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Jobs Crisis: Hundreds gathered at a Milwaukee church to voice their frustrations with the jobs crisis and Gov. Walker's recent decision to move jobs out of Wisconsin.

High-Speed Rail Rally: Just days after Wisconsin's high-speed rail funding was distributed to other states, Milwaukeeans rallied at City Hall to voice their anger over the loss of thousands of good jobs.

Wisconsin Workers are Ready to Fight

The following op-ed by President Mike Thomas hit newspapers across the state the week of December 20th. For more information visit the Community Strength page of www.seiuwi.org.

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Since Governor-elect Scott Walker was elected on Nov. 2nd, he has made numerous attacks on organized labor including his intentions to rescind bargaining rights for state employees. He is picking a fight with a labor force that is hot-blooded from years of pay cuts, furlough days, and increased costs for essential benefits, not to mention the 400 public sector jobs lost in November alone.

Wisconsin workers and their families have had enough of Walker's political rhetoric and they are ready to fight back against threats to their livelihood. For three decades, the State Employment Labor Relations Act has protected public employees and has kept the peace between workers and the state. However, Walker is testing his invincibility by threatening to change the law—a law that protects state workers from unfair labor practices.

Walker's intention to attack state jobs as a way to repair the state's debt is misguided. He said, "You are not going to hear me degrade state and local employees in the public sector," but that is exactly what he is doing. By cutting jobs, salaries, and benefits, Walker is

angering many hardworking public employees which is most definitely degrading. It sends the message that public employees and the services they provide aren't valued.

With tens of thousands of public employees crushed by last week's Senate decision on state contracts, Walker is going into office with "the flexibility afforded to [him] to make the tough choices necessary to reduce state spending while still providing core government services." I've got news for you, Walker: government services rely on the public employees who administer them. Without valued public employees, our quality public services will not be maintained.

The political mischief of that Senate decision came at the expense of hardworking citizens and those who did not stand up for Wisconsin's teachers, healthcare workers, and departmental staff must be held accountable. Their actions are directly connected to our governor-elect's threats and Wisconsin's working families will not sit around and take it. They will not stay quiet and let money-hungry politicians take away their jobs, their hard-earned income, their healthcare, their livelihood.

Governor-elect Scott Walker has picked a fight with the wrong people. The working class is what pushes Wisconsin's economy forward and they will not be dormant. We are ready to fight and we are not backing down.

Inauguration Day Rally

On Inauguration Day, over 700 citizens including unemployed workers, ministers and community leaders gathered at the State Capitol to bring attention to the tens of thousands of Wisconsinites who are out of work.

The Counter-Inauguration Day event was organized to tell Gov. Scott Walker and the new legislature that they will be held accountable to the working families of Wisconsin who have taken serious hits to their livelihood over the past several years.



The Inauguration Day event began with a vigil outside Monona Terrace where Rev. Willie Brisco of MICAH led the group in prayer for Wisconsin's thousands of unemployed workers and their families. The vigil ended with a call to action to fight for family-supporting jobs and to hold Gov. Walker accountable to his campaign pledge to create 250,000 jobs by the end of his term.

The day's events concluded with a demonstration outside the State Capitol during the inauguration ceremony. Participants held signs and handed out leaflets urging voters and political leaders to fight for good jobs in Wisconsin.

Gov. Walker's decision last month to turn down federal high speed rail money that would have created thousands of jobs in the state



sparked the need for the event. Community leaders are insisting that a transparent government prove that all major new expenditures under the banner of job creation actually produce family sustaining jobs.

Co-sponsors of the event included the Good Jobs and Livable Neighborhoods Project of Citizen Action of Wisconsin, MICAH, League of Young Voters, Voces de la Frontera, and the Milwaukee Area Labor Council.

Member of the Month: Alicia Treadwell

Alicia Treadwell has been an SEIU member since 1998 and a HCWI member since its transition from Local 1199. She has also served on the State Council Board of Directors for over a year.

Currently, Alicia is volunteering with a coalition that is fighting for good jobs and holding Gov. Walker accountable to job creation in Wisconsin.

"I motivate the members," said Alicia. "I assist them with anything that will help them move forward. I don't just talk about it, I walk about

it. Whatever they need, I'm there."

Alicia also attended the counter-inauguration protest on January 3rd.

"What we did as a union family, as a community, as working families, as tax payers was a success. We came together and got our message across to the legislators at the capitol. It was wonderful. We were all on one accord."

Beyond her commitment to SEIU, Alicia enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and volunteering on political campaigns.



Wisconsin State Council Weekly Updates

Sign up to receive Wisconsin State Council's Weekly Updates! Every Friday, you'll receive top headlines about politics and legislation concerning workers. Plus, at the end of each email, you'll find links to labor and political events happening in the next week.

Visit www.seiuwi.org to sign up!

Community Speak-out on Jobs Crisis

On December 16th, over 200 citizens, ministers and community leaders gathered at New Hope Baptist Church to speak out about the jobs crisis in Milwaukee.

Special guests included:

- Rev. Willie Brisco of Milwaukee Inner-city Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAH)
- State Sen. Spencer Coggs (D-Milwaukee)



- Minister Marilyn Miller of Reformation Lutheran Church
- Rev. Joe Games of Providence Baptist Church
- Rev. Robert Sims of Bethesda Baptist Church

Sen. Coggs spoke of the many transitions of the A.O. Smith facility- the current location of the Talgo train plant- and how it has been a beacon of hope for workers in the surrounding neighborhoods for many years.

He encouraged the crowd to not give up on job creation in the area and to work together to hold Gov.

Walker accountable to Milwaukee's working families.

Unemployed workers, union members, teachers, ministers, mothers and others shared their experiences with joblessness. They spoke of their struggles and empowered the group to take action and continue their commitment to job creation in Milwaukee.

The event was sponsored by MICAH, SEIU, League of Young Voters, Milwaukee Area Labor Council, and the Good Jobs and Livable Neighborhoods project of Citizen Action of Wisconsin.

Public Employees:

Share your story and make a difference!

If you or someone you know is a public employee, please consider sharing your story with us.

Public employees have taken serious hits to their employment including mandatory overtime and cuts to pay and benefits. We're looking for stories about public employees who have taken these hits in order to ensure that quality public services are provided.

Your story will be shared with state legislators as we advocate for policies that protect workers and their families in the upcoming legislative session.

Visit www.seiuwi.org for details.

High-Speed Rail Rally

On December 13th, over 200 community members gathered at Milwaukee City Hall to show support for Wisconsin's high-speed rail project and voice anger over losing the thousands of jobs it would have created.

Earlier that week, Gov. Walker successfully pushed federal money for the project out of state, leaving many Wisconsinites wondering if he will really create 250,000 jobs by the end of his term.

"If Walker can throw away 13,000 good jobs before he is sworn into office, what is he going to do after he's sworn in?" asked Jackie McElroy, a Healthcare Wisconsin member who attended the rally.

"It is totally unacceptable for him to decide that we don't need those jobs. People all over the state are hurting from layoffs and lost benefits. It's time to bring jobs back to Wisconsin, not throw them away."

Sponsors of the event included the Good Jobs and Livable Neighborhoods project of Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Voces de la Frontera and the Wisconsin State

