

The United Worker

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Trumka: Workers 'Not Interested in a Sliver of Change,' Demand Economy That Works for Them, Not One Percent

Editor's note: The following piece was written by Mark Gruenberg, editor, Press Associates News Service. It has been slightly edited to conform to local style.

Workers are "not interested in a sliver of change or gestures" from politicians, but demand massive shifts to an economy that works for them, and not the one percent, said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka August 29 during an annual pre-Labor Day press breakfast hosted by The Christian Science Monitor.

Primed by their unions, they already demand and get that commitment from presidential hopefuls on the campaign trail, he added.

That economy that works for all must include strong worker rights safeguards, through the Pro Act (Protect the Right to Organize) on Capitol Hill and through massive changes in labor laws and enforcement in Mexico before the U.S. Congress ratifies any "new NAFTA" pact, Trumka said. "We need action to transform the economy," and not just in trade pacts.

Trumka noted that unions' popularity, at least as measured by an annual Gallup Poll, reached a record 64% approval. But that hasn't translated, yet, into increasing union numbers, due to the loopholes and flaws of U.S.

labor law.

He sees change coming, though, citing new state-level legislation that will open the way to organizing more than 120,000 workers and due to the fact that public employee unions, thought to be harmed by last year's U.S. Supreme Court *Janus* decision, have added 200,000 members in AFSCME and 88,000 in the American Federation of Teachers alone.

But the disconnect between popularity and results has led the AFL-CIO, in its preparations for the 2020 presidential campaign, to undertake a massive education effort among its unions' members, prepping them on questions for the Democratic contenders. The quizzes are a prelude to what Trumka predicts will be a record labor political effort next year, though he gave no details.

Those questions involve kitchen-table issues, such as years of stagnant wages, pensions which crashed in the Great Recession, increased corporate shifting of health care spending from firms to workers, and the right to organize free of corporate interference and repression. The Pro Act, designed to massively strengthen labor law, now has more than 200 U.S. House co-sponsors and 41 Senate co-sponsors.

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Richard Trumka
President, AFL-CIO

Democratic Lawmakers Introduce National Domestic Bills on Workers Rights

Editor's note: The following story was provided by Press Associates News Service. It has been slightly edited to conform to local style.

Saying it's time to legally stand up for the nation's millions of domestic workers, the co-chair of the House Progressive Caucus and a top Democratic presidential contender on July 15 introduced nationwide domestic workers' rights bills.

If enacted, the legislation (HR3760 and S2112, respectively) by Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Washington), and Sen. Kamala Harris (D-California) would bring a measure of job equity to one of the nation's most-exploited groups of workers: Maids, house cleaners, nannies and home health care assistants among them.

Ninety percent of those 2.5 million workers are women and the overwhelming majority of them are women of color, migrants into the U.S., or both, statistics show.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), headed by activist and organizer Ai Jen-Poo, has pushed the Domestic Workers Bill

Of Rights through in New York, Illinois, Oregon, California, Nevada, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Hawaii and New Mexico, plus the city of Seattle. NDWA now wants to take it nationwide.

"For the first time in history, we have a chance to raise the bar for every domestic worker in our country, and set the stage for all working people," said Ai-Jen Poo.

The workers need it. The 1935 National Labor Relations Act and the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act – the nation's two basic labor laws, one which OKs the right to organize and the other which establishes the minimum wage and overtime pay – exempt domestic workers.

That's a legacy of racism and sexism: President Franklin Roosevelt needed the support of Southern Democrats to pass both, and their price was deliberate omission of jobs held by black and brown people, including domestic work for women and farm work for Hispanic-named people of both sexes.

The five-man majority on the U.S. Supreme Court continued that legacy

several years ago, ruling against the Service Employees International Union when it sued on behalf for minimum wages on behalf of an home health care worker who was among those they were trying to organize.

Without legal rights, the workers are open to both exploitation and abuse, NDWA says. The bill of rights would outlaw sexual harassment and racial discrimination against the domestic workers, among other provisions. It would also establish a national wage standards board to set pay, and ensure domestic workers who toil as live-in caregivers or nannies get decent pay, not pennies.

"Domestic workers do the work most precious to us: Caring for our homes and loved ones. But they don't have the basic rights and dignity they deserve," Ai-Jen Poo said on NDWA's website. Many don't even have written contracts and can be fired on a whim.

"Home care workers, nannies and house cleaners have been excluded from basic labor protections. Many domestic workers are afraid to speak up about wage theft, discrimination, and unsafe working conditions because they fear losing their jobs or being torn from their families by deportation," the site added.

Provisions of the legislation include:

- Bringing domestic workers under labor and civil rights laws.
- Mandated paid overtime, safe

and healthy working conditions, rest and meal breaks and penalties for lawbreakers, including employers or clients who sexually harass the workers.

■ New protections to "address the unique challenges of domestic work," such as mandated written agreements, fair scheduling, the wage and standards board and support for survivors of sexual harassment.

■ A know-your-rights hotline and information, "co-enforcement mechanisms, and provisions to protect against retaliation."

"The work of domestic workers is so incredibly important, both as caregivers and as organizers. This is the work our economy is built on, yet too often, it's undervalued and underappreciated," Harris said. "We all deserve basic rights, safety, and dignity in the workplace. By fighting for fairness and equal treatment, we are fighting for the best of who we are as a country."

"We have to look at is the cost of not providing these basic civil rights protections to what is now one of the fastest growing workforces in the country," said Jayapal. "It underpins our economy."

"As people live longer, we have the opportunity to embrace an intergenerational future in America, where all of us are cared for at each stage of our lives. All of us deserve to work and live with safety and dignity, and this legislation ensures that no one is left behind," Ai-Jen Poo added.

From the President

Labor Day Brought Vital Fact to Light

Media coverage of this year's Labor Day often included what I consider a crucial fact. Namely, the general public has a favorable view of organized labor – but people who want to join unions often fight an unfairly uphill battle.



Michael Sacco

AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka, who's been a friend for many years, did a great job throughout a series of interviews explaining why our country is long overdue for extensive labor-law reform. The deck is severely stacked against workers in most traditional organizing campaigns. We've gotten to this point through decades of attacks on unions. Those attacks – sometimes sneaky, sometimes brazen – have taken a toll and have eroded too many protections.

And that's basically why the movement's numbers are where they are. It's a flat-out falsehood that unions aren't needed anymore, or that people aren't interested in joining. Nonpartisan polling shows that people do indeed value what collective bargaining and union representation have to offer. They understand that union representation is the only effective way to have a voice in the workplace. They'd welcome the chance to sign up, and they know that union members consistently earn more money and have better benefits than unrepresented workers. But, too often, employers have all the power during an organizing campaign, and they face few if any penalties for breaking the law.

It's no secret that when unions are strong, the middle class is strong. And America's businesses and workers, from the 1930s to the 1970s, grew together. But since then, companies have gotten more prosperous while workers' pay largely has stayed the same.

We have an opportunity to turn this ship around, and as always, it starts at the ballot box. The 2020 elections, incredibly, are only a year away. They are scheduled for Tuesday, November 3, 2020 and take it from me, a lot is on the line. All 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives, 34 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate, and the office of president of the United States will be contested. Thirteen state and territorial governorships, as well as numerous other state and local elections, will also be contested. There are also elections before the end of this year. Stay informed about the issues and candidates, and support candidates at every level of government who'll support America's working families and the maritime industry. The UIW has never cared about political party and that'll be the case again next year. We'll back those who back us, period.

Grassroots and Civility

Speaking of politics, I enjoyed recent remarks given by Brian Schoeneman, legislative director of the UIW's parent organization, the SIU. While addressing one of our affiliated unions, he declared that the most important thing union members can do to protect your job and help advance the labor movement in the political arena is to vote.

"There is no more powerful four-letter word in the union vocabulary, even when politicians give us reasons to use a lot of other four-letter words," he said, and I agree.

Motivating others to vote is also important, and it's something we can all do. Talk with your co-workers and neighbors about the issues and candidates that matter to you. Encourage them to vote, and if they're not registered, point them in the right direction.

On a personal note, I encourage all UIW members to keep it civil when discussing politics, no matter who you're talking with. It's often a touchy subject, but our country needs to re-learn the art of civil discourse and focusing on issues rather than personalities.



UIW/MTD President Michael Sacco (right) welcomes AFT President Randi Weingarten to the 2018 MTD meeting.

AFT Becomes MTD's Newest Affiliate

Organization Boast Membership of 1.7 Million Strong

The Maritime Trades Department (MTD) recently welcomed its newest affiliate: the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

"We are very proud and honored that the AFT has joined the ranks of the MTD," declared MTD President Michael Sacco, who also is president of the UIW and its parent organization, the Seafarers International Union (SIU). "We have had a very good working relationship with the AFT and its members from the local level up throughout the years.

"People may wonder why the Teachers would join," he continued. "Well, without teachers, none of us would have a chance to learn critical new ideas, to fight for our members and to succeed in life."

The MTD is a constitutional department of the AFL-CIO. It has 22 affiliates with a collective membership of approximately six million.

"The AFT is proud to join the Maritime Trades Department," said AFT President Randi Weingarten. "Together, we can fight for what all Americans want – a better life and a better future for our families – through good jobs; high-quality, affordable health care; a secure retirement; great public schools; affordable college; and a healthy democracy."

The AFT represents 1.7 million teachers, paraprofessionals and school staff, higher education faculty and

staff, nurses, other health care professionals, and public employees.

AFT members work as instructors and staff at a variety of public maritime schools, colleges and programs across the United States. The union also represents workers at the Guam Port Authority.

During the last two years, MTD affiliates – prominently including the SIU – and the AFT have worked together to help Puerto Rico recover from the devastating hurricanes of 2017, including the delivery and dispersal of 100,000 water filters. Weingarten spoke directly about that labor solidarity when she addressed the 2018 MTD executive board meeting in Orlando, Florida.

At the start of this year, members of the Port Maritime Council of Southern California immediately adopted a local school when the United Teachers of Los Angeles went on strike on Jan. 10. They walked picket lines and provided supplies (including food and drinks) during the six-day struggle.

In 2018, the Maritime Port Council of Greater New York/New Jersey and Vicinity recognized Weingarten with its Paul Hall Award of Merit. In receiving the recognition, Weingarten told the audience how MTD affiliates helped her local, New York City's United Federation of Teachers, gain recognition in the early 1970s.

Income Growth Slows to Crawl in 2018

The U.S. Census Bureau on September 10 released its report on income, poverty, and health insurance for 2018.

"Household income growth significantly slowed again in 2018, following a marked deceleration in 2017. While any reduction in poverty or increase in income is a step in the right direction, most families have just barely made up the ground lost over the past decade," said EPI Senior Economist Elise Gould.

"After correcting for a discontinuity in the income data to make years before and after 2013 comparable, median household income remains just below where it was back in 2000."

Median household incomes rose only 0.9% in 2018, compared with 1.8% in 2017. In 2016 and 2015, median household incomes grew much faster, at 3.1% and 5.1%, respectively. The poverty rate, meanwhile, dropped 0.5 percentage points to 11.8% in 2018.

"Increased employment among African Americans in 2018 helped to reverse the loss of income among these households in 2017," said EPI Economist and Director of the Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy Valerie Wilson.

"In 2015 and 2016, income growth was stronger for black and Hispanic households than for white households, but after a disappointing 0.8% decline in black median household income in 2017, income grew 1.8% for black households in 2018.

"The report also shows that while in 2017, growth in Hispanic median household income continued to outpace that of white non-Hispanics, income growth stalled for Hispanic households in 2018.

"These trends resulted in a widening of the Hispanic-white income gap, while the black-white income gap was essentially unchanged," Wilson concluded.



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Gulf Coast Region: Dean Corgey, vice president.

Midwest Region: Chad Partridge, vice president.

West Coast Region: Nicholas Marrone, vice president



Collective Bargaining Agreement Extension in Puerto Rico



Union members at UIW-contracted Illumination Products Inc., in San Juan, Puerto Rico on August 5 unanimously ratified an extension of their collective bargaining agreement for an additional three years. In photo above, UIW members affirm their support for the move by raising their hands in a show of approval. From left to right are: UIW Shop Delegate Juan Medina, UIW Shop Delegate Jose Lopez, UIW Rep Amancio Crespo, Norma I. Matos, Natividad Seda and Pedro Torres.

Trumka Discusses Economy, 2020 Elections

Continued from Page 1

The kitchen-table questions also include so-called “free trade” pacts and business’s corresponding massive export of U.S. jobs to Mexico.

The latest such pact, the “new NAFTA” President Donald Trump compelled Mexico and Canada into signing, “still falls short” when it comes to guaranteeing and enforcing worker rights in Mexico, Trumka said. “We need a pact that upholds the rights and dignity of working people” in all three NAFTA nations, he added.

To see whether such a pact – and safeguards – can be achieved, Trumka on September 4 led a delegation of union presidents to Mexico City to discuss the issue with Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and other officials.

But he admitted it may be an uphill climb. In one of many examples, Trumka pointed out Mexican firms – especially Mexican factories of U.S.-based multinationals – have 700,000 contracts with pro-government, pro-company unions. The new NAFTA, formally called the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement includes a Mexican pledge to dismantle those pacts and to replace the pro-company unions with independent unions within four years. Trumka doubts that will occur. He also doubted Mexican wages would rapidly rise.

“Trade without enforcement is a

windfall for corporations and disastrous for workers. If Mexico can’t ensure that the new NAFTA is a non-starter... We need him (Obrador) to show how he guarantees the rights of working people, or workers all over North America will suffer.”

All those issues, and more, have come up on the U.S. campaign trail as unionists have quizzed the Democratic presidential hopefuls. The results, Trumka said, have been gratifying.

“We’re excited that all the candidates are talking about workers’ rights and unions, and that’s a big plus,” Trumka said when asked to rank five top contenders: Former Vice President Joe Biden, Sens. Bernie Sanders, (I-Vermont), Elizabeth Warren, (D-Massachusetts), and Kamala Harris, (D-California), and South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg.

Trumka declined to rank them. “Any (AFL-CIO) endorsement will come from the bottom up – from our members through our executive council. And it’ll take 70 percent of the vote there.

“They’re asking candidates about their position on different issues that are important to them. And forcing the candidates to think about it,” Trumka said of union members. “And if they have a position, it’s stated. If they don’t, they think it through and get a position. That’s where we’ve been largely successful and we will do that again.”

And in that respect, all the current

hopefuls differ from 2016 Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, whom most unions supported early in her contest with Sanders. She put kitchen table issues second, behind criticizing Trump, said Trumka.

“The more that they (current candidates) talk about changing the rules -- and it’s not just trade, it’s tax laws, it’s regulations, it’s health and safety, it’s education, it’s health care, it’s pensions. It’s bankruptcy laws that have stripped workers of their pensions over the years” the greater the possibility they’ll win workers’ votes, he said.

It’s “what case they make on all of them. And then our members will say: ‘That’s the one that we want.’”

“The lesson the Democrats and the candidates have come to understand is that unless you talk about kitchen-table economic issues, you won’t get elected.” But they can’t just give lip service, he said.

On other issues, Trumka reiterated labor’s opposition to Trump’s nomination of Eugene Scalia, a pro-management attorney, to be the new Labor Secretary. Trump formally sent Scalia’s name to the Senate on August 26. No hearings have been scheduled yet on the nod.

“We actively opposed him in 2002, because his record was so bad” when GOP President George W. Bush nominated Scalia to be Solicitor of Labor, the department’s top legal post. “It’s only gotten worse. His views are dan-

gerously outside the mainstream.”

Union opposition to Scalia, son of the late conservative U.S. Supreme Court Justice, helped scuttle Bush’s nomination. Scalia never got a hearing.

And Trumka led off with particular scorn for the president, though he did not name him.

“Working people are rising to meet this moment in history because we know something is deeply wrong,” he said.

“Our nation is being poisoned by hateful rhetoric and divisive tactics at the highest levels of government. People of color are being scapegoated, minimized, dehumanized and told to go back where they came from. Racist dog whistles have been replaced with megaphones.

“Women are openly degraded and discriminated against. And America’s welcome mat, long a beacon of hope for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, including my parents, is being bulldozed and paved over, replaced with a clear message: “you’re not welcome here.”

“Meanwhile, the rich continue to hoard unprecedented money and power, while the people who build that wealth are working harder and longer, for less money, with less dignity, in harsher, more dangerous workplaces. Faced with the reality of historic inequality and rising bigotry that goes all the way to the top, the labor movement is offering a path forward lit by solidarity,” Trumka declared.

Govt. Report: U.S. Job Growth Weaker in 2019

The U.S. economy added just 130,000 jobs in August, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Given the sizable downward revisions of half a million jobs from March 2018 to March 2019, this modest employment number brings average monthly job growth this year so far down to 143,000, compared to a stronger 208,000 jobs

created on average in the first eight months of last year. The private sector saw a slower 96,000 jobs added while government employment rose by 34,000. The vast majority of this increase (27,300) was in the non-postal federal sector, largely due to an uptick in hiring in advance of the upcoming decennial census. The BLS reports that 25,000 temporary

workers were hired to prepare for the 2020 Census.

The unemployment rate remained at 3.7% in August. The labor force participation rate edged up 0.2 percentage points to where it was when the year started, at 63.2%. The prime-working age labor force participation rate (25–54 years old) saw a significant gain in August, rising 0.6 percentage points. Like the overall labor force participation rate, it is now sitting exactly where it was at the start of 2019 (82.6%). The prime-age employment to population ratio rose as well (+0.5 percentage points) in August and is now

slightly above its level in January (80.0% versus 79.9%). While the August increases are welcome, they are only just making up for the losses in participation that occurred earlier in this year.

Nominal wages grew 3.2% year-over-year in August, which is slower than expected in an economy that has had historically low unemployment—the unemployment rate has been at (or below) 4.0 % for the past 18 months. Wage growth has been particularly disappointing because it provides further evidence that the deceleration experienced in the first half seems to be holding.

UIW Headquarters Recognizes Employees

More than 25 union and non-union employees at UIW/SIU headquarters in Camp Springs, Maryland on July 12 were recognized for dedication to the union and professionalism in the performance of their respective duties. Each were lauded for their respective years of service to the union by their colleagues during a formal recognition event in the headquarters cafeteria which was hosted by UIW Secretary Treasurer David Heindel and UIW Plan Administrator Maggie Bowen.

The longest serving UIW/SIU Headquarters employee to be recognized was John Sacco with 35 years of service. Because of previous commitments, Sacco was unable to attend the event.



David Heindel
UIW Secretary-Treasurer



30 Years Service - (From left) Catherine Gano, Tammy Kiley-Brazerol, Sandra McDonald and Kristy Clements



Maggie Bowen
UIW Plan Administrator



25 Years Service - Sandy Snead



20 Years Service - (from left) Donna Brisco, Stephanie Baker and Debra Miller. Also recognized for 20 years of service, but not pictured, was Glenn Lewis.



10 Years Service - (from left) Brian Horton, Craig Floyd, Sherri Curtis, Stacy Thacker, Lee'tonja Scott and Constance Young. Also recognized for 10 years of service, but not pictured, were Charles Corbin Jr. and Norma Ferguson-Pike.



5 Years Service - Nick Merrill. Also recognized for five years of service, but not pictured, were Robert Parker, Amber Leonard and Rose Fox.



40 Years Service - Janice Smolek (left) and Kerrie Thompson



35 Years Service - Robert Springer Jr.



30 Years Service - Bonnie Johnson

Paul Hall Center Bestows Accolades on Workers

Officials at the UIW-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC) on July 9 rolled out the red carpet to recognize and honor employees for their assorted years of service to the union.

Hosted by Acting PHC VP Tommy Orzechowski, the event recognized more than 25 employees. Like their counter-

parts at UIW/SIU headquarters in Camp Springs, Maryland, each service award recipient at the PHC received certificates and assorted gifts for their respective years of service.

Certificates and giveaways were provided by the Seafarers Plans Department in both locations.



25 Years Service - Lori Cates



20 Years Service - Frank Torres. Also recognized for 20 years of service, but not pictured, were Stanley Beck and Kathy Swann



15 Years Service - (From left) Tracey Mayhew, Joseph Zienda and Kimberly Greenwell. Also honored for 15 years of service, but not pictured, was Terri Dean.



10 Years Service - (Photo at left, from left) Vaniah Hairston-Morgan, Michael Roberts, Carol Strohmeier, Catherine Bean, Kimberly Busby, Monica Szepesi, Susan Combs and David Aud.



5 Years Service - (Photo at left, from left): Mark Goldsmith, Amber Rye, Karen Gold, Cindy Springer, Patrick Schoenberger, Natalie Woodburn, Christopher Raley, Tina Stevens and John Thomas. Also recognized for five years of service, but not pictured, were: Christine Davis, Andrew Kenny, Donna Nelson and Charles Noell.



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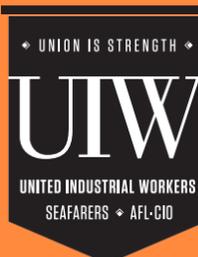
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EPI Asks (and Answers): How is Economy Working for America's Working Families?

A new report from the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) thoroughly examines the economic plight of American workers.

"This report makes clear that despite an unemployment rate below 4%, wage growth continues to elude the vast majority of working families," noted EPI Vice President John Schmitt. "This is a result of a decades-long attack on labor unions, and trickledown policies that put corporate profits and CEO pay ahead of the rights and wages of working people."

A headline on one of the essays contained in the overall report stated, "Working people have been thwarted in their efforts to bargain for better wages by attacks on unions."

The report, available online at epi.org, was launched just before Labor Day. The research therein is consistent with the nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank's self-described mission of "including the needs of low- and middle-income workers in economic policy discussions.... EPI conducts research and analysis on the economic status of working America. EPI proposes public policies that protect and improve the economic conditions of low- and middle-income workers and assesses policies with respect to how they affect those workers."

One of the report components, by Heidi Shierholz, points out that the "share of workers represented by unions has dropped by more than half since 1979 – from 27.0% to 11.7% in 2018. Not coincidentally, the share of income going to the top 10% has escalated in this period – these high earners now capture nearly half of all income. The decline of unions is not because people don't want to be in unions. They do: The share of people who either have union coverage or report they want it is 60% – the same as it was 40 years ago. But employers' aggressive efforts to dismantle unions and impede organizing efforts have robbed workers of this opportunity. We need fundamental reform of labor law to restore and protect workers' rights to come together and have a voice in their workplace."

Her conclusion about the need for labor law reform is shared by the AFL-CIO, to which the UIW is affiliated. Such reform is one of the federation's top priorities, though it's also an enormous challenge.

"Impeding union representation has been a primary goal of corporate inter-

ests in recent decades, and these interests have convinced conservative policymakers to attack collective bargaining through legislation, executive rulemaking, and the courts," Shierholz added. "Meanwhile, policymakers claiming to care about the economic struggles of typical Americans have too often turned a blind eye to these attacks. But if workers are not able to effectively organize into unions, broadly shared prosperity that extends to most working people has virtually no chance."

Her part of the report states it is "no surprise that workers want unions." The EPI, using government data, found that on average, a worker covered by a union contract earns 13.2% more than a peer with similar education, occupation, and experience in a nonunionized

members and this 'spillover' effect to nonunion workers means unions are crucial in fostering a vibrant middle class and reducing income inequality."

Shierholz also debunks a view held by some outside the labor movement that the decline in collective bargaining has occurred naturally. "Quite the contrary," she wrote. "Fierce corporate opposition has suppressed workers' freedom to form unions and bargain collectively. Intense and aggressive anti-union campaigns – once confined to the most anti-union employers – have become widespread; it is now typical, when workers seek to organize, for their employers to hire union avoidance consultants to orchestrate fierce anti-union campaigns."

"And though the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) makes it illegal for employers to intimidate, coerce, or fire workers in retaliation for participating in union-organizing campaigns, the penalties are insufficient to provide a serious economic disincentive for such behavior (there are no punitive damages or criminal charges under the NLRA; penalties may consist of being required to post a notice or reinstate illegally fired workers)," she continued.

"This means that many illegal tactics can be actively pursued; for example, employers often threaten to close the worksite, cut union activists' hours or pay, or report workers to immigration enforcement authorities if employees unionize. More than one in seven union organizers and activists are illegally fired while trying to organize unions at their place of work."

Yet, despite such conduct, policymakers "have egregiously failed to update labor laws to rebalance the system," she said. "In fact, in many cases policy is moving backward; 27 states have passed so-called right-to-work laws, which are intended to undermine union finances by making it illegal for unions to require nonunion members of a collective bargaining unit (who don't pay union dues) to pay 'fair share fees' – fees that cover only the basic costs of representing employees in the workplace. And the Supreme Court decision in *Janus v. AFSCME* – a case financed by a small group of foundations with ties to the largest and most powerful corporate lobbies – made 'right-to-work' the law of the land for all public-sector unions. Conclusion: We need to protect workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively."

"This report makes clear that despite an unemployment rate below 4%, wage growth continues to elude the vast majority of working families. This is a result of a decades-long attack on labor unions, and trickledown policies that put corporate profits and CEO pay ahead of the rights and wages of working people." - - - EPI Vice President John Schmitt

workplace in the same sector.

Union workers also are more likely to have employer-sponsored health insurance, and their employers tend to contribute more toward those plans. They are also more likely to have paid vacation and sick leave, more input into the number of hours they work, and more predictable schedules. Union employers are more likely to offer retirement plans and to contribute more toward those plans than comparable nonunion employers, the EPI found.

Other benefits of union representation, according to the report, include providing workers due-process protections; creating safer workplaces ("because union workers are protected by their unions from repercussions for reporting safety issues, they are more likely to report safety concerns"); and shrinking the racial wage gap.

"Furthermore, the benefits of collective bargaining extend beyond those employees who are represented by a union," Shierholz wrote. "Where unions are strong, they effectively set broader standards that nonunion employers must meet in order to attract and retain the workers they need and to avoid facing an organizing drive. The combination of the direct effect of unions on union

Experts Look Back At House Legislation That Would Benefit Working People if Passed into Law

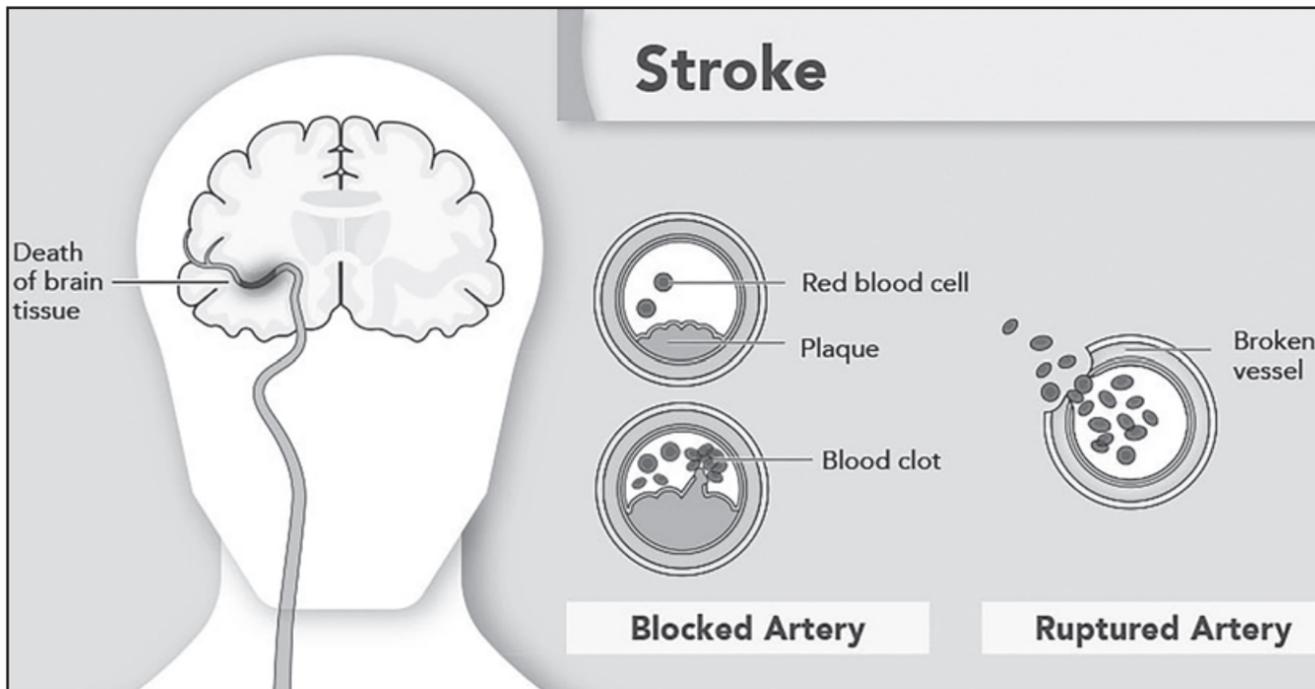
Continued from Page 8

of employers to pay workers money they are legally entitled to—is a widespread and deep-rooted problem that directly harms millions of U.S. workers each year. According to a recent study by EPI, employers steal over \$15 billion from American workers' paychecks each year through minimum

wage violations alone. This month, Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Connecticut) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-Washington) in July introduced the Wage Theft Prevention and Wage Recovery Act, which would combat wage theft by strengthening current federal law and empowering employees to recover their lost wages. If enacted, the bill would ensure that workers across America

receive a fair day's wage for a fair day's work and empower them to recover the lost wages they deserve.

The House has taken action on key workers' rights measures. Chief among these is the Raise the Wage Act. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) should allow votes on this critical bill. If he does not, he is preventing a raise for millions of U.S. workers. Further, the House should prioritize passage of the PRO Act, the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, and the FAIR Act. Each of these measures would help unrig a system that is tilted toward corporate interests and help to make our economy more just.



A stroke can happen in one of two ways: blocked artery or ruptured artery.

Stroke Takes Heavy Toll on Americans

Editor's note: The following article and the art above were provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Stroke kills nearly 150,000 of the 860,000 Americans who die of cardiovascular disease each year—that's 1 in every 19 deaths from all causes.

A stroke, sometimes called a brain attack, happens in one of two ways: Ischemic stroke—when the blood supply to the brain is blocked; and Hemorrhagic stroke—when a blood vessel in the brain bursts.

A stroke causes brain tissue to die, which can lead to brain damage, disability, and death. Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of serious long-term disability. This is disturbing because about 80 percent of strokes are preventable.

People can greatly reduce their risk for stroke by making lifestyle changes to help control their blood pressure and cholesterol levels and, in some cases, by taking medication.

Are you at risk for stroke?

Anyone, including children, can have a stroke at any time. Every year, about 800,000 people in the United States have strokes—and about 1 out of 4 of those strokes are recurrent strokes. Having one stroke means an individual has a greater risk of having another (or recurrent) stroke.

Several factors that are beyond an individual's control can increase his or her risk for a stroke. These include one's age, sex, and ethnicity. But there are also many unhealthy habits, such as smoking, drinking too much alcohol, and not getting enough exercise, that can be changed to lower stroke risk.

Using tobacco products and having high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or obesity can also increase the risk for stroke. However, treating these conditions can reduce it. Individuals should ask their doctors about preventing or treating these medical conditions.

Signs and symptoms of stroke?

An easy way to remember the most common signs of stroke and how to respond is with the acronym **FAST**:

F - Face drooping: Ask the person to smile. Does one side droop?

A - Arm weakness: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S - Speech difficulty: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred?

T - Time to call 911: If the person shows any of these signs, call 911 immediately. Stroke treatment can begin in the ambulance.

Other common signs of stroke are:

- Sudden dizziness, trouble walking, or loss of balance or coordination,
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes,

- Sudden severe headache with no known cause,
- Sudden numbness of the face, arm, or leg, and
- Sudden confusion or trouble understanding others

As a reminder, if you or anyone you know have any of the above symptoms, call 911 immediately. Stroke is a medical emergency, and stroke treatment and outcomes depend on how fast a person gets to the hospital and the type of stroke they had.

When an individual is being transported by ambulance, first responders may be able to start their treatment right away and can alert the hospital that a stroke patient is on the way. This notification gives the hospital's medical team time to prepare equipment and medicines you may need.

How is stroke diagnosed?

Doctors can perform several tests to diagnose stroke, such as brain imaging, including a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or computed tomography (CT) scan, tests of the brain's electrical activity, and blood flow tests.

Can stroke be prevented?

High blood pressure is the single most important treatable risk factor for stroke. Preventing, diagnosing, and controlling it through lifestyle changes and medicine are critical to reducing stroke risks. There are several steps people can take to reduce their risk for stroke:

- Eat a healthy diet low in sodium with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Tips on nutrition are available at CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity
- Maintain a healthy weight. CDC's Healthy Weight website includes information and tools to help you lose weight.
- Be physically active. Visit CDC's Physical Activity website for more information on being active.
- Don't smoke, and avoid secondhand smoke. CDC's Office on Smoking and Health website has information on quitting smoking.
- Limit alcohol use. See CDC's Alcohol and Public Health website for more information.
- Prevent or manage your other health conditions, especially high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and obesity. Visit CDC's High Blood Pressure, Cholesterol, and Diabetes webpages on these conditions to learn more.

How is stroke treated?

People who have strokes may receive emergency care, treatment to prevent another stroke, rehabilitation to help them relearn the skills they may have lost because of the stroke, or all three. In addition, lifestyle changes, such as those formerly mentioned can help lower the risk for future strokes. People should always take medicines as prescribed and talk with their doctors about the best ways to reduce their stroke risk.

UIW Pensioners

Rosalinda Budd
Armaly Brands
London, Ohio

Robert Campbell
Paulsen Sunbury
Sunbury, Pennsylvania

Fernando Chavez
Del Monte Corp.
Wilmington, California

Emelita Clinton
DEW Management Systems, Inc.
29 Palms, California

Craig Cotterall
Paulsen Wire Rope
Sunbury, Pennsylvania

Neil Disabella
A&E Products Group
Newark, Delaware

Amelia Ednalaga
Severson Group, LLC
29 Palms, California

Jesus Gandarilla
Save The Queen
Long Beach, California

Humberto Garcia
District 1, MEBA
Brownsville, Texas

Deborah Grahl
National Fiberstock
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

James Gilispie
Armaly Brands
London, Ohio

Gertrudes Hasse
Severson Group LLC
29 Palms, California

James Jennings
Victory Refrigeration
Voorhees, New Jersey

Timothy Mays
Crown Cork & Seal
Abilene, Texas

Consuelo Moreno
Save The Queen
Long Beach, California

Hipolito Navarro
A&E Products Group
El Paso, Texas

Jose Rodriguez
Victory Refrigeration
Cleveland, Ohio

Steven Sherf
Victory Refrigeration
Mt. Ephraim, New Jersey

Michael Win
Atlantic Cordage
Edison, New Jersey

Gone But Not Forgotten

GIOVANNINA CROLLA
Pensioner Giovannina Crolla, 91, died February 1. Sister Crolla came under the union umbrella in 1980, joining while working at Tara Textiles. She was born in Italy and began receiving stipends for her retirement in 1994. Sister Crolla was a resident of Eastampton, New Jersey.

EUGENE GLOVER SR.
Pensioner Eugene Glover, 91, passed

away June 12. A native of Cedartown, Georgia, Brother Glover donned the union colors in 1972 while working at National Graphics. He was a military veteran, having served in the U.S. Army. Brother Glover began collecting retirement stipends in 1989 and made his home in Columbus, Ohio.

ANGELLO ILLUZZI
Pensioner Angello Illuzzi, 96, died June 17. Born in Italy, Brother Illuzzi was a

military veteran. He signed on with the UIW in 1956 while working at Regent Wire & Rope Works. He retired and went on pension in 1986. Brother Illuzzi called Ocklawaha, Florida home.

WESLEY TWILLEY
Pensioner Wesley Twilley, 75, passed away July 14. A native of Philadelphia, Brother Twilley donned the UIW colors in 1966 while working at Victory Refrigeration. He started receiving

retirement stipends in 2011. Brother Twilley was a resident of Camden, New Jersey.

KATHERINE WATKINS
Pensioner Katherine Watkins, 84, died July 5. Born in Ross County, Ohio, Sister Watkins signed on with the UIW while working at Church & Dwight Co., Inc. She retired and went on pension in 1997. Sister Watkins made her home in London, Ohio.



TSA Starts Advisements of REAL ID Requirements

Rollout of new signage begins at document checking station

The Transportation Security Administration on August 22 announced that it has begun verbally advising travelers who present non-compliant driver's licenses of the upcoming REAL ID requirement and enforcement date.

Beginning October 1, 2020, each traveler must present a REAL ID-compliant driver's license, state-issued enhanced driver's license, or another acceptable form of identification, to fly within the United States. Individuals who are unable to verify their identity will not be permitted to enter the TSA checkpoint and will not be allowed to fly.

"The security requirements of the REAL ID Act are an important step in enhancing commercial aviation security," said TSA Acting Deputy Administrator Patricia Cogswell. "REAL ID implementation is a little more than a year away – now is the time to prepare."

Since April, TSA has displayed signs at airports to remind travelers that REAL ID-compliant licenses or other acceptable forms of ID, such as a state-issued enhanced driver's license, a valid passport, or U.S. military ID, will be mandatory for air travel beginning on October 1, 2020. REAL ID-compliant licenses are marked by a star on the top of the card. Michigan, Vermont, Minnesota

and New York states issue REAL ID and state-issued enhanced driver's licenses, both of which are acceptable. Washington state issues enhanced driver's licenses only. These documents will be accepted at the airport security checkpoint when the REAL ID enforcement goes into effect. Travelers who are not sure if their state-issued ID is compliant should check with their state driver's license agency.

Passed by Congress in 2005, the REAL ID Act complies with the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the federal government "set standards for the issuance of sources of identification, such as driver's licenses." The Act established minimum security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards and prohibits federal agencies from accepting licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards for official purposes, such as at airport security checkpoints. The regulations established the deadline of October 1, 2020, to ensure full enforcement of the REAL ID Act. States have made considerable progress in meeting this key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission.

For more information about flying with a REAL ID and to download and print informational materials, visit tsa.gov/real-id.



Working People Would Benefit From Legislation Passed by U.S. House

Editor's note: The following article was written by Margaret Poydock and Celine McNicholas of the Economic Policy Institute. It has been edited slightly to conform to local style and policy.

Congress ended its legislative work for the summer July 26. Members returned to their districts after a busy week dominated by discussion of the Mueller report. While much of the focus of the 116th Congress has been on investigations of the administration, the House of Representatives has passed several bills that would benefit working people.

On July 18, the House passed the Raise the Wage Act which would raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour in 2025. This critical legislation would increase wages for over 33 million U.S. workers and lift 1.3 million people out of poverty—nearly half of them children. Workers in every congressional district in the country would benefit from this critical legislation.

In March, the House passed the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and guarantee that women can challenge pay discrimination and hold their employers accountable. Since the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963,

millions of women have joined the workforce. However, more than five decades later, women are still earning less than their male counterparts. On average in 2018, women were paid 22.6 percent less than men, after controlling for race and ethnicity, education, age, and location. This gap is even larger for women of color, with black and Hispanic women being paid 34.9 and 34.3 percent less per hour than white men, respectively—even after controlling for education, age, and location. The Paycheck Fairness Act is crucial legislation in reducing these gender pay gaps and guaranteeing women receive equal pay for equal work.

In May, the House passed the Equality Act, which prohibits discrimination in housing, the workplace, and other settings on the basis of sex, gender identity and sexual orientation. While many states have enacted laws to protect LGBTQ Americans against discrimination regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, there is no federal law that would provide the same protections. There is, however, a glaring need: nearly two-thirds of LGBTQ Americans have experienced discrimination in their personal lives. The Equality Act amends the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Fair Housing Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity, and the Jury Selection and

Service Act to explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected characteristics. The Equality Act is a pivotal step toward ensuring equality for all Americans.

In addition to the bills the House has already passed this session, a number of others that have been introduced that would restore and strengthen workers' rights. These include:

Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act: (See Page 1 in this edition of the United Worker) Unions are critical for increasing wages, improving working conditions, and combating income inequality in America. However, the erosion of labor laws and attacks on unions by special-interest groups have weakened union membership to just 10.7 percent in 2018. The result has been stagnant wages for working people, unsafe workplaces, and rising inequality. The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, introduced by Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Virginia) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-Washington), would strengthen the federal laws that protect workers' right to organize a union and collectively bargain over wages, benefits, and better working conditions.

Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act: Under current federal law, public service workers do not have the freedom to join in union and collectively bargain over wages or working conditions. The Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, introduced by Rep. Matt Cartwright (D-Pennsylvania) and Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), would require states to provide public-service workers the freedom to join in union and collectively bargain. Ultimately, the bill would provide 17.3 million public employees a national standard

of bargaining rights.

Forced Arbitration Injustice Repeal (FAIR) Act and the Restoring Justice for Workers Act: According to a recent report by EPI and the Center on Popular Democracy, more than 80 percent of workplaces will subject their workers to mandatory arbitration with class and collective action waivers by 2024. The FAIR Act, introduced by Rep. Hank Johnson (D-Georgia.) and Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Connecticut), would eliminate forced arbitration in employment, consumer, and civil rights cases. The Restoring Justice for Workers Act, introduced by Reps. Jerrod Nadler (D-New York), and Bobby Scott (D-Virginia) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-Washington), would ban mandatory arbitration and class and collective action waivers in labor and employment matters.

Restoring Overtime Pay Act: In June, Reps. Mark Takano (D-California) and Bobby Scott (D-Virginia) and Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Patty Murray (D-Washington) introduced the Restoring Overtime Pay Act, which strengthens overtime protections by attaching the salary level to the 40th percentile of earnings of full-time salaried workers in the lowest wage census region. The bill also requires automatic updates every three years to ensure the level remains in line with the changes in our economy. If Congress were to enact the bill in 2019, the overtime salary level would increase from \$23,660 per year to roughly \$51,000 per year, making roughly 4.6 million workers newly eligible for overtime pay.

Wage Theft Prevention and Wage Recovery Act: Wage theft—the failure

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