

2017 May Day March and Rally Worker Rights are Civil Rights

Talking Points I:

Why May 1st?

The United States is one of the few countries in the world that doesn't celebrate Labor Day (often called International Worker's Day) on May 1. This is sad because the choice of May 1 is traced back to the 1886 tragedy in Chicago's Haymarket Square at a protest rally against the killing of 4 strikers who had been on strike for the 8-hour day.

We are here because:

- We believe the labor unions are and always have been responsible for creating and keeping a strong middle class nationally and locally.
- The current president is determined to undermine unions and weaken even more the right of labor to bargain decent pay and affordable healthcare
- We believe in Civil Rights and the right to form join and assist a union in the workplace is a basic civil right.
- All hard working wage earners deserve a living wage, and should not be chained to minimum wages.
- We believe women and minorities should not be paid less for the same work.
- We believe in the dignity of honest work which should always have the right to bargain for an honest days pay and safe, decent workplaces.
- We respect our Kupuna and believe older and more senior workers should not have to worry about retirement or fear for their health.
- We believe so called 'Right to Work' laws are wrong because they force unions to represent free-loaders that won't join or pay their fair share of the dues.
- If President Trump wasn't lying to American workers when he promised to make America Great he should be defending, not attacking Unions & collective bargaining.
- If you can't make America Great by attacking Unions & collective bargaining.

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Talking Points II

- “Right to work” is the name for a policy designed to take away rights from working people. Backers of right to work laws claim that these laws protect workers against being forced to join a union. The reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force someone to join a union.
- Number one on the new administration's anti-union to-do list is "right to work" -- or as many prefer to call it, "no rights at work" or "right to work for less." But whatever you call it, more of us will be faced with new laws that codify freeloading, making it optional to pay for union representation.
- Right to work laws originated as means to maintain Jim Crow labor relations and to beat back what was seen as a Jewish cabal to foment a revolution. No one was more important in placing right to work on the conservatives’ political agenda than Vance Muse of the Christian American Association, a larger-than-life Texan whose own grandson described him as 'a white supremacist, an anti-Semite and a Communist-baiter, a man who beat on labor unions not on behalf of working people, as he said, but because he was paid to do so.
- Martin Luther King Jr. called right-to-work a "false slogan" and said the laws "rob us of our civil rights and job rights." But proponents of the laws believe they're necessary for the growth of manufacturing and business that can bolster states' weak economies. A lack of nationwide right-to-work legislation, they argue, has resulted in "abuses of workers' human rights and civil liberties."
"In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as ‘right to work.’ It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and collective bargaining...”
- North Carolina has been a right-to-work state since 1949, thanks to a vote by an all-white Jim Crow legislature which also banned collective bargaining for public employees statewide. Today it has only a 3% union membership rate nearly the lowest in the country!
- Martin Luther King was killed in Memphis Tenn (a RTW state) where he was trying to help Sanitation Workers form a union.
- Higher poverty rate in right to work states compared to 12.8% in non-right to work states.
- Twelve of the 15 states with the worst pay gaps between men and women are “right to work” states.