

OPEIU LOCAL #9

Newsletter

For Bulletin Board Posting

MAY 2012

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PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, May 15, 2012
5:00 p.m.

SEIU Offices
209 W. Jackson Street
Chicago, IL
3rd Floor Conference Room

Refreshments will be served

A Victory for Public Employees

The Federal Courts recently ruled that parts of Act 10, Gov. Walker's union-busting law, were unconstitutional under the U.S. Constitution. While this ruling shows that Walker disregarded U.S. law when attempting to crush public sector unions, it does not fully restore the rights of public employees on the job.

The federal court ruled:

The requirement to recertify a union yearly with an absolute majority—51% of all bargaining unit members—is a violation of the constitutional protections of Free Speech and Equal Protection.

Denying a worker the right to voluntarily have union dues withheld from their paycheck violates their First Amendment Rights.

Justice William Conley immediately stopped the state from enforcing the absolute majority

requirement in union elections and set a deadline of May 31st to return automatic dues deduction for all members of public employee unions who so choose.

While full collective bargaining rights were not restored this is a step in the right direction. There is still much work to be done to ensure that all working families have the right to collectively bargain.

Health & Hygiene Drive Continues

The 23rd annual Health & Hygiene Drive, sponsored by the Community Services Committee of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council is running through June 8th.

Donations will be given out to homeless shelters in the area which are in need of products such as toothbrushes, tooth-paste, non-alcohol mouthwash, razors, shaving cream, combs, brushes, hair picks, hair care products, spray deodorant, lip balm, baby products, feminine hygiene products, paper products, laundry supplies, first aid supplies. Donations can be dropped off at: MALC office, 633 S. Hawley Road, any Milwaukee Fire station, or at the United Way at 225 W Vine St.

Scott Walker—Bad for WI Women

As we all know, workers are under attack in WI but women are now bearing the brunt of it. Who is to blame? Corporate-backed politicians typified by Scott Walker.

About 2 weeks ago, in the dead of night, Walker signed a piece of legislation that rolls back progress on pay equity in WI, where women make only 75 cents for every dollar a man earns doing the same job. (Wisconsin's rate was already worse than the

disheartening national average of 77 cents on the dollar.) Walker's legislation repeals a 2009 law that made it easier for victims of wage discrimination to have their day in court. This action just adds to the long list of reasons Wisconsin voters need to recall him on June 5th.

To add insult to injury, State Senator Glenn Grothman (R), who led the effort to enact this bill believes that pay discrimination is a myth driven by liberal women's groups. Ignoring the studies that show the pay gap exists, Grothman blamed females for prioritizing childrearing and homemaking instead of money, saying "Money is more important for men." Whatever gaps exist, he insists, stem from women's decisions to prioritize childrearing over their careers. "Take a hypothetical husband and wife who are both lawyers," he says. "The husband is working 50-60 hours a week, going all out, making 200 grand a year. The woman takes time off, raises kids, is not go, go, go. Now, they are 50 years old. The husband is making 200 grand and the woman is making 40 grand a year. It wasn't discrimination. There was a different sense of urgency in each person." He goes on to add that "you could argue money is more important to men. A guy in their first job, because they expect to be the breadwinner, may be a little more money-conscious. Grothman totally ignores the fact that in two-thirds of American families women are either the primary or co-bread-winners, and yet they still earn less than their male counterparts in all 50 states.

Additionally, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney has refused to denounce Walker's anti-worker, anti-women actions. Romney's campaign staff seemed stumped when asked if Romney supports the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the first law President Obama signed, making it easier for women to sue in wage discrimination cases. Campaign officials were silent, then said only,

"we'll get back to you on that." We are all still waiting to hear.

No public official should have to stop and think about pay equity. It is the right thing to do. And, it's the smart thing to do. When women do not get paid fairly, we all suffer. Yet, in Wisconsin, the systematic attacks on women's pay and voices continue. Walker's so-called budget-repair bill passed last year broke the backs of many women in the state, where the resulting layoffs and pay cuts disproportionately hit working women.

Pay equity emerged as a significant issue in the 1970's and unfortunately, continues, to this very day. We have made some strides as a nation but much remains to be done. But progress has been far too slow and scarce. We must finish what we started in the 1970s. We must make sure women earn equal pay for equal work. We must also stop corporate-backed politicians like Scott Walker and Rebecca Kleefisch and recall them on June 5th.

**VOTE—WI—RECALL SCOTT
WALKER & REBECCA KLEEFISCH
PRIMARY ELECTION MAY 8TH
GENERAL ELECTION JUNE 5TH**

As always if you have any problems do not hesitate to call or email the office.

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