

# STEEL VOICE



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## State Worker Rights Battles Spreading Nationwide

By Mark Gruenberg

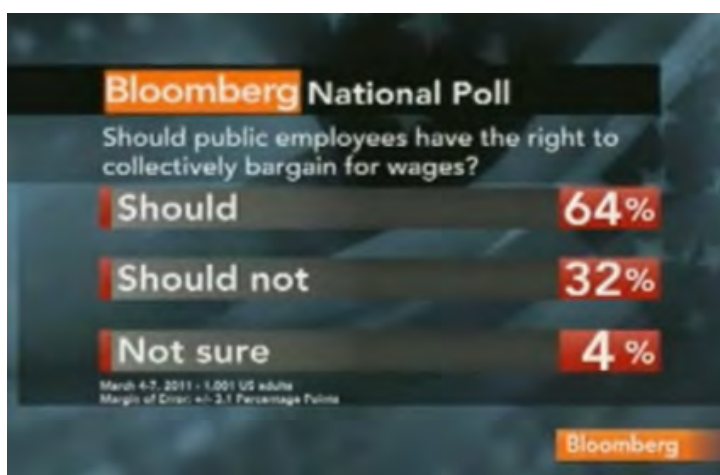
WASHINGTON (PAI) - Telling union leaders something rank-and-file members – and those members' friends and neighbors – know, the AFL-CIO's analyst of state and local governments reports battles to protect workers rights have spread nationwide.

Indeed, the Right Wing campaign against workers is so pervasive that Naomi Walker, the fed's Director of State Government Relations, had only enough time at the April 13 AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting to hit the high – or rather, low – lights of the Right Wing-GOP-business anti-worker drive. Doing every state would take hours.

And they problems are not just in



Union members rally at the Indiana Statehouse on March 10, 2011 to protest anti-worker legislation.



Wisconsin and Ohio, she told the two reporters covering the council meeting in an interview after her presentation.

Those states have been in the vanguard

of the war on workers. Right Wing Gov. Scott Walker, R-Wis., whose campaign was backed by the virulently anti-union Koch brothers, rich Kansas City oilmen, used late-night political maneuvering to strip 200,000 state and local workers – all but police and firefighters -- of collective bargaining rights.

⇒ See BATTLES, Page 6.

# My View

**Bruce Reed, Local Union Representative**



Brothers and Sisters:

In our last newsletter I discussed the fact the Republican majority in the State House and Senate would likely attack our Unions, as we know now the attack came quickly. Our Local Union had many members spend days off and vacation days to support the Democrats in the walk out supporting the working people of Indiana. The walk out led to the "right to work bill" being ultimately taken off the table for this session.

The attack on the working class is still going on, the Teachers Collective Bargaining rights are still on the table and will most likely be affected in a negative way for the people that we trust our children to on a daily basis. The State Senate has now presented a bill to restrict collective bargaining for teachers, bus drivers, janitors lunch room personnel and all other school support staff (SB 575). The Governor and his party have commercials running on television now that asks, why should

seniority be the reason for a teacher to keep their jobs? I guess we should ask why should a working person in any field keep their job just because they are senior or have experience. Using this logic we should look at the Doctors, Lawyers, Legislators, Nurses, Judges and any other field of work.

Our Teachers have educated themselves to do the job in the manner the State of Indiana has asked them to do, and now the Legislators in power are saying we want our friends in the private school sector to have the money to fund their schools, not public schools. Our fight with this group of legislators is about more than just "right to work", it's about every working man and woman in this State, and the right to collectively bargain with their employers, whether public employers or private.

The issues they are debating and driving through to become law are not the issues they campaigned on during the election process. All we heard was jobs and taxes, anybody heard the Republican Representatives talk about cutting taxes or job creation since the session started?

They have said the "right to work" will create jobs! If that is a fact, then all the jobs should already be in the southern states where "right to work" has been in effect for many years. The only people to gain from "right to work" are the employers; they will not have to bargain collectively with their employees.

We stood in support of the House Representatives that supported the middle class working man early in the session; we must continue to let all the Representatives and Senators

know we are still watching. Support the Representatives that support us and write, email and call to support them; also let the ones that do not support the workers of Indiana know we will not forget who they are in the next election. □



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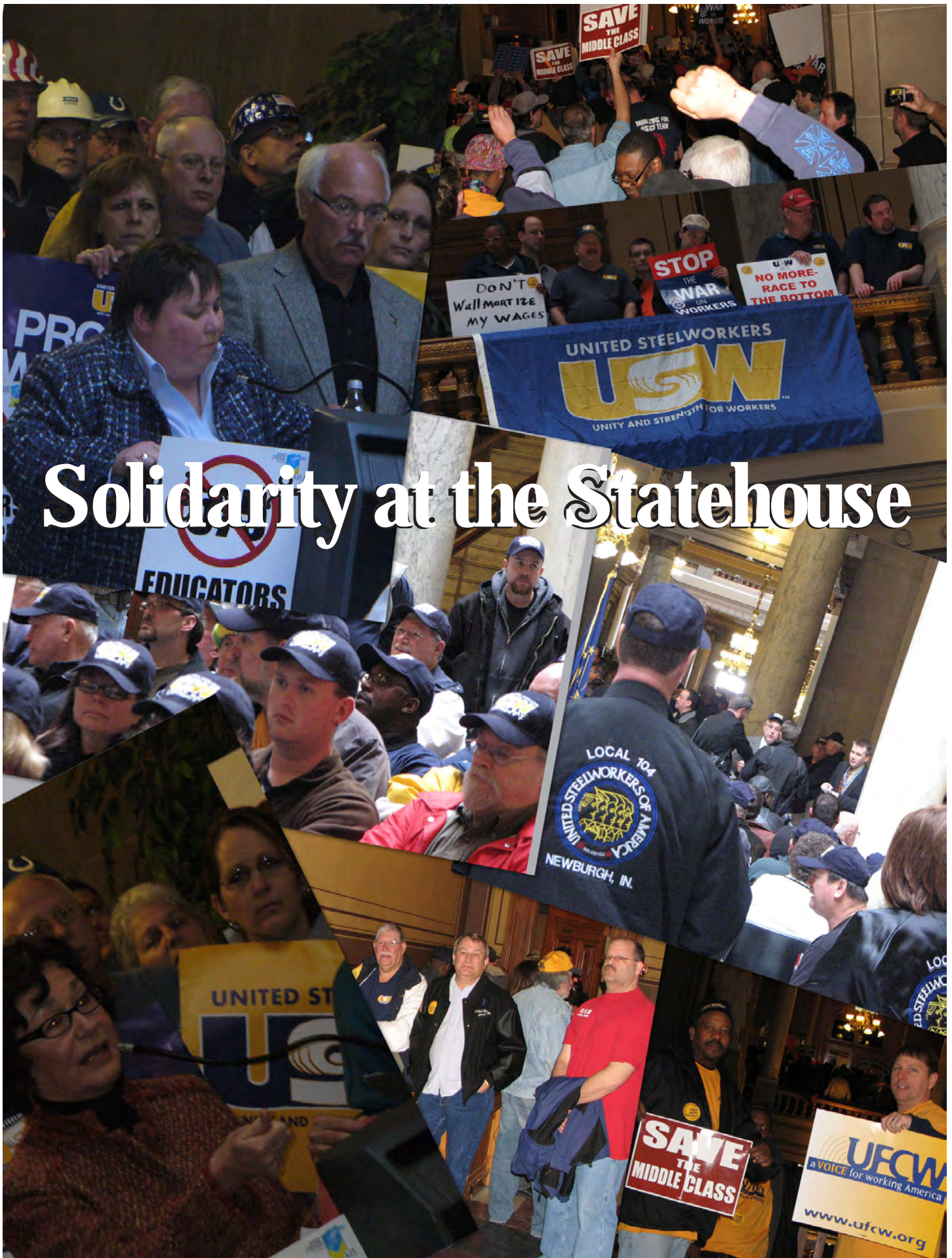
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# Unionists To Take Anti-Worker Ohio Law To Statewide Vote

By Mark Gruenberg

COLUMBUS, Ohio (PAI)—Move over, Wisconsin. On March 31, Ohio's dominant GOP enacted an anti-worker law that's even more draconian than the Badger State's virtual ban on collective bargaining. Ohio unions are responding by planning to put their state's law to a statewide vote — where they're confident they'll beat it.

The law, pushed through the GOP-run Ohio legislature by Right Wing GOP Gov. John Kasich, would extremely limit collective bargaining for all 400,000 state and local government workers in the Buckeye State. That's what Right Wing GOP Gov. Scott Walker did to 200,000 workers, except police and fire fighters, in Wisconsin.

Kasich's law, like Walker's, is part of a nationwide Right Wing push in the states, funded by the GOP's business backers and pushed by national and local Republicans, to strip workers of rights and protections built up starting in the New Deal.

But the Ohio law would do more:

- Force any local union contracts that included raises to local public votes.
- Allow non-union employees in a workplace covered by the union contract — and whom the unions must by law represent, too — to withhold "fair share" payments of the unions' costs of representing

them.

- The state's 350,000 teachers, police, fire fighters and other public workers, could bargain only on wages, hours, and employment terms and conditions. Their em-

of proven identification, such as a birth certificate, to register to vote.

In a state with a high jobless rate and hundreds of thousands out of work for more than a year, meeting those requirements would be both



Protesters rally against Senate Bill 5 in Columbus before the bill's recent passage.

ployers, the governments, could unilaterally set terms — or dump — health benefits and pension contributions and change workforce levels. The bill also bans strikes and eliminates binding arbitration for police and fire fighters.

As if that wasn't enough, Ohio Republicans introduced other legislation to deprive thousands of their opponents of the right to vote. That measure, HB159, would force people to present not just a current state-issued photo ID — such as a driver's license — but other forms

too costly and unconstitutional, state AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Pierrette "Petey" Talley wrote lawmakers. It would particularly disenfranchise the young, minorities, the elderly and the disabled, she told the state House's Government and Elections Committee.

Talley called HB159 the most restrictive voter ID bill in the U.S., adding: "We believe it is unconstitutional to require anyone to expend any money to exercise the right to

⇒ See OHIO, Page 13.



# Strong As Steelworkers

Chuck Jones, President



I want to thank everyone that came out and supported our efforts at the State House. I also want to thank all of the Democrat State Representatives. They left the state and refused to allow the Republican State Representatives to destroy the unions and the working class people. I am very proud to be a Union Member and a Democrat, but I can't express how great this made me feel. The Democrat State Representatives showed a true solidarity, and they managed to last "One Day Longer."

I feel and I hope you do too, that we owe them tremendously. Our thanks and respect they deserve. Anything that we can do for them now or in their re-election campaigns, we need to make sure as union brothers and sisters, that we get behind them and fight for them just as they fought for us. Without them we would not have won this battle.

Hundreds to thousands of people showed up on a daily basis to gather

in protest against the Republicans attempt to implement the "Right to Work Bill." We defiantly consider this a huge victory; however we cannot let down our guard or assume that our fight is over. The only way to insure a true victory is by getting Democrats elected to offices such as Governor, Mayor, State House, and State Senate. These are the public service offices that make and determine State Laws. We do have quite a bit of work to do in order to accomplish this but I am confident if the working men and women continue to be united, we will get it done. We have some very strong union members.

During the past month many of you came out in the cold, the rain, and even on a few nice days to represent the United Steelworkers. Some of you took your vacation days and your personal days. And some of you just took unpaid days off. As President of this local I want

you to know that no one went unnoticed. Your time and actions will not be forgotten. I have a very special thanks to Lori Landers-Rippey. For those that don't know Lori, she has been battling cancer for some time now. She is in the process of retiring from Carrier Corporation due to her medical issues. This is her third time being diagnosed with this horrible disease. Lori managed, even in her weakened state, to come to the State House. She wanted to show her support for working men and women and the United Steelworkers. I asked Lori what she was doing there and her reply was "I feel like it is my duty." If Lori's conviction is this strong, I am convinced that we can prevail at anything. I have a great admiration for Lori and I wish her the best of luck and a speedy recovery.

Thank you. □



**Greg and Lori Landers-Rippey with Vickie Burrus protesting at the Indiana Statehouse.**

**⇌BATTLES, From Page 1.**

Gov. John Kasich, R-Ohio, a former congressman and Wall Street bond trader, pushed through an even more draconian package, called SB5, banning collective bargaining for 350,000 state and local workers – including police and firefighters – outlawing strikes and dumping the right to organize for home health care aides, among other things. And he's not done yet, Naomi Walker said.

In Congress, the ruling House GOP gave Scott Walker a national platform at an April 14 House Oversight Committee hearing on how states are coping with fiscal crises. And Naomi Walker calculates Right Wing groups plan to spend \$174 million on TV ads promoting their anti-worker schemes. Other key state trouble spots include:

- Indiana State House Democrats blocked the ruling GOP's right-to-work legislation by decamping to Champaign-Urbana, Ill., depriving the House of a quorum, Naomi Walker noted. That still leaves the Indiana state House GOP pushing to ban project labor agreements on state-funded construction, advocating letting taxpayer dollars be used for vouchers to send kids to private schools "and some bills that would have even criminalized collective bargaining," Naomi Walker added.

The Indiana right-to-work bill is dead for now: GOP Gov. Mitch Daniels, whose executive order six years ago dumped state worker collective bargaining rights, told fellow Republicans to cool it on that issue. The bill has been pigeonholed in committee.

- Ohio's ban on collective bargaining, which Kasich pushed through, prompted a "citizens petition" against it that gathered 6,000 signatures in the first 48 hours. The state AFL-CIO drew thousands to a kickoff rally on April 9 in the state capital of Columbus for its petition drive to put SB5 on this fall's referendum ballot. Keeping momentum against SB5 through Nov. 2012 would be hard, Naomi Walker said.

She warned the AFL-CIO council that "Kasich may try to embed parts" of SB5 in a budget bill "which can't be overturned," thus negating the unionists' petition drive.

"We're expecting everything" from the GOP-run Ohio legislature "from privatization of public services to right-to-work" to attacks on prevailing wage laws, she said.

- The New Hampshire House approved a bill giving state and local governments a green light to refuse to bargain new public employee contracts. It would let the governments declare an impasse when old pacts expire and then immediately turn all workers into "free will" employees, depriving them of contracts and legal protection.

Naomi Walker said that scheme, too, is buried in a budget bill. News reports quote the state senate's GOP leader as skeptical of it. Gov. John Lynch (D) vows to veto it. Granite State unions plan ways to round up enough votes to back Lynch's veto.

- The Missouri GOP's "paycheck deception" plan, virtually outlawing union political contributions, is apparently headed for a 2012 referendum ballot. "The National Organization for Women sent out a state-

wide e-mail to its members about the harmful impact that would have on working people," Naomi Walker says. She cites that as an example of how labor is attracting allies in its fights against the Right. A right-to-work bill was debated, then yanked, in the GOP-run Missouri senate.

- Paycheck deception also reared its head in Florida. So have Right Wing plans to eliminate project labor agreements, and to force unions to stand yearly for members' re-certification. The GOP also wants to kill local construction hiring preferences and even registered apprenticeship programs, hurting building trades unions – in a state that's among the worst in construction unemployment data – and minorities.

- States are also moving to eliminate opposition to the Right Wing agenda by depriving those whom they view as foes of their voting rights and political power, Naomi Walker pointed out. In Arizona, the GOP is trying to repeal a state law approving partial public financing of elections – a law now before the U.S. Supreme Court.

And 33 states, with New Hampshire and Ohio in the lead, are trying to disenfranchise groups of voters, especially students, the elderly, the disabled and minorities, through various strict "voter ID" requirements. The court upheld a strict Indiana ID law several years ago.

□

# ESCAPE



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# Rail Unions: Number Of Leaky Or Damaged Cars With Hazardous Materials Doubled

WASHINGTON (PAI)—The number of leaky or damaged rail freight cars containing hazardous materials, such as chlorine, has virtually doubled in the last four years, a coalition of seven railroad unions told the federal government.

And the feds should reject railroads' demands for "blanket approval" in advance for moving those cars — and their materials — to railroad-

investigate why the number of movements of damaged freight cars with hazardous materials has doubled so quickly.

The unions' March 24 letter about the leaky and broken cars containing hazardous materials comes as FRA is considering a demand by two business lobbies, the Chlorine Institute and the Association of American Railroads, for the "blan-

Engineers and Trainmen/Teamsters (BLE), was killed.

The derailment occurred near a school, though at night, sparing the children. It also endangered the surrounding community with release of the chlorine gas, BLE said.

The Transport Workers, BLE/Teamsters, the Train Dispatchers, the Maintenance of Way Employees/Teamsters, the Railroad Signalmen, the Transportation Communications Union/Machinists and the United Transportation Union "are opposed to any 'blanket' movement approvals that would be self-executing upon submission to FRA."

"FRA has the enforcement authority and statutory responsibility to ensure the safe transportation of hazardous materials, including the issuance of movement approvals with appropriate limiting conditions for non-conforming tank cars and packages," their letter said.

"FRA cannot abandon its statutory authority to investigate the safety implications of moving non-conforming cars and packages, nor can FRA process requests for movement approvals without a detailed investigation of the circumstances and risks associated with each incident of non-conformance on a case-by-case basis."

Case-by-case investigation is what happens now. Then, FRA issues waivers to let railroads move dam



specified repair shops, which may not be the closest repair shops, the unions, led by the Transport Workers, add.

Instead, they said, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) should continue its current policy of approving moves of such damaged cars on a case-by-case basis, with added pre-movement warning to all workers who could be endangered. They also asked the agency to in-

ket waivers" to let them move those damaged freight cars anywhere at any time without prior FRA investigation and approval.

Movement of such cars is important not just to union workers, but to communities nationwide. For example, a derailment in South Carolina released chlorine gas from a damaged tank car several years ago. The engineer, a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive

⇒ See RAIL, Page 9.



# Betty Dukes: Small Wal-Mart Action Leads To Big Sexual Discrimination Suit

By Mark Gruenberg

PITTSBURG, Calif. (PAI)—It all started with something Betty Dukes didn't do in 1998 at a Wal-Mart store in Pittsburg, Calif. She didn't come back late from lunch.

But her manager said she did and initiated retaliatory "coaching" for the veteran greeter at the store. But there were no such warnings, or punishments, for male co-workers who did come back late, she noticed.

rial vacancies, but was never told of opportunities. When vacancies opened, they went to less-qualified men. And she got demoted – and her pay cut – after the "coaching." Men did not.

Then she started asking questions: How much were the men paid? How much were the women paid? Who got the higher ratings – and who got the management jobs? And all those questions, banded to-

orah Gunter, Christine Kwapnoski, Stephanie Odle and other female Wal-Mart workers looked on, their attorneys argued the class-action suit they and almost 1.6 million other present and former female Wal-Mart workers filed should go forward. The suit covers from 1998 until the present.

Wal-Mart attorneys argued it shouldn't. Wal-Mart argued Dukes, Kwapnoski and the others should sue it – the world's largest private enterprise – one by one.

In an interview with Press Associates Union News Service after the High Court hearing, Dukes says she shouldn't have to do that.

"I was aware of gender and racial discrimination and I was falsely accused of violating a policy" that wasn't even on Wal-Mart's books, she said. That's when Dukes started talking to female co-workers. They discovered men were paid more, despite women's better evaluations and more experience, and that promotions were skewed.

"So I started looking for legal help and while talking to the lawyers about what happened to me, I also mentioned to them the other discrimination that was going on."

What was going on was pervasive, company-wide sexual discrimination, lawyers for the women say. Drawing on depositions from the



Wal-Mart employee Betty Dukes stands in front of a Wal-Mart in Pittsburgh, California.

And Dukes, now 61, a dignified well-spoken African-American woman distinguished by a ready smile, a steely will, and wire-rimmed glasses, started noticing other things at her Wal-Mart, too. She wanted training for manage-

gether with similar questions from other woman workers at other Wal-Marts, led Betty Dukes and her colleagues to the U.S. Supreme Court on March 29.

There, as Dukes, Edith Arana, Deb-

➡See SUIT, Page 12.

# WE NEED AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE



Our economy has been failing for years, and the middle class has been shrinking with it. Corporate CEOs have outsourced our jobs, dismantled pensions and demanded wage, benefit and hour cuts. It's almost impossible to get ahead.

But these concessions aren't enough for CEOs. Along with the politicians they backed in the election, corporations are attacking workers and their ability to fight back. They're trying to weaken and eliminate workers' unions so they can tilt the balance of power even more.

It's time to put an end to these political games. We need to work together to create quality jobs here at home and to restore balance to our economy.

**CALL YOUR STATE SENATOR AT  
800-382-9467**

**OR STATE REPRESENTATIVE AT  
800-382-9842**

## Unit 07 Carrier

Brothers and sisters,

Negotiations have begun at Carrier. The negotiating committee is fighting for the membership on several issues. The company is coming after us on several issues.

The committee would like to remind members to call on your ANS. FMLA is under attack. You are responsible to check your attendance points yourself. If you have a problem you must address it with the Company. The company is not removing attendance points over 90 days old.

When filing for medical leave you must check to make sure all your papers have been received in the medical department and that they are filled out properly.

In Solidarity,  
Vickie Clark Burrus  
Unit 07 Vice President

## Unit 09 Quemetco

Brothers and Sisters,

Things are going well for us here at Quemetco. The price of lead has been staying over \$1 a pound. That is very good for us. The company is spending a lot of money right now for plant improvements. We are currently seeing a feed room expansion for our main furnace and installation of a Wet Electrostatic Precipitator (WESP). The WESP will further re-

move contaminants from our stack exhaust gases.

On April 1, our weekly contribution for our insurance decreased by about \$12 a week. This was due to our overall premium decreasing for the year. The company passed this savings on to us.

Although the local decided not to send anyone to the Joint Management Union Safety Conference in Merrillville due to financial reasons, the company has agreed to send two of our safety committee members to the conference.

I would like to thank everyone who showed up at the Statehouse for the rallies and protests. I want to thank Bruce Reed and Chuck Jones who were at the Statehouse everyday representing Local 1999. I am very grateful to the House Democrats who made the sacrifice of being away from their families to stand up for working families. We won the battle on "Right to Work" but the war on the middle class still rages on. I want to encourage everyone to stay in contact with their representatives both here in Indianapolis and Washington D.C. We must be diligent in our fight to protect the working families we represent. No one else is standing up for them.

In Solidarity,  
Kelly Ray Hugunin  
Unit 09 President

## Unit 13 Diamond Chain

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I want to thank everyone who

took the time to come down to the Statehouse to protest "Right to Work". I would also like to thank the Democrats who stayed in Illinois to protect us from the anti-worker bills that the Republicans were trying to push through.

The company has announced that they want to go smoke free at the plant. We are working on this issue.

Our grievance load has been steady.

In Solidarity,  
Mike Hensley  
Unit 13 President

## Unit 17 Mid America Extrusion

Brothers and Sisters,

Our business is still slow, shipping just over 680,000 pounds of aluminum. On a brighter note 98.2% on time deliveries for the month of March.

We have one grievance at the third step.

I would like to thank all those who attended the rallies at the statehouse and our politicians in support of the labor movement.

In Solidarity,  
Howard W. Davis  
Unit 17 President



**⇒SUIT, From Page 9.**

women who have been willing to step forward, they described a corporate culture at Wal-Mart of lower pay for equal work, of refusal to post vacancies but instead reserving them for men, of lack of promotions and of sexual condescension.

That includes the fact that women with the same qualifications and experience as men consistently earned \$1,100 less per year, each. That includes the fact that even though Wal-Mart's workforce is majority fe-



male, only 33% of low-level managers are women and the proportion sharply shrinks the higher you go in the Wal-Mart hierarchy.

Kwapnoski, of Bay Point, Calif., said the sexual condescension, discrimination and harassment was the same at her Sam's Club. Kwapnoski had a back-office no-contact-with-customers entry-level Receiving Office Manager job, which she finally got after the class-action case began in 2001. Her general manager gave her

**⇒See SUIT, Page 13.**

**⇒RAIL, From Page 4.**

aged freight cars containing hazardous materials to the nearest repair shop, the unions said. As a result, there has not been a fatal accident involving a previously damaged car containing hazardous materials in 16 years, they noted.

But with FRA short-staffed and under budget constraints, continued growth in railroad requests for such waivers – due to continued growth in the movement of damaged freight cars – raises the possibility of such an accident, their letter said.

To both prevent an accident and to make the movement of such damaged cars, and their hazardous materials, safer for workers and communities, the seven unions recommended FRA adopt several safeguards:

- “Leaking or unstable containers must be temporarily or per-

manently plugged, patched and stabilized prior to movement approval authority being granted, and then be required to be transported to the nearest repair facility. It makes little sense to move a damaged or nonconforming container hundreds of miles forward when a qualified repair facility may be much closer in the opposite direction.”

- Continued case-by-case decision-making on railroad requests to move such damaged cars for repairs. The unions said FRA should also set conditions for speed of the freight trains with such cars, clearances underneath bridges, and “buffer cars” between the damaged cars and the rest of the train.

- Notify rail workers in advance and provide protection for them if their freight trains include the problem freight cars with the hazardous materials. FRA recently proposed railroads be given three years to stock emergency escape

breathing equipment for workers in such situations. The unions want to shorten that to three months for the largest railroads and one year for the rest.

- Tell all workers at risk, union and non-union, about the hazard, in advance. The emergency breathing apparatus requirement, the unions said, would apply only to union workers. That's wrong, they added.

“FRA must require every request for movement of a non-conforming container or tank car – as specifically as possible – to identify populations of employees who potentially may be exposed. Each approval must be conditioned upon notification and protection of those employees who will potentially be exposed to the hazardous material prior to when it is trans-loaded or moved to the repair facility.” □

**⇐SUIT, From Page 12.**

“advice.”

“I was told to ‘blow the cobwebs off my makeup’ and ‘doll up,’” Kwapnoski said. But it wasn’t just makeup; it was something more.

The manager also told her that men were being promoted and getting raises – while she was not – because “they have families to support.”

“Well, at the time I was a single mom with two kids. I, too, have a family to support,” Kwapnoski says.

The case has gone on so long that

one of the women, Odle, who now lives in Norman, Okla., showed reporters a picture of her daughter, at age 3, when it began.

“I made a promise that she wouldn’t have to go through what I had to go through. And here we are,” Odle said, gesturing at the 14-year-old girl beside her.

Wal-Mart’s defense in the High Court, said the attorneys for the women, came down to two arguments: That it’s too big to sue and that because it has an employee handbook that outlaws sexual discrimination on the job, that should be enough.

And in their press conference after the High Court hearing on whether the class-action case should go forward to an actual trial, Wal-Mart attorneys trotted out a female manager who said she got her position in fewer than four years after being hired.

That doesn’t surprise Dukes or her colleagues: They told reporters that in recent years, Wal-Mart has changed some policies, such as posting managerial vacancies. In a way, Dukes told PAI, the women suing Wal-Mart have already won.

“It started as Dukes vs. Wal-Mart,” she said. “Now, it’s Wal-Mart vs. Dukes.” □

**⇐OHIO, From Page 4.**

vote.”

But it was the anti-worker measure, SB5, that caused the uproar in Ohio, just as Walker’s collective bargaining ban did in Wisconsin and nationwide. Thousands of workers and their allies thronged the state capitol building in Columbus for weeks, but were locked out by state troopers acting on Kasich’s orders.

And the late-night Ohio House session giving final approval to the measure was so jammed and so raucous – from protests coming from the galleries – that the GOP House speaker ordered the troopers to clear it out, too.

Faced with Kasich’s anti-worker law, the Ohio AFL-CIO put together a mass noontime rally on the Capitol lawn on April 9 to launch its referendum campaign, spokesman Andy Richards told Press Associ-

ates Union News Service.

And non-AFL-CIO unions, including the Teamsters, the Ohio Education Association and the Service Employees, have joined the petition drive to get the vote on SB5 on this November’s ballot, Richards added.

Kasich signed SB5 on March 31. The state attorney general had 10 days to two weeks to polish its legal language. Once it’s in final form, the unionists can start gathering signatures for their referendum.

“This law is a shameful attack on people who care for us when we’re sick, rush into burning buildings to save our lives, clear snow from the roads during blizzards, come to our rescue when we’re in trouble and protect us from criminals in prisons,” Teamsters President James Hoffa said in announcing his union’s support for the referendum. “It has nothing to do with fixing the budget or creating jobs. It’s union

busting, plain and simple.”

Unionists must gather approximately 230,000 valid names from voters residing in at least half of Ohio’s 88 counties in 90 days to put a referendum on overturning the anti-worker law on this fall’s ballot, Richards added. They intend to get a lot more than the minimum, both as a show of strength and to play it safe. The strength is there, Richards declared. Latest polls show voters would defeat SB5, 54%-31%.

But Richards doesn’t underestimate the opposition. Karl Rove, George W. Bush’s political guru, has already bought \$5.6 million in TV ads pushing Kasich’s law. The Chamber of Commerce plans to spend \$20 million to defend it. “They’re trying to create a permanent underclass that they can exploit, for their corporate buddies,” Richards said of Ohio’s ruling GOP. □

# Take a new look at collective bargaining

By Carl Hostler

I see much irony in the public view of collective bargaining. The most successful unions in the country are the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, The American Medical Association, the American Bar Association and other business groups.

The whole idea of a union is not that complicated. They want to get the best deal they can for their members.

When business associations band together to get their best deals, we call it capitalism. When working people band together to try to get a good deal for them, many call it socialism.

you would love to have as a next-door neighbor. They are not looking for anything other than best circumstance they can get for their members. Sounds awfully much like the Chamber of Commerce, doesn't it?

Another irony is the link that unions have to the middle class. Arguably, they were a strong impetus to the creation of the middle class. As unions bargained and struck to get things such as eight-hour days, just cause for discharge, pension benefits, health benefits and safety, the managers and staff of companies wound up with the same thing.

The middle class has been shrinking

civil discontent occur when the gap between the haves and the have-nots is the widest. There's no question that gap is currently widening throughout the world.

Unions try, as best they can, to reduce that gap and are publicly branded as outcasts for it. I just don't get it.

The size of the bargaining pie never changes. It's determined by economics. Who gets what portion of the pie is collective bargaining.

Unions yell "fair" and their critics automatically want to turn fair into a four-letter word.



If we bail out AIG, Chrysler and others, that's called a safety net. If we provide welfare to people who need it, that's called socialism.

Unions, just like companies, are only as good as the people who operate them. If you take the time to meet Kenny Perdue, Larry Metheney, Pat Maroney, Ken Hall, Greg Gore, Cecil Roberts, Ed Boone, Eddie Mullins and the other folks who steer the ship of unions in this area, you'll find that they are people that

since the 1980s. Both parents now have to work to afford a four-person family. Coincidence? The real sorry part of it is that it's the middle class that puts its kids in the military, pays taxes, volunteers, gives blood and otherwise shoulders a big part of the load of this country.

In the 1970s, the average CEO compensation had a ratio of 40:1 when compared to the person working on the shop floor. Today that ratio is 400:1. History tells us that eras of

Johnson and Johnson did a study of plant efficiency in the 1980s. They found that, worldwide, their most efficient plants were the union plants where labor and management were most open in their discussions. Imagine that, the act of people co-operating is actually efficient.

That's not to say that every shop should be union. I have many friends who own and operate small-to medium-size businesses that are not union. Their employees are their friends and they take good care of them. But we all know that as companies get bigger, workers change from people into numbers.

I can't help but worry that those who would eliminate unions are missing the boat. I don't think that they realize that if unions disappear, then the middle class may be out the door as well. □



# We're Standing Up for Public Schools and Their Dedicated Workforces



**Public school workers are under attack in Indiana.** We're pushing back and urging legislators to vote NO on bills designed to hurt teachers and public education.

**CALL YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS TODAY.**

Ask them to:

- ☒ **Vote No on Senate Bill 575**—Taking collective bargaining rights from public school workers.
- ☒ **Vote No on Senate Bill 1**—Promoting unfair evaluation of teachers.
- ☒ **Vote No on House Bill 1003**—Diverting taxpayer dollars from public schools to private and religious schools.

**CALL YOUR STATE  
LEGISLATORS  
TODAY.**

STATE SENATORS  
**800-382-9467**

STATE  
REPRESENTATIVES  
**800-382-9842**

**Tell them to stand up for teachers, custodial workers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and other employees in our public schools.**

## STEEL VOICE

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## SENATOR BERNIE SANDERS' GUIDE TO CORPORATE FREELoadERS

- 1 Exxon Mobil's** 2009 profits totaled \$19 billion, yet according to its SEC filings, the company received **A \$156 MILLION REBATE** from the IRS. **PLUS, IT DIDN'T PAY ANY FEDERAL TAXES.**
- 2 Bank of America** made \$4.4 billion in profits last year. This was after it received **A \$1 TRILLION BAILOUT** from the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department, and **A \$1.9 BILLION TAX REFUND** from the IRS.
- 3 General Electric** has made \$26 billion in profits in the United States over the past five years. It's also received **A \$4.1 BILLION TAX REFUND** from the IRS. **GE HAS CUT A FIFTH OF ITS AMERICAN JOBS** in the past nine years, and is boosting jobs overseas—where tax rates are lower. And where it can continue evading U.S. taxes.
- 4 Chevron's** IRS **REFUND LAST YEAR TOTALED \$19 MILLION**, but its 2009 profits came to a whopping \$10 billion.
- 5 Boeing** received a \$30 billion contract from the Pentagon to build 179 airborne tankers. It also received a **\$124 MILLION REFUND FROM THE IRS.**
- 6 Valero Energy** made \$68 billion in sales and received a **\$157 MILLION TAX REFUND** check from the IRS. Over the past three years, it has received a \$134 million tax break thanks to the oil and gas manufacturing tax reduction.
- 7 Goldman Sachs** paid **1.1% OF ITS 2008 INCOME IN TAXES.** Yet it made a **PROFIT OF \$2.3 BILLION.** And guess how much it received from the Federal Reserve and U.S. Treasury Department? \$800 billion.
- 8 Citigroup** profits last year totaled more than \$4 billion. But it paid zero dollars in federal income tax, and **RECEIVED A \$2.5 TRILLION BAILOUT** from the Federal Reserve and U.S. Treasury.
- 9 ConocoPhillips'** profits from 2007 through 2009 totaled \$16 billion, **BUT IT WAS STILL AWARDED \$451 MILLION IN TAX BREAKS** because of the oil and gas manufacturing deduction.
- 10 Carnival Cruise Lines** is apparently getting pretty good business: Its profits over the past five years totaled more than \$11 billion. **ITS FEDERAL INCOME TAX RATE, HOWEVER, CAME TO JUST 1.1%.**