November 27, 2017

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U.S. Supreme Court Set to Hear Case on Union Dues Janus v. AFSCME

The U.S. Supreme Court could soon outlaw public-sector unions from requiring nonmembers to pay dues or fees as part of a lawsuit which aims to dramatically change national labor law. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) is the primary target of the lawsuit. AFSCME Council 31 has represented the Illinois state workers. The eventual aim is to end mandatory dues or fees for all public-sector workers by setting a precedent at the highest court. Mark Janus and the other state workers are basing their claim on a First Amendment challenge. The U.S. Constitution bans compelled speech, which includes being forced to fund political activities. Abood v. Detroit Board of Education allows unions to require dues so long as nonmembers have the option of paying the nonpolitical fair-share fee. The case will be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court in early 2018. Below is AFSCME Council 31 statement of facts regarding the case.

What is this case really about?

This case is really about taking away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions to improve our lives and sustain our families. Real freedom is about more than making a living; it's also about safety on the job, affordable health benefits, having time to care for a loved one who's ill and dignity in retirement. The wealthy corporate special interests behind this case want to take away our freedom to join together in a union because they simply do not believe that working people should have the same freedoms as they do to negotiate a fair return on our work.

Who is behind this case?

Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner originated this case in a lawsuit he filed against AFSCME Council 31 to try to weaken our union by banning Fair Share fees in state government. When the federal court said Rauner didn't have standing to bring such a suit, he found a lone state employee—Mark Janus—to allow the legal challenge to proceed in his name.

The suit is backed by the Liberty Justice Center (an arm of the Illinois Policy Institute) and the National Right to Work Foundation which is part of a network funded by corporate billionaires to use the U.S. legal system to rig the rules against the rights of everyday working people. For decades, the super-rich have used their massive fortunes to gain outsized influence in politics, chipping away at the progress people in unions have won for all working families. Now they want the highest court in the land to take away our freedom to come together to protect things our families need like a living wage, retirement security, health benefits and the ability to care for loved ones.

What are Fair Share fees?

When employees (in a legally defined bargaining unit) at a particular workplace have chosen to be represented by a union, the union becomes the legal representative for collective bargaining matters. The union is required by law to represent and negotiate on behalf of all of these workers—and all the workers receive the wage increases, benefits and workplace rights that the union is able to achieve.

Some workers may not want to be a member of the union—and they are not required to do so—but all workers are required to contribute to the cost of representation, whether through membership dues or a "fair share" fee. Because all the workers enjoy the benefits, job security and other protections that the union negotiates, it's only fair that everyone chip in for the cost of that representation.

Is anyone ever forced to join a union or pay dues or fees that go to political candidates?

No. The simple truth is that no one is required to join a union and no one is required to pay any fees that go to political candidates. A bargaining unit employee who does not want to be a union member or does not want to contribute toward electing candidates who support working families can choose to be a Fair Share feepayer—and pay a fee that is calculated to exclude any political expenditures. This is already the law of the land—and nothing in this case will change that.

What is the real impact of the Janus case?

By outlawing Fair Share fees, employees who benefit from the gains that the union makes will not have to pay anything toward the cost of union representation. The wealthy elite behind this case want to drain unions of resources so that working people will not have a powerful voice. When working people have the freedom to speak up together through unions, we make progress together that benefits everyone. We are a nation of people that stand up for our rights, but if the billionaires and corporate CEOs behind this case get their way, they will take away the freedom of working people to come together in a strong union and build power to fight for a better future for ourselves, our families, our communities and our country.

Over, please...

November 27, 2017

mta Revenue and Expense Report

The Revenue & Expense Committee was created in February 1995 to cooperatively examine the District's finances. The Committee is comprised of members each from MTA, CSEA, and MUSD.

MTA

Alma Orta (SUE),
David Navar (WGE)
Richard Franco (MAI)
Doug Patzkowski (MTA) alternate

Kathy Schlotz (ex-officio)

TOPICS OF INTEREST THIS QUARTER

The Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

The 2017-2018 MUSD Budget was approved November 8, 2017 and meets the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) request that the MUSD Board adopt a fiscal stabilization plan (FSP) to accompany the 2017-2018 adopted budget.

LACOE appointed Mark Skvarna as the District's Fiscal Advisor. LACOE cited Education Code 42127.6 empowering Mr. Skvarna with stay and rescind authority on any action determined to be inconsistent with the school District's ability to meet its financial obligations.

Facilities and Bond Update

The Board approved a Measure GS Project List for the first phase of the Bond Capital Improvement Program.

The funds balance for Measure M, Measure EE, and GS were given. Measure M and EE are old bonds that should have been spent. Measure GS expenditure has a timeline of three (3) years starting December 2016. The first Bond sale will have as a priority HVAC systems district wide and technology.

As part of the prioritization and utilization of Measure GS Bond monies and stakeholder engagement, MUSD is requesting that each school site administrator establish an ad hoc committee to help determine the top three (3) priority projects for consideration at their respective school sites.

Enrollment Report and Attendance Recovery

The District continues to experience significant declining enrollment. The vast majority of the District funding is based on attendance. Implementation of Saturday school at various school sites was discussed as well as other ways to recover ADA. Online attendance is used at specific school sites and is another process of collecting accurate attendance period by period.

The College Readiness Fair held in September counted towards attendance recovery. The District has maintained a 96.2% average daily attendance to access more revenue. The attendance goal is 98.8%.

Enrollment variables exist such as the number of Inter-district transfer permits. The District attempts to control this by using specific criteria to issue permits: senior privilege, sibling at another District, and/or specialized program. The Committee discussed ways of retaining students so that they do not transfer out from the District.

The District's funding is generated through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). Additional funds (known as the Supplemental and Concentration Grants) are generated through the unduplicated pupil counts: students who qualify for free and reduced meals, students who are learning English, and students who are in foster care. The District is tracking and monitoring the students through CALPADS. .