



WASHINGTON FEDERATION OF STATE EMPLOYEES
WFSE/AFSCME ▷ AFL-CIO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Supreme Court releases Janus v. AFSCME decision

OLYMPIA, WA —

The Supreme Court of the United States released its decision on the landmark case, Janus v AFSCME today which mandates that “fair-share” provisions in existing public-sector union contracts are eliminated, and non-members no longer have to pay for representation services that unions must continue to provide to non-members.

Public employees across Washington state and America, affirm that the decision made today will not divide us. Our members know that, especially for women and people of color, joining together in unions continues to be the key factor in increasing mobility for all workers by increasing wages, benefits and raising standards in all our communities.

This ruling isn’t just an attack on union workers; it’s an attack on the freedom of all working people to come together to improve their lives, their workplaces and their communities. The people behind this case want to divide working people and limit our power in numbers because they want to weaken our ability to win fair wages, affordable healthcare and retirement security. Unions remain the best way to level the playing field for all working people while holding elected officials accountable to ensure public services are funded and delivered in an effective and efficient manner.

Unions work hard every day to protect things our families need like Social Security, health benefits, and paid time off to care for our loved ones. Standing together, we will continue to fight for our rights and our freedom to prosper.

AFSCME Council 28 (WFSE)’s 44,000 members provide the vital services that make Washington happen. With members in hundreds of different occupations — from social workers to community corrections officers, laundry staff to information technology specialists — WFSE advocates for fairness in the workplace, excellence in public services and prosperity and opportunity for all working families.

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AFSCME COUNCIL 28 (WFSE) MEDIA CONTACT:

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WFSE MEMBER SPOKESPEOPLE

SARAH DECKER (Vancouver) Hello, my name is **Sarah Decker** and I work for the Washington State Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss. We run the Washington School for the Deaf and provide services to Deaf and Hard of Hearing students throughout the state and we support the professionals who serve those students in their local communities.

Unions are a critical part of our society. On the one hand you have management directing programs, employees, and limited resources, on the other hand you have the union advocating for worker's rights; **when they meet there is a balance that benefits us all.** I've seen first-hand, as a union steward, the gains we make when all sides are equally represented. These gains don't just promote our employees; they improve our agencies, and our communities as well. So supporting our union, whether you work or not, is supporting employees, public services, our clients, and our communities. **Supporting our union is supporting us all.**

- CONTACT Sarah Decker: 503-880-7624, signsoflife@hotmail.com

SUE HENRICKSEN (Tacoma) My name is **Sue Henricksen**. As a state employee, I provide therapy services for individuals who live in a Residential Habilitation Center and provide services to children who have a disability and live at home with their caregivers. I use my voice to improve the way services are provided and improve our ability to provide these services to the people who need them the most. **Our power in numbers allows us to develop healthy collaborative relationships with management, improve office morale, and work processes.**

I also serve as President of AFSCME Council 28 (WFSE). As a union officer I have a unique opportunity to use my voice to support, improve and protect working conditions, pay, benefits and healthcare for state employees statewide. **I'm sticking with our union so I can continue making a difference for workers, services and the people we serve.**

- CONTACT Sue Henricksen 253-732-2943, sueh@wfse.org

ANDREW PAGE (Vancouver) My name is **Andy Page** and I have been working for the Washington State Department of Corrections as a **Community Corrections Officer** for 13 years. I focus on community safety while enforcing the orders of the Court for felony level offenders who have been placed on community custody / probation.

In my role as a Community Corrections Officer I deal with people who have had or are currently struggling with chemical dependency or mental health issues. This career presents many stressful challenges and events. I wear the hat of a police officer, social worker and counselor all at the same

time. The compensation for our job class has been significantly lower than my cohorts on the national level. **That's where our union has been the most effective for me.**

With our union we have **power in numbers** to make workplace improvement gains through agency-specific bargaining for the Department of Corrections. **Union negotiations help increase both our financial stability and our safety in the work place.** Our union protects state employee pensions and keeps healthcare affordable. **My fellow Union members who bargain on my behalf and negotiate with our managers may not know me personally, but I know they have my best interest in mind.**

- CONTACT Andy Page 360-213-3073, awpcougar@yahoo.com

MIKE YESTRAMSKI (Lakewood) My name is **Mike Yestramski** and I'm a psychiatric social worker at Western State Hospital near Tacoma, Washington. For more than 15 years – the last five in Washington – I've been helping people who struggle with mental illness, substance abuse disorders, behavioral addictions and more.

Being part of a strong union gives me and my co-workers a voice on the job. It allows us to better communicate with management about how to improve client services and ways to make sure that each behavioral health professional, as an individual, is better able to provide those services.

Our union has definitely helped us move in a very positive direction from where we were to where we are now— we have made a lot of great strides.

Through our union we have been able to access **better training for what we do and push for better evidence-based treatment models for our clients.** We've also been able to achieve living wages and more vacation time. This is vital to our kind of work, because in order to be an effective professional in a helping field— you need to be taking care of yourself, too.

- CONTACT Mike Yestramski 410-474-7154, djstatick@gmail.com

KRISTINA JOHNSON-SHORT (Omak) My name is **Kristina Johnson-Short** and I've been an employee of WA state for 5 years, first as a Financial Service Specialist and now as a Social Service Specialist providing services to Stevens and Ferry County.

Unions serve a critical role in my community where the safety of children is paramount. Our union advocates for safe work conditions for state employees. As someone who lives in a remote area, I know how inclement weather and traveling to isolated locations can affect my workplace safety. **I'm sticking with my union so I can continue to provide services to families and children in need where my safety is considered.**

- CONTACT Kristina Johnson-Short 509-936-3969, Kjohnson_short@yahoo.com

ALEX BACON (Seattle) My name is Alex Bacon, I'm a member of WFSE Local 304 and I've been working at Seattle Central College as an administrative assistant in the library for the past couple of years.

Community College education is a critical step towards economic security for many Washingtonians. I'm proud to help students access higher education.

The cost of education and housing here in Washington is a growing challenge for many, particularly where I work in Seattle. **Our union fights for a higher education system that serves all of us, including student loan debt reform that would benefit not only my coworkers but the students we serve. Our union also fights to raise the minimum wage, and more work is needed to ensure that all workers are paid fairly for their work.**

- CONTACT Alex Bacon 206-604-2285, Bacale01@gmail.com

JULIANNE MOORE (Yakima) My name is Julianne Moore and I've been a state employee since 1984. I work at Yakima Valley School, a residential habilitation center for people with developmental disabilities.

Here's where I stand: **I'm going to stick with my union** to protect my career, to protect public safety and most of all, to protect the people I serve!

- CONTACT Julianne Moore 509-961-7548, juliannemoore@aol.com

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Stock photos of our spokespersons are available upon request.