

## What the *Janus* case means for YOU

In early 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear a critically important case that will impact all working men and women - including those who are not union members. Here are the facts about *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31* and why they should matter to you.

### What is *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31*?

Simply put, this court case is an attempt to weaken unions and make it more difficult for middle-class Americans to join together and advocate for themselves and our communities. Funded by wealthy right-wing donors like the Koch Brothers, the case is attempting to ban the union's ability to collect fair share fees.

### What are fair share fees?

When a majority of employees at a workplace choose to be represented by a union, that union is required by law to represent *every* employee. Those who join the union pay dues towards the costs of union-provided services, including contract negotiations, legal representation, and more.

Since employees who choose not to become members still receive the salary, protections, and benefits provided by the union contract, they can be required to chip in towards the cost of securing and defending those benefits by paying a percentage of the dues rate. This is called a "fair share" fee. Fair share fees are a long-established practice that has been reaffirmed as Constitutional for more than 40 years. Fair share fees are permitted by law in 24 states, including Illinois. The *Janus* case seeks to outlaw them nationwide and allow for "freeloaders," employees who enjoy the benefits of a union without paying their fair share.

### Can anyone be forced to join a union or support union-endorsed political candidates?

No. Do not be misled! The fact is, **no one is ever required to join a union, and no one can be forced to pay fees to support political candidates.** Any member who does not want to contribute to union-endorsed candidates can redirect the portion of their dues that goes towards political expenditures. Employees can also choose not to join the union and pay fair share fees instead. By law, **fair share fees CANNOT go towards political expenditures.** Nothing in the *Janus* case will change that.

### Who is behind this lawsuit?

The well-funded attack was started by Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner as part of his ongoing contract dispute with AFSCME Council 31. When a federal court decided that he did not have standing to bring the case, Rauner and his network of wealthy special interests found one state employee - Mark Janus - who was willing to add his name to the legal challenge so it could proceed.



### I'm not in a union. Why should I care?

If the billionaires and CEOs behind this case get fair share fees outlawed, some employees who benefit from the gains made by the union will not have to pay anything towards the cost of maintaining them. Unions will have fewer resources, and working people will have a less powerful voice. Here's why that matters:

- Unions fought for the five-day work week, overtime pay, the minimum wage, sick days, child labor laws, healthcare benefits, and other things many of us take for granted. Today, unions continue to be a voice for fairness in the workplace.
- Unions help all workers - not just their members - earn higher wages. In states that restrict fair share fees, the average worker earns about \$6,000 less per year than in strong union states.
- Unions advocate to keep workplaces safer and healthier for everyone.
- Unions promote equal pay for equal work, helping to reduce inequalities and close gender and racial wage gaps.
- Unions advocate for things like small class sizes and adequate education funding that benefit our communities.

If unions are weakened, these fair, commonsense benefits and protections could be eroded over time. That would harm everyone.

*Janus v. AFSCME Council 31* is the latest attempt by powerful interests to eliminate one of the last checks on their control - the freedom of working people to join together and fight for equity and opportunity for all, not just the privileged few.

