

Grocery workers at UFCW Locals 21 and 367 Send Strong Message to Companies with Strike Vote



UFCW Locals 21, 367 and Teamsters Local 38 grocery workers sent a strong message to the grocery chains by overwhelmingly voting to authorize a strike.

UFCW Locals 21, 367, and Teamsters Local 38 sent a strong message of solidarity to Fred Meyer, Safeway, QFC, and Albertsons last week when they voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike. The 98 percent strike authorization vote is the workers' latest step in their fight for fair treatment, pay, and benefits. Contract negotiations will continue on October 10 and 11. Workers say they expect the chains to now come to the table with a set of serious proposals.

"We hope the employers come to their senses and make a fair proposal that respects me and my co-workers and our families. But if they force us to strike, we are ready," said Jessica Roach, a UFCW Local 367 Fred Meyer worker.

Workers have been in contract negotiations since March. Despite more than 12 bargaining sessions and a first round of informational pickets in July, Fred Meyer, Safeway, QFC, and Albertsons have continued to stick to proposals that would stop providing healthcare coverage for employees working fewer than 30 hours a week, deny workers paid sick days, and cut pay - including for those who work on holidays.

More information and updates on the strike vote and bargaining situation at Fred Meyer, Safeway, QFC, and Albertsons can be viewed at <http://www.ufcw21.org/>. **OP**

UFCW Locals Help Push California's Minimum Wage to Highest in the Nation

In September, with support from UFCW locals across the state, California's legislature voted to increase the state's minimum wage to \$10 per hour.

Last week, California Governor Jerry Brown signed the bill into law,

which means that California will soon have the highest minimum wage in the country.

The wage will be implemented in two steps: an increase to \$9 per hour in July of next year, followed by another \$1 increase to \$10 in January of 2016.

California's minimum wage had been stuck at \$8 since 2008. Had California's 1968 minimum wage been indexed to inflation, it would now be \$11.08.

UFCW locals in California saw that an increase was long overdue so they stepped up and took action. Members held five lobby days at the State Capitol in Sacramento. This gave UFCW members the opportunity to appeal directly to State Senators, Assembly members, and the Governor about how raising the minimum wage would impact their lives.

As the minimum wage bill headed towards passage, UFCW members willed it over the finish line by making direct phone calls to uncommitted legislators.

At the signing of the bill, Governor Brown's remarks made it clear he heard their message loud and clear.



UFCW locals in California took action to help raise the state's minimum wage to \$10.

“Our society is experiencing a growing gap between those at the top and those at the bottom,” he said. “Our social fabric is being ripped apart. Today, we sew that fabric a little tighter together, as we raise the wages of those who labor at the bottom.”

This isn’t the first time UFCW’s California locals have helped to secure a minimum wage increase. They were also recently involved with passing living wage ordinances in San Jose and Long Beach.

More than 2.3 million California workers will be affected by the wage increase. **OP**

OUR Walmart Continues to Prepare for Actions Leading Up to Black Friday



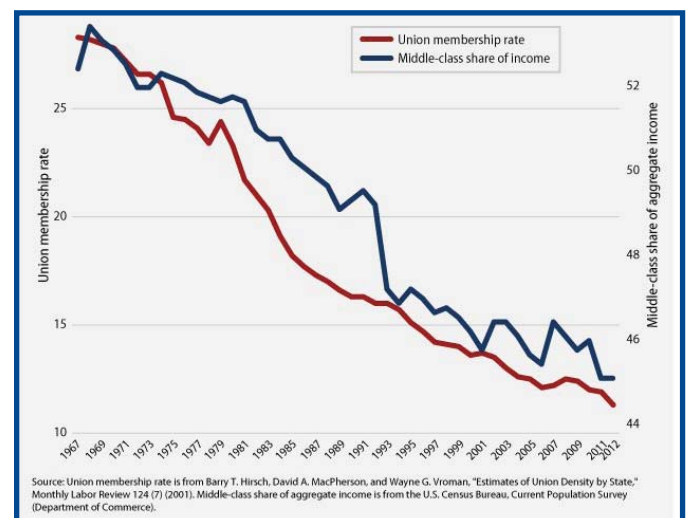
OUR Walmart members and allies prepare for actions throughout the fall leading up to Black Friday.

Over the last year, OUR Walmart members and workers’ calls for change have been met with Walmart’s extreme response of firing and disciplining those who speak out. This has led many to seriously question the company’s relationship with workers throughout its supply chain.

OUR Walmart and community supporters will continue their actions to call on the company to publicly commit to a real wage of at least \$25,000 annually and the rescission of all illegal firings and/or disciplinary actions against more than 70 workers for going out on strike.

Black Friday is the most important day of the year for retailers like Walmart and is an essential moment for sending the company a message. OUR Walmart members have announced widespread protests for Black Friday in 2013. As Black Friday approaches, the campaign is asking allies to commit to supporting OUR Walmart members as they take action this holiday shopping season by signing the petition pledging to join Walmart workers this year in their calls for change at <http://action.changewalmart.org/page/s/black-friday-pledge>. **OP**

New Data Link Decline of Middle Class to the Decline in Union Membership



A study from the Center for American Progress links the slide of middle class incomes to the decline in union membership.

A study from the Center for American Progress links the slide of middle class incomes to the decline in union membership. Between 1967 and 2012, union membership fell from 28.3 percent of all workers to 11.3 percent in all 50 states.

The decline in union membership is reflected in the decline in the share of the nation’s income going to the middle 60 percent of households, which fell from 52.3 percent to 45.7 percent over the same time period. More information on the study from the Center for American Progress can be found at <http://bit.ly/19bhcf9>. **OP**