

# Union Rights are Under Attack — We're Standing Up & Fighting Back!

In this first report, we find that by bargaining together through unions, California workers increase their earnings and have more access to health and retirement benefits, thereby reducing reliance on the state's public safety net programs.



Click on picture for more information

## Key findings include:

- Workers covered by a union contract in California earn an average of **12.9%** more than their non-union peers with similar ages and educational attainment working in similar industries.
- Overall, a union contract increases an individual worker's annual earnings by **\$5,800**, for a combined total of **\$18.5 billion** across California. In low-income regions like the San Joaquin Valley, the difference is more dramatic, increasing a worker's earnings on average by **\$7,000** each year.
- **670,000** more Californians have health insurance through their employer as a result of collective bargaining.
- **830,000** more Californians are offered a retirement plan by their employer as a result of collective bargaining.

Our worker power makes California a big target of the "Freedom" Foundation, an anti-union organization funded by corporate billionaires who see higher wages, better benefits and strong unions as cutting into their profits and threatening their control. They are pushing so-called "Right-to-Work" laws to undermine worker power and make it easier to reduce wages and take away safety protections and other benefits. Real freedom is about being able to balance life and work, and working people deserve the freedom to negotiate a fair return on our work so we can provide for our families. For more information on Freedom Foundation, go to <http://nwaccountabilityproject.com>.

On June 27, 2018, the Supreme Court issued its decision in the case of *Janus vs. AFSCME*. This decision undermines workers' power to speak up through their union. The Supreme Court has ruled against the union, overturning longstanding labor law and bringing "open shop" to all public sector workplaces, meaning workers covered under a union contract can opt out of paying dues. If workers opt out, unions lose power to fight for good wages, benefits and working conditions because they have fewer resources. Unions may lose entire contracts if the majority of workers opt out, as employers will not be required to bargain with the union.

We need to make sure all OPEIU 29 members know what's at risk if we let this attack divide us. If we stick together and maintain high union membership, we can keep our good contracts and continue to have a strong union.

Over the next months, we will be reaching out to you and your coworkers to stay organized and informed and take action to protect our powerful voice at work. If you want to learn more about how you can help, please **contact your Union Representative**.

**If we all do not stand together, we stand to lose more together, even for those few who want to ride on others coat tails!**



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