs waits to award Turay with a new PEOPLE jacket. Turay is among hundreds of workers joining AFSCME for the first time, recommitting to their union and joining PEOPLE (like Turay) or upping their contributions. That all comes in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's anti-worker ruling in the *Janus* case.



#UNION

(Above, left to right) Executive Board member and DNR worker Eric Pascal; state Rep. Erin Murphy, AFSCME's endorsed candidate for Minnesota governor; Local 3142 treasurer Catherine Claude and secretary Linda DeGidio (Bottom) Local 151.

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America Needs Unions Now More than Ever



The conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against workers and for the rich and powerful forces behind *Janus*. (Photo by Phil Roeder/flickr/creative commons)

On the heels of high-profile walkouts, new organizing and growing approval for unions, labor leaders see the U.S. Supreme Court's anti-worker *Janus* decision as a rallying point to unrig the economy and put workers first.

The Supreme Court ruled against working people and in favor of billionaire CEOs and corporate interests in *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31*. The 5-4 decision June 27 held that requiring fair-share fees in the public sector violates the First Amendment.

The leaders of AFSCME, AFT, NEA and SEIU released this statement:

As millions of American workers recommit to their unions and launch new organizing drives and as support for labor unions has risen to its highest level in years, it is shameful that the billionaire CEOs and corporate special interests behind this case have succeeded in manipulating the highest court in the land to do their bidding.

This case was nothing more than a blatant political attack to further rig our economy and democracy against everyday Americans in favor of the wealthy and powerful.

Public service workers – teachers, social workers, firefighters, 911 operators – are more determined than ever to stick together in our unions. Unions remain the most effective vehicle for the power in numbers that working people need to secure our rights and freedoms, and provide a pathway to the middle class.

We will remain a strong and vibrant force for working people and will continue fighting to sustain our families, improve our workplaces and to make our communities stronger regardless of the court's ruling.

The decision sends our economy in the wrong direction. But it is also a rallying point. We call on elected leaders and candidates to do everything in their power to make it easier to unite in unions and build more power for all working people.

“Unions will always be the most effective force and vehicle to propel working people into the middle class,” says AFSCME International president Lee Saunders. “Despite this unprecedented and nefarious political attack – designed to further rig the rules against working people – nothing changes the fact that America needs unions now more than ever.

“We are more resolved than ever to fight like hell to win for our members and the communities they care so much about,” Saunders says. “AFSCME members don't do this work to get rich. They do it because it's a calling – and for that service, they deserve respect. They deserve the same freedoms as the CEOs and billionaires who continue to rig the rules against everyone else.

“The American labor movement lives on, and we're going to be there every day, fighting hard for all working people, our freedoms and for our country,” he says.

“No court case, win or lose, could ever change how important my work and service is to me and the community I care about,” says AFSCME Council 31 member Stephen Mittons, a child protection investigator for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

“My union gives me the strength, freedom and the tools I need to help people and to provide for my family. That's why I'll always stick with my coworkers, no matter what,” Mittons says. “We're going to keep doing what we've been doing: organizing and talking to coworkers and community members, building power for working people.”

What can you do? A lot.

- 1) Show support for your union and stand up to wealthy special interests (page 3).
- 2) Organize and sign up members (pages 4 and 5).
- 3) Vote in the Aug. 14 primary and the November election for pro-worker candidates (page 8).



AFSCME Council 5 is a union of 43,000 workers who advocate for excellence in services for the public, dignity in the workplace, and opportunity and prosperity for all working families.

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(elected September 2016)

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Stepping UP

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Published by AFSCME Minnesota, AFL-CIO
300 Hardman Ave. S.

South St. Paul, MN 55075-2469

six times yearly:

January/February, March/April, May/June,
July/August, September/October,
November/December

Subscription price \$1 per copy; \$5 per year

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

Stepping Up, 300 Hardman Ave. S.

South St. Paul, MN 55075-2469

Periodical postage paid at South St. Paul
and additional mailing offices.

Publication No. 352180



Member International Labor
Communications Association
Design: Lynette Kalsnes
Printing: Seven Corners Printing
Mailing: Do-Good.biz



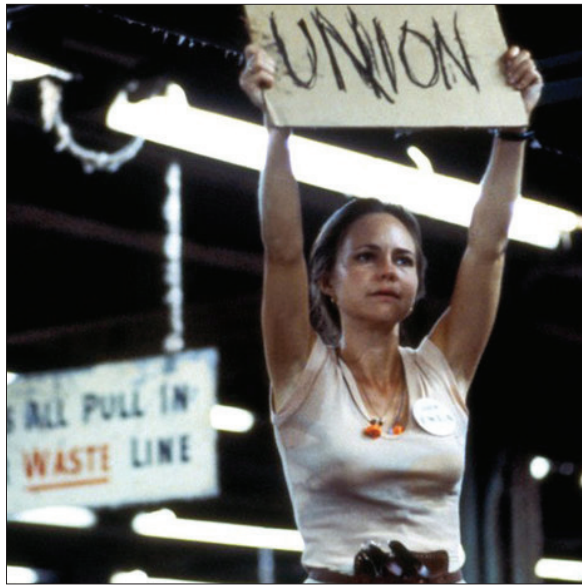
Fight Big Money, Corporate CEOs

AFSCME Council 5 members have a simple, powerful response to the big corporations and wealthy special interests trying to silence our voices. We know they want to take away our right to form unions and stand together to improve life for ourselves, our families and our communities.

They don't want us to have the freedom to win better pay and benefits and to improve our own working conditions. They want all the power and all the money.

So union members across the country are joining together with one voice and one image. We're snapping photos of ourselves holding UNION signs – just like the one Sally Field waved in “Norma Rae.”

We're sharing them on social media with the hashtag #UNION and making them our profile photos on

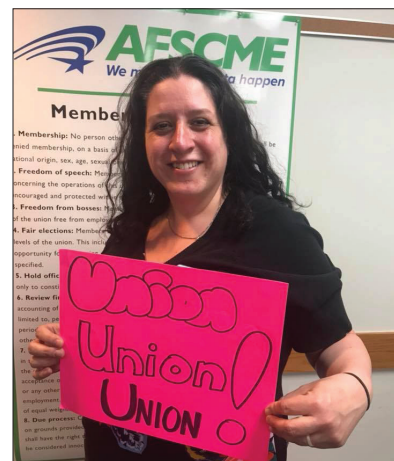
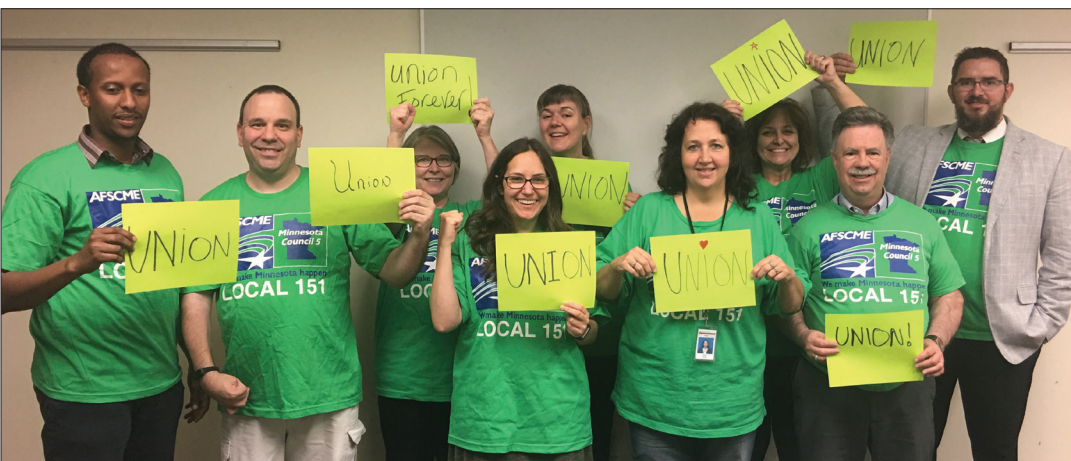
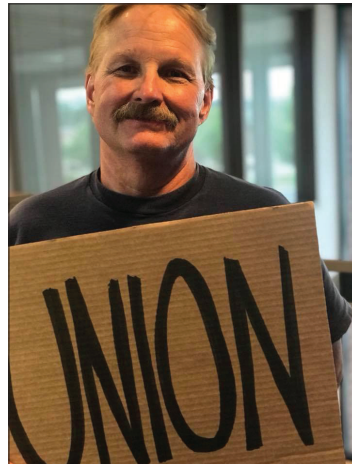
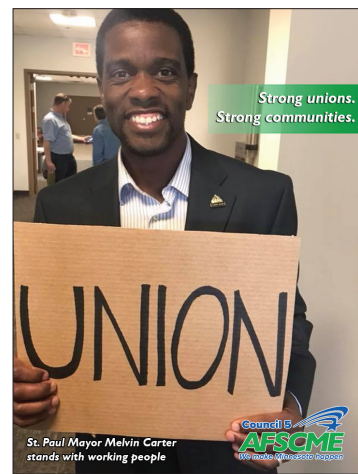
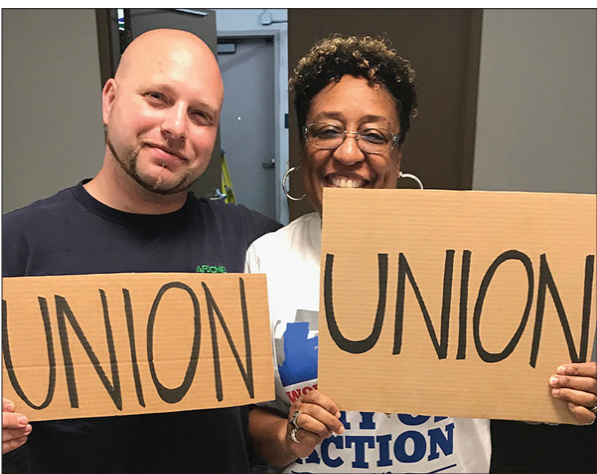


Facebook.

Join the fun and resist! Along with sharing #UNION selfies on your own social networks, please share them on Council 5's Facebook page and tag us @AFSCMEmn5 on Twitter.

Billionaires and big corporations aren't satisfied with the Supreme Court's *Janus* ruling. They're amping up their efforts to “defund and defang” unions. Showing our solidarity as workers – online and in real life – is more important than ever.

Collective action, even something as simple as changing your profile picture, sends a strong message: WE are the UNION, we are strong and united, and we are here to fight for freedom, prosperity and justice for all.



WANT TO JOIN THE FUN AND RESIST?

Just share your #UNION selfies on your own social media networks. Then share them with Council 5's Facebook page and tag us @AFSCMEmn5 on Twitter.

Top Row: Member organizers Bryan Kirsch and Denna Thurmond; Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey with members; and Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter.
Row 2: Local 868's Darrin Aarre, Scuffy Paulson and Eric Ptacek; Local 221's Duane Butorac; Local 8's Julia Fried-Devine, Kara Carlson, Kate Tchida and Douangta Vang-Sitcler; and Council 5 members at the DFL Convention. **Row 3:** Council 5 executive director John P. Westmoreland; Saint Paul council member and AFSCME member Chris Tolbert; Council 5 president Judy Wahlberg; and PERA Local 2829's Randy Jeukens, Theresa St. Aoro, Watchee Zogaa, Elizabeth Mickelson, Dara Medow and Rick Franco. **Row 4:** Field rep Nur Nur and Local 151's Trent Kekedakis, Susan Hebert, Margaret Berger, Linda Oeltjenbruns, Dawn Flores, Deb Flies, Allan Malkis and Sam Holl; and Local 3142 president Esther Kaiser.

Workers flock to unions after Janus

New members join AFSCME, recommit following anti-worker Supreme Court decision

When the *Janus* decision came down, billionaires, big business and their anti-worker think tanks licked their chops, predicting the end of unions.

But workers across Minnesota are proving them wrong.



Todd Bennington

Within just three weeks of the June 27 U.S. Supreme Court decision, 339 people joined AFSCME Council 5. They decided to become full members to

support their union, their co-workers and their communities.

Dr. Seymour Gross, a senior clinical psychologist at Hennepin County Mental Health Center, was among them. He was fair-share. But when the Supreme Court ruling against unions and workers came down, he decided to join AFSCME Local 34. He calls the ruling “awful” and “harmful.”

“After the Supreme Court decision, I figured that joining was what I could do,” he says. “I believe in the benefits of unions. Politically, that is being attacked. And now with Trump, I want to reinforce the idea that it is a good thing to do, just the principle there is some ability to have power with authority that may not always be considerate.”

Gross says he supports unions because they give workers a voice with management and power in numbers.

The *Janus* decision was what alerted Hennepin County principal planning analyst



Local 744 member Fatmata Turay (left) signs a PEOPLE card as member organizer Starr Suggs waits to award Turay with a new PEOPLE jacket at a picnic for Minneapolis Veterans Home workers.

Todd Bennington that he wasn’t a full member. Like many people, he thought he already was one because he believed joining was automatic. After the ruling, he became a member of AFSCME Local 2864 to “affirm the importance of unions and union representation.

“Unions are one of the remaining bulwarks protecting working people from complete economic exploitation,” Bennington says. “I also worry that, particularly among professional staff, too many feel like such representation and workplace protections aren’t needed anymore, which is very naive.

“The next few years will be difficult ones for most people in this country, and one way that I can do something proactive and positive to minimize that pain is by standing in solidarity with my fellow working Americans as a full AFSCME member,” he says.

Case renews members' commitment to AFSCME

After the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Janus* decision hit, Steven Keu and Sarah Lamb decided to renew their commitment to their union.

The pharmacy techs at the Minneapolis Veterans Home signed new union cards at their Local 744 picnic. During that picnic alone, 16 workers moved from being fair share to full members, 16 recommitted to their union and a dozen joined PEOPLE.

“I never worked anywhere where there was a union before,” Keu says. “I just never had the opportunity to do it. I heard the union advocates for us. That’s why I signed up.”

Renewing that commitment Wednesday was especially important to him because he saw his union help a coworker and stand behind that person.

“I got to see it firsthand,” Keu says. “They’re real advocates for you. They’ll tell you what your rights are. No one tells you that when there’s no union. There’s no one behind you.”

Coworker Sarah Lamb, who grew up in a union household, signed a new card in response to *Janus*.

“It seems like it’s the beginning of the disappearing of unions,” she says. “I don’t think a lot of people understand a lot of the things unions do. I don’t want to turn into a right-to-work state like Wisconsin. They don’t have any bargaining chips anymore.”

Lamb says she’s worked at the Minneapolis Vets Home for several years and has been union that whole time.



Vets Home pharmacy techs Steven Keu and Sarah Lamb

“I’ve seen the hard work our union does, all the emails, being able to protect our wages, our insurance, all of that,” Lamb says. “To have an advocate out there looking out for those things is very important.”

In her department, she says, having a union also means low turnover.

“I think people have more stability, with benefits and all of those other things that are included in contracts, they’re kind of chips to keep people happy in their jobs,” she says. “I know it’s a big thing that’s kept me in this job. There are so many other pharmacies you can move to. The benefits definitely keep me where I am.”

So does getting to help care for our veterans: “I like our mission, that we are here as a support for the nation’s veterans. They can rest easy knowing they’ll be taken care of later on,” Lamb says.



PEOPLE memberships, donor levels climb quickly

Even though big corporations and big money led to an anti-worker Supreme Court decision, the *Janus* case isn't stopping workers or their unions.

Minnesota public workers aren't just joining AFSCME Council 5, they're joining PEOPLE or upping their contributions to help fight the powerful forces trying to silence workers and take away our freedoms. A dozen workers joined PEOPLE in one afternoon at the Local 744 Minneapolis Veterans Home picnic.

Multiply that across our state and nation, and you start to sense the groundswell that's occurring in support of unions, our power in numbers, and our freedom to join together to create better workplaces and communities.

Fatmata Turay, who's worked at the Vets Home doing general maintenance for 12 years, explains why.

"When you join PEOPLE, there will be more power to help the people so they have a voice," the Local 744 member says. "If my money can help elect government officials who will help workers, it would be fantastic for us. We're praying so God can change it around.

"It's very good for us to have a union," Turay adds.

"Sometimes, the advantage can be too much for management. If a union is there, they speak out for us and protect our jobs, too."

Her fellow maintenance worker and AFSCME member, Leon Visperas, also joined PEOPLE.

"It's important to elect people who help workers," he says, holding his new green PEOPLE jacket close to his chest.



(Top) Fatmata Turay joined PEOPLE to provide more power for workers to keep and have a voice. "If my money can help elect government officials who will help workers, it would be fantastic for us."

(Right) Local 744's Leon Visperas holds his new PEOPLE jacket close after signing up so he can help elect worker-friendly candidates.

(Below) Different shifts took part throughout the day. Erin Maye Quade (center in olive dress), AFSCME's endorsed candidate for lieutenant governor, talked with members.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- 1) Sign up for MemberLink at www.afscmemn.org and recommit to your union.
- 2) Organize new members and help them join AFSCME Council 5 via

MemberLink or by calling the Member Action Center at 651-450-4990, 218-722-0577, 320-325-2344 or 800-652-9791.

- 3) Join PEOPLE or increase your donation at www://afscmemn.org/join-people-build-power.

THE RACIST ROOTS



Proponents of so-called “right-to work” laws often use lofty language to sell their agenda, with false appeals to freedom, among other high ideals.

But right to work – or, more accurately, “right to work for less” – is really about corporations and the super rich taking away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions.

It’s no secret that wealthy corporations and individuals are pouring money into politics like never before to stack the deck against working people and pad their own profits. The State Policy Network (SPN), an alliance of right-wing think tanks with a combined annual budget of \$80 million, is an example. In a 2016 fundraising letter, it announced a “breakthrough” campaign to “defund and defang” public service unions.

The goal of SPN, the letter reads, is to “permanently break the power of government unions.” They cite their opposition to the role that organized public service workers play as advocates for quality public services, and for policies that help working families and hurt corporate bottom lines, like health care and retirement security.

This network of front groups for wealthy special interests has implemented a multi-pronged strategy to achieve its goal: passing right-to-work laws at the state and local levels, spreading misinformation, contacting public service workers directly to persuade them to drop out of their unions, and using the court system to undo decades of legal precedent and impose right to work nationally. Both organizations behind *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31*, which made right to work the law of the land following the Supreme Court’s ruling, are part of SPN.

But what none of them would ever openly say – not even in a letter to donors – is

where right to work comes from and what its real agenda is.

‘I AM FOR WHITE SUPREMACY’

Although the term “right to work” may have been coined by a Dallas Morning News editorial writer, it was used, exploited and popularized by a man named Vance Muse. Nicknamed “the Big Fink” by labor unions, Muse was a larger-than-life Texan who dressed the part and did not hesitate to say or do things that made most people squirm.

“I am a Southerner and I am for white supremacy,” he told a U.S. Senate committee in 1936.

He called himself “the greatest lobbyist in America” and didn’t use elevated language to disguise his work – he was openly racist, anti-Semitic and a Communist-baiter.

During the campaign to pass right to work in Arkansas in 1944, Muse and the Christian American Association – an organization he founded that was a front for wealthy special interests – distributed literature to make their case. They warned that if their effort failed, “white women and white men will be forced into organizations [labor unions] with black African apes whom they will have to call ‘brother’ or lose their jobs.”

Perhaps it’s not surprising that throughout his career, Muse also worked to oppose women’s suffrage, and to repeal child labor laws and the eight-hour day for railroaders. He was active in the Committee for the Americanization of the Supreme Court, which targeted a Jewish man, Justice Felix Frankfurter.

Muse’s work and the beliefs that inspired it were repulsive to many in his own family. In 1986, more than three decades after Muse’s death, his grandson, Vance



OF RIGHT TO WORK

Story by Pablo Ros
Graphic by Takudzwa Spandhla
AFSCME International

Muse III, wrote about his grandfather's "hate-for-hire career," calling him "a man who beat on labor unions not on behalf of working people, as he said, but because he was paid to do so."

By the time of Muse's death in 1950, a dozen states, mostly in the South, had passed right-to-work laws.

RIGHT TO WORK HARMS COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Muse's influence waned after his death. In the half century between 1960 and 2010, only four states became right to work.

But in the last six years, six states have adopted such laws, including traditionally labor-strong Michigan and Wisconsin. What's going on?

Wealthy special interests have long used networks like SPN to attack working families, but the election of President Barack Obama in 2008 marked a new beginning. As Jane Mayer writes in "Dark Money," during the last weekend of January 2009, just a few days after Obama's inauguration, Charles and David Koch led a secretive gathering of wealthy and powerful CEOs and political philanthropists "who aimed to do all they could to nullify the results of the recent election."

The Koch brothers, billionaire industrialists, had a combined wealth that "put at their disposal the single largest fortune in the world," Mayer writes. They and the other wealthy members of their network were convinced that Obama was a serious threat to their interests, she explains, and that they would "need to resort to extraordinary political measures."

Aided by the Supreme Court's 2010 decision in *Citizens United*, which opened the floodgates to political spending, wealthy corporations and the super-rich have been

using their money to attack all working people and especially communities of color. Their coordination may have begun as a response to the Obama presidency, but the influence of these powerful elites remains one of the most powerful forces in the American economy and political system.

Through front groups like Donors Trust, Americans for Prosperity and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), among many others, they've been busy undermining minority voting rights, opposing wage laws that disproportionately benefit black and Latino workers, and pushing other pro-corporate legislation at the expense of working people, including right-to-work laws.

The *Janus v. AFSCME* case, which threatens the freedom of workers to form strong unions by imposing right to work in the public sector nationwide, represents the culmination of these years of coordinated attacks, backed by tens of millions of dollars of funding.

Right to work is an affront to all working people, but especially to workers of color, who have historically formed strong unions to earn fair wages and dignity on the job. As the Economic Policy Institute points out, "Unions help raise the wages of women and black and Hispanic workers – whose wages have historically lagged behind those of white men ... Black and Hispanic workers get a larger boost from unionization than their white counterparts."

In other words, communities of color will lose the most if right-to-work laws continue to spread. In the public sector, black women likely will be the most affected by the Supreme Court's ruling against workers in *Janus*.

Muse was openly racist, while today's proponents of right to work prefer lofty language to sell their agenda. But the result is the same: The racist legacy of right to work is alive and well.



Don't forget to vote, volunteer

Stakes high for Minnesota's state primary and general election

It may seem each time election season rolls around, you'll hear people saying that this is the most crucial election ever.

But when it comes to the Aug. 14 primary, and even more importantly Election Day on Nov. 6, that's especially true for union members this year.

Over the past eight years, we've watched as Gov. Mark Dayton turned former Gov. Pawlenty's \$6.5 billion deficit into years of surpluses. Dayton restored \$2 billion that Pawlenty "borrowed" from our schools, and he restored the public services that Pawlenty cut. Dayton has been a true friend to the labor movement and workers at every turn.

But Dayton is leaving office after eight years, and it's impossible to exaggerate how much rides on

picking a successor who shares our values as much as Dayton does. It's not about being a Democrat or Republican: It's about putting workers first, not billionaires and big business.

**"It's not important that we think alike. It's important that we think together. Our union is nothing but the members themselves."
— Member Mike West**

Unfortunately, over the last two years, Republicans in control of the state House and Senate gave big tax breaks to the rich and big corporations. They also gave a tax break that only benefitted the wealthiest 1,000 estates – not a lot of farmers or workers in that category. These legislators went so far with

these tax breaks, our state risked going into deficit late last year. Deficits could quickly loom again if lawmakers pass policies that favor the super-rich and the super powerful rather than giving back to workers and funding essential public programs.

As soon as Republicans in Wisconsin (led by Scott Walker) and in Iowa gained control, they did everything they could to gut unions. The way Iowa union members are fighting back is truly inspirational. But to prevent that fight from being necessary here, we need to elect worker-friendly candidates across the board, for governor, House, Senate and local offices.

As you vote, please think about the true values of various candidates and how their actions help – or hurt – workers, our families and our communities.

AFSCME members share what they're looking for in candidates:



Denna Thurmond, PERA, Local 2829 Executive Board

"I want to make sure we back candidates who share our interests and our values, who will fight for us as public workers in the workplace so we keep our collective bargaining. That's very important to me.

I can't believe people don't vote! When we get candidates you don't want in office, think about the fact you didn't vote. If you don't vote, you don't have a voice. You won't be included in the process. If you're not going to be part of the solution, you're part of the problem."



Denise Bickford, Central Lakes College maintenance worker, Local 4001 Executive Board

"I think we need an honest governor for the people. I want somebody that supports my job, my livelihood, and that's labor friendly. That's what I want.

When I retire, I need my pension. I don't want it to go into a 401(k). I've worked for the state for 20-plus years so that's important to me. I think we should have dignity.

If you don't vote, you're not going to be heard."



Mike West, Minnesota Correctional Facility St. Cloud, Local 599

"It's not important that we think alike. It's important that we think together. Our union is nothing but the members themselves."



Christina St. Germaine, Minnesota Sex Offender Program security counselor, Local 1092 Executive Board

"I want a person that has family values, who looks out for the average American, working families, people who have children, people who are elderly. I want a governor for everybody, not just the wealthiest 3 percent, someone who will protect workers' rights to be able to have our union, to negotiate for fair wages, benefits, to know they won't be starving in retirement, to make sure we continue to have a safety net, real family values.

The everyday struggles people deal with when government cuts funding for programs, the people at the top don't feel it. They need to wake up and realize there are a lot of people who depend on services. Everybody depends on the streets being plowed: Without public sector dollars and Local Government Aid, how are people getting to work? When they cut public services, everybody suffers. Everybody is affected by cuts to Local Government Aid, funding from the federal government. States and counties and cities suffer."



Rick Frauendienst, St. Cloud MnDOT, Local 604 vice president

"Honesty is one of the core values we have to look for in candidates. In my opinion, that's number one. Respect would be number two, and a vision for the future, cooperation, caring and compassion.

By respect, I mean respect for other people's positions in life, not thumbing their nose at people because they have a different job or look different or have a different belief system. People who come from other countries have the right to provide food, shelter and clothing for their families just like I do, and they have the same wants and needs and deserve the same respect that I do."

What can you do? Vote!

AFSCME members met to interview and endorse candidates who will support labor and workers. You can find their endorsements for the Aug. 14 primary at www.afscmemn.org/vote.

Just before the General Election on Nov. 6, watch for your Stepping Up Voters' Guide in the mail and online at www.afscmemn.org.

Volunteer!

Want to volunteer for a campaign? AFSCME political organizers can help connect you with one. Email Laura.Askelin@afscmemn.org or call 651-238-5334.

Not sure where to vote?

Find out how to early vote and check polling places at www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/.

