



NEWS & VIEWS

THE OHIO STATE COUNCIL OF MACHINISTS



President Wright's Remarks on the Future of the Labor Movement and Upcoming November Elections



T. Dean Wright, Jr.

Today, more than ever, is the time to organize. Sixty-one percent of Americans favor unions; fueled by favorable attitudes younger workers have and their increasing membership to unions. In 2017, 198,000 new members out of 262,000 (three-fourths) were classified as 34 and under.

Despite attacks on labor unions collectively, conservative party strategies have only set the stage for us to unionize and strengthen the collective voice.

The White House has boasted its low unemployment rate at 3.7% with a self-damaging hubris claiming the economy has "recovered" from the Great Recession. Low unemployment is only ONE piece of recovering. They don't like to talk about the next piece, because the lines in their pockets won't be as full – wage growth.

Companies have consecutively been taking advantage of workers by paying them substandard, low wages with little to no wage increases, which should come as no surprise to us. But, annual inflation is at the highest its been since 2012, at 2.9%, while annual wage growth is at 2.7%.

It doesn't take an economist to conclude that 2.9% is higher than 2.7%. Workers cannot afford high living and rising commodity costs, while their wages erode. Unfortunately, inflation isn't the only reason why wage growth is low. Educational attainment is low and infrequent. We know this as apprenticeships, a younger generation, in a different field, knows this as internships and co-ops. All can be equally informative and cultivating, but also

strenuous if gone without funding, which more times than not they are.

Low educational attainment resources and stagnate wage growth are also causing labor shortages.

AND THIS IS OUR STAGE.

We are the voice of workers. We can negotiate their wage increases, their education. District 54 has won four organizing campaigns working this angle this year, and seven last year.

We should be commended for the collective bargaining we could use to solve workers grief, help the economy recover further and alleviate the shortages in labor sectors.

Yet, we're not. I'm not the first person to discover this information and you know the majority party has these numbers and facts as well. This is why they are strategically attacking labor unions, unlike the previous administration.

- They appointed Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, who voted for Janus (A "Right-to-Work" for less (RTW) attack on public sector workers).
- They consistently nominate candidates who are pro-RTW and look to dismantle National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) rulings and previous union victories.
- Twenty-eight (28) states are RTW.
- House D1 Rep. Steve Chabot consistently introduces RTW legislation in Ohio.
- At-will employers are getting away with more and more.
- Federal workers have been denied favorable working wages.
- And the list goes on...

BUT OHIOANS VOTED THEM IN. WE VOTED FOR A TICKET AND MAJORITY PARTY THAT IS *not* PRO – LABOR!

We have allowed them to turn ourselves against each other and become distracted. President Trump made a tweet, "millennials are running everything," Colin Kaepernick

resurfaced in a Nike ad, I'm part of this group and that group, an anonymous Op-Ed was written in the NYT, CNN is "fake news," these are the daily notifications and dividers most of us see daily.

We're busy, unquestioning of facts, trusting of social media posts, uncommunicative with those who aren't "part" of our community.

But our community is the union.

Who protects and builds workers' rights? Advocates for economic justice? Provides a voice in the workplace AND in the political arena? Works for pay equality, regardless of gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation? Upholders democracy? UNIONS.

We are the biggest advocacy tool to have; we don't look to separate groups or point-fingers to distract from the true problems. Unions acknowledge issues, look to strengthen the collective whole, and makes sure everyone belongs by having their members' card.

This #Bluewave or #Redwall mentioned in the news is a voting divider, a distraction. It's nothing compared to a #UnionSolidarityTsunami that's coming.

Going forward, our goal should be to have the conversation of "what my union does for me" with friends and family, help with organizing campaigns, as we are only strong as the collective whole, and make changes to our representatives.

Because when we come together we make change.

That's why going into the November elections we have especially taken the time to endorse pro-labor candidates (listed within this packet). We know these candidates are for working-class families.

Some of you may feel as if your vote doesn't matter, but it does. Remember; no Republican candidate for presidency has ever won without Ohio. We are the deciding factor. So lets clean up our backyard this November, and get ready for 2020.

Go vote on November 9th!

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