

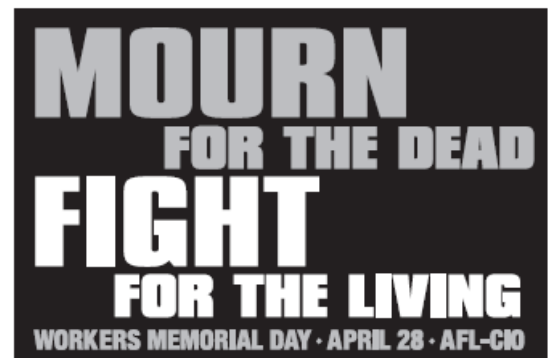
Union Attacks = Workplace Safety in Jeopardy

Today is Workers Memorial Day, a day that we mourn for those hurt or killed on the job. We also renew our fight for the living. With 4,340 workplace deaths and roughly 50,000-60,000 deaths from occupational illnesses annually, this fight could not be more critical.¹ Steelworkers are fighting against bad policy nationwide that could further threaten our workplace safety and health.

Consider what's at risk:

- **If proposed right to work legislation becomes law** – One of the goals of this legislation is to harm a local's ability to support itself financially. As a result, locals could struggle to send members to safety trainings and to defend members who encounter safety and health concerns on the job. In those states with right to work laws, *workplace deaths are 52.9 percent higher than in non-right to work states.*² A second recent study suggests that states that are working to reduce workplace injuries and fatalities should “consider encouraging trade union growth and repealing right to work laws.”³
- **If public sector workers are stripped of bargaining rights** – A nurse at a county care facility loses a tool to fight for safer nurse-to-patient ratios. A road maintenance worker loses the ability to bargain for better safety equipment. Without a union to back them up, too many workers keep silent for fear of retaliation when safety and health risks are present. *Eliminating bargaining rights eliminates our voice for safety on the job.*
- **If policies are enacted to limit unions' ability to engage in the legislative and political process** – Unions have always been at the forefront in demanding legislative changes to reduce exposure to safety and health hazards – hazards that too many employers would rather not address. We can't remove workers' voices from these debates.

Given that many Steelworkers go to work each day in some of the most dangerous industries, any threat to safety and health on the job can impact us even greater. **Mourn for the dead, and let's keep fighting for the living.**



¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Note: Numbers are from 2009, the most recently available data.

² AFL-CIO, *Death on the Job*, April 2010

³ Ronald Zullo, *Right-to-Work Laws and Fatalities in Construction*, Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy at University of Michigan Ann Arbor, March, 2011.