

## Accomplishments of the Labor Movement

Unions have made life better for all Americans by helping pass laws favorable to working people.

- Helped end the horrific practice of child labor
- Helped protect workers' rights by establishing the 8-hour work day
- Played a critical role in helping working people earn fair and just wages by establishing minimum wage laws
- Fought to pass numerous laws protecting workers' health and safety on the job (OSHA)
- Helped create the Social Security system, which provides workers with retirement, disability, survivorship, and death benefits
- Fought for worker protections by helping establish unemployment insurance and workers' compensation laws
- Played a critical role in the civil rights struggles of the past and today



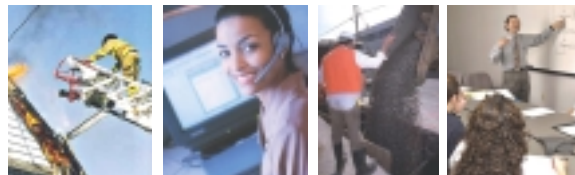
## What is Working Rhode Island?



Created in 2004, Working Rhode Island is a coalition of over 100,000 active and retired union workers, united as a collective voice on issues affecting working families. Working Rhode Island consists of unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO, as well as many independent unions.

For too long, the term 'union' has been seen in a negative light. WorkingRI will highlight and promote the invaluable effect the labor movement has had on our free, democratic society.

This is why we are asking for your help. We call it the **'Power of One'**. If all union members begin to tell their family and friends the true benefits of unionism, people will start to understand its value and appreciate how it makes our communities a better place to live and work.



## Don't Miss



*An informative, one-hour weekly show highlighting issues and events affecting working families.*

Statewide Interconnect B  
Channel 14

Tuesday 7pm • Thursday 8pm • Saturday 5pm



# We Make Rhode Island Work



**WORKING**  
RHODE ISLAND

[www.workingri.com](http://www.workingri.com)

## Accomplishments

- On-going coordination to promote the value and contributions of the labor movement. A strong labor movement is critical to maintaining and growing a solid middle class.
- Participated with 'Voice Your Vote' and the 'Voter Action Project' to register 11,000 new voters in 2006, increasing voter turnout by 16.5% over 2002.
- Supported numerous union locals, public and private sector, in their struggles to achieve fair and just contracts for their unions.
- When Brooks Pharmacy refused to sign a project labor agreement and tried to hire out-of-state contractors to build their new corporate headquarters in RI, WorkingRI assisted the Building Trades in a public relations campaign - leading to an entirely union labor jobsite.
- Joined with the New Public Transit Alliance to improve and expand RIPTA and invest in transportation choices that protect the environment.
- Sponsored Labor Day WaterFire, where WorkingRI collected donations in conjunction with the Rhode Island Red Cross for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- Participated in coalition effort that raised Rhode Island's minimum wage to \$7.40/hour on Jan 1, 2007.

# Rally For Respect



June 1, 2005

Working Rhode Island coordinated the largest labor rally ever at the State House. Over 5,000 union members turned out to show their support for issues affecting labor.



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# Why Union?



Through unions, workers win better wages, benefits and a voice on the job - and good union jobs mean stronger communities. Union workers earn 30 percent more than non-union workers and are more likely to receive health care and pension benefits than those without a union. Unions lead the fight today in bettering the lives of union and non-union workers, such as through protection of our pensions, improved safety and health protections, and fair-trade agreements that protect American jobs and lift the standard of living for workers all over the world. It is impossible to maintain a democracy without a free, independent and strong labor movement.

*“What does labor want? We want more schoolhouses and less jails, more books and less arsenals, more learning and less vice, more constant work and less crime, more leisure and less greed, more justice and less revenge. In fact more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures, to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful and childhood more happy and bright.”*

- Samuel Gompers  
Founding President  
American Federation of Labor

## The Union Difference

Communities and workers do better when unions are stronger.

	10 States Where Unions Are Strongest	10 States Where Unions Are Weakest
Average hourly earnings, 2005 <sup>1</sup>	\$17.48	\$14.50
Median Household Income, 2005 <sup>2</sup>	\$51,161	\$43,783
Percent of population with no medical insurance, 2005 <sup>3</sup>	13.7%	17.9%
Workplace fatalities per 100,000 employees, 2004 <sup>4</sup>	4.3	5.1
Public education spending per pupil, 2005	\$9,725	\$7,111
Crimes per 100,000 population, 2004	3,782	4,411
Percent of population in poverty, 2005 <sup>5</sup>	10.9%	12.8%
	UNION	NON-UNION
Median weekly earnings	\$781	\$612
Womens' median weekly earnings	\$723	\$541
African American median weekly earnings	\$656	\$507
Latino median weekly earnings	\$679	\$428
% of workers with access to guaranteed pension	73%	16%
Workers whose jobs provide access to health insurance	92%	68%
Workers without health insurance coverage	2.5%	15%

<sup>1</sup> Except as otherwise noted, all data is from Kathleen O'Leary Morgan and Scott Morgan, State Rankings, 2006, Morgan Quinto Press, 2006. <sup>2</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. <sup>3</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. <sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 2004. <sup>5</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Union Members in 2004, Jan. 27, 2005; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in Private Industry in the United States, March 2005; Economic Policy Institute; Employee Benefits Research Institute, May 2005.