

# International Worker Justice Campaign Questions and Answers



## ***What is the International Worker Justice Campaign?***

***The International Worker Justice Campaign (IWJC)*** is the major organizing campaign of ***UE Local 150, The North Carolina Public Service Workers Union.***

The ***IWJC*** is a developing movement driven by rank-and-file public sector workers to build awareness and support for collective bargaining rights for public employees throughout the state.

The ***IWJC*** calls for the elimination of all legal and political obstacles to collective bargaining rights for public service workers at the municipal, county, and state levels throughout North Carolina.

The Campaign also

calls for recognition of the ***human rights*** of all workers and observance of established ***international labor standards*** in accordance with those passed by the International Labor Organization, a body of the United Nations.

## ***What is Collective Bargaining?***

Collective Bargaining is the basic process of negotiation between workers who have organized into a union or other employee based labor organizations and their employers on issues such as wages, work rules, child care, health and safety on the job, benefits such as how much an employee should contribute to the employers health plan, vacation, work schedules, etc.

- *Collective bargaining gives organized workers a powerful tool through which to change unfair working conditions, injustices on the job, or to improve wages and benefits.*
- *Collective Bargaining should result in a signed contract or legally enforceable collective bargaining agreement between workers and their employers. A legally enforceable collective bargaining agreement ensures that issues which have been negotiated and agreed upon by both the workers and management are binding.*
- *Without the right of workers to reach a legally enforceable agreement with their employers, management has total authority to create and interpret policies and areas of discipline as they see fit.*

## ***Why Is Collective Bargaining Important for North Carolinas' Public Sector Workers?***

Although North Carolina public sector workers have the right to form and join a union and can

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negotiate with their employer for fair wages and benefits as well as decent working conditions, *it is illegal* for the workers and their employers to sign a legally enforceable collective bargaining agreement.

### ***Why Is Collective Bargaining illegal in North Carolina?***

North Carolina is one of only two states in the US that have a law which prohibits state and local government from entering into collective bargaining agreements with their employees. In North Carolina, this law is known as **General Statute 95-98**. The other state is Virginia.

General Statute 95-98 was signed into law in the 1950s during the time of legal segregation and major human rights violations in the United States.

### ***What Does the International Worker Justice Campaign Involve?***

- The formation of **Core Committees** of workers and community or labor activists to organize and educate the rank and file as well as to build support for the campaign.
- The formation of **Workers Rights Boards** composed of respected ministers, elected officials from the local, county, and state levels, community leaders, and other respected citizens to



hear testimonies directly from workers about their day to day experiences on the job without collective bargaining.

- The convening of **public hearings** to examine the problems and conditions faced by workers that show their need for collective bargaining. Public Hearings have been organized in Rocky Mount, Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill, and Goldsboro. Greensboro and Charlotte are also targeted to hold hearings. A state-wide hearing is planned for Raleigh in early November 2005.
- **Endorsements and Resolutions** from churches, community organizations, labor unions, cities, towns, and counties across the state as well as individuals who support this important campaign.
- A **petition drive** aimed at collecting thousands of signatures from workers and citizens around the state calling for collective bargaining rights for workers in

the public sector.

- The **filing of an official complaint at the International Labor Organization (ILO)** against the State of North Carolina and the United States for violations of workers' **human rights and International Labor Standards** that grant all workers around the world, regardless of their country or nationality, the right to collective bargaining.

### ***What Can I Do To Support The Campaign?***

1. Attend one of the public hearings being organized in an area near you
2. Become a signer and distributor of the IWJC Petition. **Call (919) 637-6949** to get petitions or for more information on the petition campaign.
3. Get an official endorsement from your church, city or town, community organization, or trade union for the International Worker Justice Campaign.

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