

NAACP passes resolution supporting union workers' right to collective bargaining

Written by

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(Baltimore, MD)—On Saturday, February 19, the NAACP National Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution supporting the right of public sector employment unions to engage in collective bargaining, marking their opposition to the bargaining restrictions sought recently by Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, and many other states.

“The NAACP stands in solidarity with our union brothers and sisters in Wisconsin, and throughout the country,” stated Chairman Roslyn M. Brock. “This coordinated effort to desensitize and misinform public opinion as it relates to workers’ rights is unconscionable in these times of economic strife.”

Governor Walker – and over two dozen other state elected officials – has proposed legislation that would strip state workers of nearly all their collective bargaining rights, in addition to cutting pay and benefits. The legislation has been met with massive protests by organized labor across Wisconsin and throughout the country.

“The NAACP, along with our over 1200 branches and youth and college chapters, stands with the teachers, service workers, public employees and hundreds of thousands of Wisconsin residents in opposition to Governor Scott Walker’s short-sighted state budget,” stated NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. “As this nation pulls itself out of the Great Recession, state budgets should not be balanced on the backs of Wisconsin hard working state and local employees who provide vital services to our communities. Governor Walker should do the job he was elected to do, which is to put people back to work – not on the unemployment line.”

“Our nation must enact smart policies to stimulate economic growth and create jobs,” continued Jealous. “We cannot cut our way out of the recession. Job creation increases our tax revenues and consumer dollars, which will grow our economy and ultimately reduce our deficit. The NAACP stands ready to fight in opposition to similar legislation in any state where the rights of workers are being eviscerated, and jobs are being severely cut, whether it is Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee or Indiana or any other state in our union.”

“This issue is actually a lot more than it appears,” stated NAACP Wisconsin State Conference President Tom White. “There are people with jobs and livelihoods at stake, and they are not going to take this change lightly. Wisconsin is one state and we should function as one. Wisconsin’s government cannot move forward on this without the support of Wisconsin’s residents. This legislation provides an opportunity for all workers, in all professions, to come together, gather their resources, and speak out. After all, it could easily be our own co-workers who come under fire next.”

The Board’s measure resolves that the NAACP “will fight to protect the rights of workers to engage in the process of collective bargaining, and NAACP oppose the continued elimination of public sector jobs which only adds to our nation’s unemployment misery.”

Additionally, the resolution says that the NAACP “will use agitation and mobilization wherever necessary to prevent these draconian proposals from becoming public policy in any jurisdiction.”

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The resolution can be found on our website at <http://action.naacp.org/page/-/Public%20Employees%20Resolution.pdf>