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Remembering Our Fallen By Putting People First On Election Day



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Every day, I wear a memorial bracelet for Corporal Tony Carrasco who was killed in action in Ad Dawr, Iraq on November 4, 2009. I do this not only to remember Tony, but also to honor his sacrifice by affirming in my own life those eternal values of justice, equality of opportunity, and compassion. That's why I'm voting no on Missouri Proposition A on August 7th.

Right-to-work laws like Proposition A were created to give employers and CEOs more leverage over employees in union negotiations. Household income is \$8,740 lower in right-to-work states and workers in those states are less likely to have a good retirement and health benefit plans. Additionally, workers in right-to-work states are 50 percent more likely to be hurt on the job. Bottom line, where unions are strong, both union and nonunion workers enjoy a better quality of life. At a time when CEOs make 361 times more than the average worker, no one should ask voters to abandon their values and vote to give corporate executives more money and power.

Jen Bersdale, the Executive Director of Missouri Health Care for All, believes Proposition A will increase the number of uninsured in Missouri.

“Workers in ‘right-to-work’ states have a 2.5% higher rate of being uninsured than workers in states without laws like Proposition A.”

As a result, the Missouri Budget Project estimates that more than 75,000 workers could lose access to employer-sponsored health insurance in Missouri. Most of these workers have children in their homes who could lose access as well.

And what happens to those children? Some will enroll in Medicaid, some in the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and some children will remain uninsured. All of which will be paid for by taxpayers (yes, even the children that will remain uninsured).

Right-to-work laws are misleading and unpatriotic. Collective bargaining is a basic human right and in the United States patriots ensure our rights are guaranteed. Actively working to restrict anyone’s rights under the guise of economic prosperity or security is unpatriotic. American workers and the unions who support and negotiate on their behalf are the crux of the American ethos. Labor unions have given us the five-day work week, fair wages, negotiated employer-sponsored health insurance, and the Family and Medical Leave Act. It’s no coincidence that as union membership has declined over 35 years, so has the middle-class portion of the national income.

I want to close by reflecting on the 1.2 million veterans that are union members. Clarence Adams (Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran) spoke of

veterans and union membership during his 2013 testimony before the House Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions:

I never thought that a big corporation could violate my rights, and the government would just let them get away with it. I am sad to say that my experience has taught me that our current labor laws are broken. Workers who dream of reaching the middle class and who hope for some job security shouldn't have to endure months, or even years, of fear and intimidation at work. I was there when my country asked me to risk everything in Iraq, and is it too much to ask for my government to protect my rights to join a union at work?

Let's create an environment that makes it just a little easier for all Americans to make it to the middle class. On August 7th, I encourage all Missourians to vote no on Proposition A.

