

June 29, 2017

In 2015 Wisconsin legislators took right to work legislation to a special session. The measure passed and was signed by Governor Scott Walker and Wisconsin became the 25<sup>th</sup> state in the country with a right to work law in its books.

My Grandfather, who is retired now, was a member of a union for 35 years and my Step Dad has been a member of a union for the last twenty years, they both are proud union men that strongly supported their unions. I grew up with a deep understanding about unions and what it meant to be a part of one and what it has done for me and my family. The adverse effects of the rights for union workers are great and will continue to affect families in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's attempt to destroy unions – did not work. According to journalist Robert De Neufville of the New York Time, "There are still a small percentage of workers who are still currently union members, Americans – whether unionized or not – should care about the decline in unions because unions give workers a bigger say in our economy and our political system. That helps the middle class and it good for democracy."

Experts say unions help boost political participation among ordinary citizens – especially among members, but also among nonunion members participate more for pro middle class. We need people to stick up for the middle class and this makes a lot of sense to me, it is my understanding that unions play a key role in protecting workers against abuses in the workplace and making sure they are receiving the proper training and proper workplace safety. This is to benefit everyone who do work that they live decently.

While CEO's and executives' salaries are skyrocketing, the middle class suffers. We need to make sure we have leadership in our state and in country that will fight for the rights of the

middle class. There is no reason my mother and father need to work as hard as they do to just get by. We need fair wages, we need to ensure safe working conditions, and make sure that there are good benefits for the workers and their families.

I grew up in South Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a blue collar town. There are not fancy houses here – there is middle class and poor. My mother and step father have always worked full time. I have two sisters and three step siblings in my family. My parents own a house and cars and work hard every day to make sure me and my sibling are given everything we need to become educated productive Americans. We have learned what hard work is from watching them. My parents don't buy anything for themselves – the kids always come first. It does not make sense to me that they have to work as hard as they do just to pay the mortgage and gas and education.

We need unions to speak on behalf of workers. We need to make sure unions succeed and the middle class is protected, otherwise the voices of the rich and the well-connected will be heard over average American workers. We must support each other and leaders who share common interests of unions.

Unions still matter and the role that unions play in politics matters more than ever. We need to make sure that unions support candidates and legislation that will protect the middle class and families like mine. We are good, hard working people. My parents want better for us kids and they want us to succeed and do better than they did so we don't have to struggle. We need to make sure that someone is looking out for the middle class and protecting our rights. Unions matter today more than ever. We need strong unions to help American middle class.