

Supreme Court Case Threatens Public Workers

Background on *Janus v. AFSCME*

The U.S. Supreme Court will take up a case this term called *Janus v. AFSCME*. The case would make the entire public sector “right-to-work” in one fell swoop.

Janus is the culmination of decades of attacks on working people by corporations and the wealthy – and the politicians who do their bidding – to rig the economy in their favor. The forces behind this case are the same forces that have pushed to limit voting rights, undermine civil rights, and attack immigrants.

Their goal with *Janus* is no secret. They want to use the Supreme Court to take away the freedom of working people to join together in strong unions, because unions give workers power in numbers to speak up for themselves, their families and their communities. Unions help hardworking people build a good life with economic stability for their families.

[A recent article in The Guardian](#) highlights how this case is part of a blatant multi-million dollar campaign to “defund and defang” and weaken labor unions because they know that labor unions are the best vehicle working people have to level the economic playing field for all Americans.

The Liberty Justice Center, the legal arm of the right-wing Illinois Policy Institute, is arguing on behalf of Illinois state employee Mark Janus, the primary plaintiff. They argue that state employees should not be forced to pay union dues.

Lawyers for AFSCME Council 31 insist these “fair share” dues only go towards funding collective bargaining efforts and do not subsidize other political activities.

The case was heard by the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals on March 1, 2017 and was granted certiorari by the U.S. Supreme Court on September 28, 2017. A possible ruling is expected sometime between April and June 2018.