

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR: Monday, February 26, 2018

Contact: Coral Itzcalli, SEIU Local 721, (213) 321-7332
Jesse Luna, SEIU Local 721, (805) 535-3484

Hundreds of Ventura County Workers and Allies Rally Against Billionaire-Driven Efforts at Supreme Court

Workers & Community Supporters to Rally at Ventura County Medical Center to Take Aim at 'Right-to-Work' Attack Designed to Further Rig System Against Working People; Rally Participants to Vow to Choose Union and Relentlessly Fight Back Against Anti-Worker Statutes Regardless of Janus v. AFSCME Outcome

Los Angeles—The women and men who keep our Ventura County communities clean, healthy and functioning will hold a pro-worker rally at the **Ventura County Medical Center on Monday, February 26, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.** Union workers will be joined by community leaders and Ventura County residents as well as city, state and federally elected officials in a show of unparalleled solidarity for the good union jobs that Americans need now more than ever. Monday's action in Ventura is one of hundreds of similar actions at cities and worksites across the nation. Union workers such as healthcare providers, firefighters, laborers and building tradesmen and women will proudly wear their uniforms – including scrubs, hard hats and coveralls – at the rally.

Who: Workers represented by SEIU Local 721, SEIU Local 2015, California Nurses Association (CNA), Building Trades—International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Ventura County Firefighters plus community and elected leaders

What: Pro-Union Worker Rally in Ventura

When: Monday, February 26, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.

Where: Ventura County Medical Center, 3921 Loma Vista Rd., Ventura, CA 93003

Visuals: Rally involving workers from a variety of union-represented jobs. Union workers will be available for media interviews.

###

BACKGROUND: Unions are the last line of defense against rampant corporate greed, and silencing union workers would make it easier for ultra-billionaires to completely rig the system – driving down wages, privatizing public services, eliminating benefits and avoiding the cost of workplace protections. **The Janus v. AFSCME case culminates a decades-long scheme by anti-worker groups to make it harder for unions to fight for good jobs and a voice at work by enacting so-called “Right to Work” laws nationwide.** [Right to Work Is a Scheme by Corporations:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8\[dwZ5x3Gs&feature=youtu.be\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8[dwZ5x3Gs&feature=youtu.be])

Currently, everyone covered by a union contract – and the fair wages, strong benefits and workplace protections that contract provides – pays a fair share fee, whether or not they're an active union member. If the Supreme Court sides against workers in the *Janus* case, that fair share fee is eliminated and the so-called “Right to Work” will become law for all public sector workers nationally.

“Right to Work” – which is really the Right to Work for less – has its roots in the Jim Crow south. It was always meant to divide workers and weaken their power by destroying unions so that the ultra-rich could get even richer. **The real goal of “Right to Work” laws is to strip workers of their collective power by encouraging them to opt out of paying their fair share – otherwise known as “freeriding” – which dismantles union membership and sticks those who remain with the bill.** [Right to Work Encourages Free riders: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5JMGx9FXxA&feature=youtu.be>]

Billionaires like the Koch Brothers and the Bradley Foundation have poured huge amounts of money for decades into phony “grassroots” groups like the Right to Work Foundation, the Freedom Foundation and the Liberty Justice Center. These organizations trick working families into thinking that Right to Work will help them when it’s actually a scheme that will cost them everything. Without union protections, workers start from nothing when their contracts expire – leaving them completely vulnerable while the ultra-rich get even richer at their expense.

It’s no coincidence that in Right to Work states across America, living standards are consistently worse. [Right to Work Hurts

Workers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woZGispXuMY&feature=youtu.be>]

Workers in Right to Work states make \$1,500 less on average than their counterparts in states where workers are free to collectively bargain. They also are less likely to have health insurance, a retirement savings or to see their children off to college – but more likely to be injured on the job.

Without union power, even non-union workers will suffer from unleashed corporate greed. [Right to Work Hurts Communities:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILV4P5Pq0_0&feature=youtu.be]

All workers have benefited from workplace safety laws pioneered and institutionalized at the insistence of union workers across myriad industries – including child labor legislation, vacation/sick time, the 40-hour work week and legislation preventing discrimination by race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or veteran’s status. Most recently, unions successfully fought for a \$15 minimum wage in California, a watershed moment benefitting all workers across the state that many believe will eventually become the standard across America. Whichever way the Supreme Court rules on the *Janus* case, working families and their community supporters will continue to choose union, to defend the American middle class and to stand strong in solidarity against a toxic mindset which rapaciously prioritizes profits over working people’s quality of life.

###