



# Local 1277

# News

March, 2017

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## WORKING FAMILIES UNDER SIEGE!

### The Assault on Unions and the Middle Class Keeps Coming —Example: H.R. 785

By Douglas Kurowski, Board member-at-Large

As if the continual and mean-spirited assaults on the labor unions and their members were not enough, corporate greed and public-sector budgetary cuts are leading the anti-working people Trump Administration and their hard-right wing allies into new and very dangerous territory: *The Republican-dominated U.S. Congress (backed by the anti-union President) is trying to pass H.R. 785, subtitled the National Right to Work Act.*

The main purpose of this terrible, middle-class destroying legislation is to *prohibit the union security clauses*, a union contract provision requiring employees to pay union dues as a condition of employment (also known as the Closed Shop). If H.R. 785 were to become law, it will not add any new or positive language to the current National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) or Railway Labor Act (RLA).

*But what it will do is repeal five (5) important labor and/or union-friendly provisions in the NLRA and one in the RLA. It will literally cripple the unions and kill what's left of the middle class, the historically proven safeguard against dictatorship!*

Already, in working-class communities, corporate greed and political posturing and short-sightedness that led to the slashing of organized labor's very-hard earned benefits like Defined Benefit Plans (DBPs) instead of Defined Contribution Plans (DCPs), and reductions in priceless, vital medical benefits.

### And We Were Worried About the Existing 28 "Right to Work States"!

You might ask, how did we get to this very sorry state? Well, let's start with the National Right to Work Committee (NRTWC). Along with a few other similar anti-working people organizations, the NRTWC, founded some 60 years ago, has been the leader in the effort to destroy public- and private- sector unions. With healthy revenue streams coming from people and organizations like the Koch brothers, Walmart and the Castle Rock Foundation, the combined efforts of these groups form real influence and "leadership" in fighting unions, and suppressing wages and benefits.

Added to this, is the grim specter of a rerun of *Friedrichs v. California*. You may recall that last year a 4-4 divided Supreme Court could not rule in the case that would have allowed workers to stop paying union dues, even as they continued to benefit from the efforts and experience of jobsite union representation. With a high court vacancy, the 4-4 split vote sent the case back to the lower court, which—*fortunately*—had ruled in favor of preserving union dues.

But now, with a President and congress hell-bent on *destroying* unions, working families and the middle class, a rerun of *Friedrichs* is almost certain. Trump's nominee for the vacant Supreme Court seat, while an intelligent and professionally accomplished man, is a hardline conservative. *It is a pretty good bet that he will be the swing vote that upholds Friedrichs (or a similar case from another court of appeal) that will destroy the union dues structure and essentially cripple their ability to work and fight on behalf of employees across the country, both at public and private jobsites.*

This bodes very badly for unions and the working men and women they represent. And this effort will be supported by both the NRTWC and deep-pocket ultra-conservatives like the Koch brothers and other misguided like-minded individuals.

This hidden, evil agenda is disguised to look like it benefits working-class needs. *That's pure b.s.!* It must be exposed for the fraud it is! After wading through pages and pages of statistics, analysis and conclusions, it all comes out the same: *Unions are not the ones that strip benefits, keep wages stagnate or falling, or have workers preform their jobs in an unsafe manner in order for management to save time and money.*

The culprit is almost always a private or public employer trying to save a buck! They ignore the basic economic fact that when employees make money, they spend money. This boosts the local and national economies. It is simple economics. In addition, there is plenty of data showing that with the decline of union membership and influence, comes the loss of the middle class.

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## **They say “The only way to eat an Elephant is one bite at a time”**

Over the last 60 years, the feast has begun for some. As mentioned earlier, some 28 states either are, or are trying to become right-to-work states, changing Defined Benefit Plans (DBPs) to Defined Contribution Plans (DCP). This increases the retirement age, decreases pensions and medical benefits, the backbone of our benefits that the rich bosses want to take away so they can fatten their already bloated “bottom line”.

This is all about silencing the voice of labor and destroying the “American Dream” of middle-class security and potential upward mobility. Statistically, the decline of union membership and influence has contributed immensely to the eroding of the middle class. *Once 35% of the work force in the 1950s, union representation is now a measly 10.7%, as of 2016.*

## **WHEN IT IS YOUR DUTY TO REPORT**

### **You Should Know What is in Your “Little Book”**

*By Errol Frazier  
Vice President, Local 1277*

Brothers and sisters, as an officer of our Local Union, and as one that has often served as your advocate at numerous second-level hearings, I would like to share with you a few things have come to my attention over the past few months.

There is a little book—one that may go by the title of “*Employee Handbook*”, or “*Employee Guidebook*”, or “*Rules and Regulations*”—that was given to you by the company you work for, when you first were hired. Remember that? You had to sign right on the dotted line, which became your way of saying that you had received it, read it through from cover to cover, and had it memorized.

That little book was part of the initial batch of the paperwork that you had to collect; you know, that same batch of paper that you probably haven’t looked at since. But that little book is important, brothers and sisters, it really is. *Among other things, actually, maybe most important, that book should be used for a guideline to keep us out a situation that could lead to discipline.*

### **When Self-Reporting is a Must**

All these books, at all our properties, *contain a provision that requires anyone who has been arrested or has received a traffic violation, either on or off duty, has the responsibility to report it to the manager or supervisor. Also, most of the books have additional wording that says, in effect, that, “If you are convicted of a felony, you are subject to discipline up to and including termination.”*

It used to be that higher-paid union workers helped empower other working people; what used to be called the “Union Equality Effect”. This meant that other employers had to increase pay and benefits in order to attract employees. This was a very good and positive thing, because a rising economic tide is supposed to raise all ships.

Trump and his allies are trying to *sink* all ships (working people and families). They are trying, with things like H.R. 785, to *destroy* unions and the working middle class. Those lied-to and taken-in people who voted for this outrageous President may very well come to regret it—and soon!

***Your ATU Local 1277 Executive Board will keep you informed on the evolution of this union and middle-class killing bill.***

Further, please, please, be mindful of the fact that we also have the responsibility to report to the appropriate manager, director, or H.R. staff person *any prescription that we are taking. And know that most of the companies we work for require documentation of these medications.* This is only sensible: We are, after all, *public-transit* professionals. Therefore we are *public-safety* employees. Our work, our training, and our careers are dedicated to ensuring the safety and reliability of the busses and rail that hundreds of thousands of mass-transit dependent people rely on day in and day out.

It is a very good idea, brothers and sisters, to review now and then that “little book” that was given to you, and then steer clear of any disciplinary pitfalls that might lay ahead.

### **It's time again!**

*By Jeff Shaffer • Treasurer, Local 1277*

Once again NASCAR is holding its annual **Union Appreciation Day**. On March 26, union members from all over California will be attending the Auto Club 400 NASCAR race at the Auto Club Speedway in Fontana.

**There is special ticket pricing for union members. For a total of \$46.00, the Ticket Package includes:**

- One Auto Club 400 Ticket
- One Pre-Race Pit Pass
- One Complimentary Parking Pass

If you are interested in attending this exciting automotive event, either log onto [www.autoclubspeedway.com/union](http://www.autoclubspeedway.com/union) or call 800/944-RACE (7223). When you are purchasing your event package, be sure to mention that you are a member of ATU Local 1277.

**I hope to see you and your family or friends out there on March 26!**

## HE TRULY DESERVES IT!

### Local 1277 Warmly Endorses Mayor Garcetti for Re-Election

By Art Aguilar  
President, Local 1277

ATU Local 1277 is pleased to endorse Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti for a second term of service at City Hall. I strongly urge every Local 1277 active member, retiree, and their families to vote for this excellent public servant on Election Day, Tuesday March 7. Further, I ask our eligible voters throughout the city to urge their friends and neighbors to do so, too.

Mayor Garcetti has been a diligent, effective leader. He has put forth reasonable policies, and has ably guided the City of Los Angeles through a period of economic uncertainty, and social and political challenges. He has consistently reached out to the neighborhoods, and has worked hard to improve the lives and futures of the residents who need the most help from their local government.

The mayor has also been a friend to organized labor, and to working people and families. He appointed thoughtful, generally pro-union members to the powerful and important MTA Board of Directors. We have seen expanded funding for local and regional mass transit, as evidenced by the passage last year of County Measure M, which the mayor strongly supported. Perhaps more important, we have enjoyed labor-management peace for the past four years.

Equally significant, Mayor Garcetti has declared Los Angeles to be a "Sanctuary City", a metropolis in which the rights and dreams of immigrants are preserved. In defying the anti-immigrant, anti-family policies of the off-the-rails administration in Washington, D.C., he has helped make our city a leading partner of the California "resistance" to the worst instincts and ideas of the Trump administration.

*Mayor Eric Garcetti has been good for our city, and working people and families. He absolutely deserves our support and votes on Election Day.*

### Secretary of Labor Nominee 2.0

The President whiffed badly—*very badly*—with his first choice for Secretary of Labor: Anti-union, anti-working people fast-food mogul Andrew Puzder was about as bad a nominee for this important position as was possible to dig up. Under intense media and U.S. Senate pressure, Puzder threw in the towel and removed himself from consideration. *Good riddance!*

So now the President has nominated another person for Secretary of Labor, *Alexander Acosta*.

Mr. Acosta actually has some experience with labor-management issues, a refreshing change from the backgrounds of some of the other Trump department nominees. Mr. Acosta, a Miami native and son of Cuban immigrants, served as a member of the National Labor Relations Board. As an attorney, he specialized in employment and labor issues in one of Washington, D.C.'s more prestigious law firms.

Mr. Acosta was the first person of Hispanic descent to serve as an assistant attorney general. He served in that capacity in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division for two years. He then became U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, working there until 2009. He led the prosecution in a number of high-profile conspiracy and fraud cases. From 2009 to the present, Mr. Acosta was dean of the law school at Florida International University.

The new nominee certainly cannot be as bad a choice as Puzder was. That's something, I suppose. Given his experience with labor-management issues and his legal background, we can hope that Mr. Acosta will realize how important the rulings and regulations from the Department of Labor are to tens of millions of working people and families, and work to retain and expand workers' rights and goals in the coming years.

### Seven Local 1277 Members Retire from Careers at MTA

*Seven Local 1277 members have retired from MTA after long and productive careers. They all were hardworking employees and loyal members of our Union.*

*Richard Leyton*, Mechanic A, Division 15, 17 years, November 1, 2016; *Kriengsak Bamrungcheep*, Rail Electronic Communication Technician, Rail Comm., 26 years, November 30; *Otoniel Gutierrez*, Body Repairer A, CMF-B, 15 years, December 1; *Dennis Nacar*, Maintenance Specialist, Blue Line, 23 years, December 7; *Gary Itoku*, Mechanic A, Division 9, 23 years, January 4, 2017; *Nicomedes Apsay*, Facilities Systems Technician, CMF-B, 32 years, January 20, and *Tony Chow*, Mechanic A, Division 1, 26 years, January 20.

*Local 1277's Executive Board and members wish these brothers and sisters long, enjoyable and healthy retirements. They will be missed!*

*Your Executive Board wants to remind all ATU Local 1277 retirees that our Union's 45th Annual "Old Timers" bash is set for Saturday, June 3, 2017. This year's party theme will be "Hawaiian Luau".*

*Please be sure that your 2017 dues are at our office by April 28, so that you will receive an invitation to this enjoyable event. Invitations will be mailed out on May 3.*

*There will be a longer notice about the party in our May paper.*



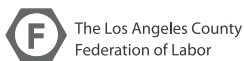
## Ten Local 1277 Members Contribute to Vital ATU COPE Fund

Ten members of our Union have generously contributed to the important ATU COPE Fund. As you know, our International Union amasses this war chest in order to support our political friends and causes, and fight the enemies of working people and families. We are proud to present Union pins and jackets to those members who have realized how vital the ATU COPE Fund is for expanding labor's influence in Congress and advancing our agenda.

**Richard Ramos; Randolph Hickey; Gerardo Gutierrez; Jose Soni; Thomas Helliwell; Raymond Berdin; Ronny Terrazas; Adolfo Perez; Steven Cole, and Jeffrey Lopez .**

To earn a jacket, one must contribute \$12.50/month, for a total of \$150.00/year. Congratulations to those members for their public-spirited and timely action. The ATU COPE Fund is very important. Please contribute whatever you can to it! Thank you.

# THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FEDARATION OF LABOR VOTER GUIDE



The Los Angeles County  
Federation of Labor

## Voter Guide

### Local Measures & Propositions

LA City Measure S — No  
LA City Proposition M — Yes  
LA City Proposition N — No  
LA County Measure H — Yes

### Los Angeles City

Los Angeles Mayor — Eric Garcetti  
LA City District 1 — Gil Cedillo  
LA City District 3 — Bob Blumenfield  
LA City District 5 — Paul Koretz  
LA City District 7 — Monica Rodriguez  
LA City District 9 — Curren Price  
LA City District 11 — Mike Bonin  
LA City District 13 — Mitch O'Farrell  
LA City District 15 — Joe Buscaino  
LA City Attorney — Mike Feuer

### School Boards and Trustees

Burbank Unified School Board — Steve Frintner  
**LAUSD Board**  
District 2 — Monica Garcia  
District 4 — Steve Zimmer  
District 6 — Imelda Padilla  
**LACCD Trustees**  
District 2 — Steve Veres  
District 4 — Ernest Moreno

### Azusa

Azusa City Council  
Eddie Alvarez  
Robert Gonzalez

### Bell

Bell City Council  
Alicia Romero  
Ana Maria Quintana

### Bellflower

Bellflower City Council  
Juan Garza

### Burbank

Burbank City Council  
Bob Frutos  
David Gordon  
Jess Talamantes

### Compton

Compton Mayor  
Aja Brown  
Compton City Council District 3  
Tana McCoy  
Compton City Attorney  
Craig Cornwell

### Covina

Covina City Council  
Jorge Marquez  
Victor Linares

### Gardena

Gardena Mayor  
Mark Henderson  
Gardena City Council  
Shannon Lawrence

### Huntington Park

Huntington Park City Council  
Karina Macias  
Manuel Avila

### Inglewood

Inglewood City Council District 1  
George Dotson

### La Verne

La Verne Mayor  
Tim Hepburn  
La Verne City Council  
Matthew Lyons

### Monterey Park

Monterey Park City Council  
Peter Chan  
Hans Liang

### Norwalk

Norwalk City Council (2 yr seat)  
Margarita Rios  
Norwalk City Council (4 yr seat)  
Esperanza Free  
Enrique Aranda

### Pasadena

Pasadena City Council District 5  
Victor Gordo

### South El Monte

South El Monte Mayor  
Joseph Gonzalez

### San Gabriel

San Gabriel City Council  
Denise Menchaca  
Chin Ho Liao

### West Hollywood

West Hollywood City Council  
John Duran  
John Hellman

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**Here are the upcoming Local 1277 membership meetings for March and April. Please make every attempt to attend the meeting for your unit. It's your Union, and we need your participation at our meetings!**

**Tuesday, March 7:** Los Angeles area members:

**Tuesday, April 4:** L.A. Building Trades Council, 1626 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles. Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.

**Wenesday, March 8:** Riverside area members:

**Wednesday, April 5:** 1074 E. La Cadena Dr., Riverside Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 2:00 p.m. Evening Session 6:00 p.m.

**Thursday, March 9:** Palm Springs/SunLine members:

**Thursday, April 6:** Cathedral City Branch Library, 33520 Date Palm Drive, Cathedral City Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 4:00 p.m.

**Thursday, March 9:** Long Beach:

**Thursday, April 6:** Machinist Hall, 319 W. Broadway, Long Beach Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 3:00 p.m.