

Aff

I Affirm the resolution resolved: A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike

Definitions:

- “Strike” is defined by Encyclopaedia Britannica, [The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Strike”, Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/strike-industrial-relations>] /Triumph Debate as:

Strike, collective refusal by employees to work under the conditions required by employers. Strikes arise for a number of reasons, though principally in response to economic conditions (defined as an economic strike and meant to improve wages and benefits) or labour practices (intended to improve work conditions). Other strikes can stem from sympathy with other striking unions or from jurisdictional disputes between two unions. Illegal strikes include sit-down strikes, wildcat strikes, and partial strikes (such as slowdowns or sick-ins). Strikes may also be called for purely political reasons (as in the general strike).

- “Recognize” is defined by Merriam-Webster as:

[“Definition of Recognize”, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/recognize>] /TriumphDebate

Definition of **recognize** transitive verb 1: **to acknowledge formally**: such as a: to admit as being lord or sovereign b: to admit as being of a particular status c: to admit as being one entitled to be heard : give the floor to d: to acknowledge the de facto existence or the independence of 2: to acknowledge or take notice of in some definite way: such as a: to acknowledge with a show of appreciation recognize an act of bravery with the award of a medal b: to acknowledge acquaintance with recognize a neighbor with a nod

(Advocacy: A just government must recognize the right to strike because it strengthens unions and leads to positive benefits. The right to strike is unconditional because the ability to balance power in the workplace and protect against structural harms must always be available to workers) We are talking about a hypothetical just government and that’s why we differ from the status quo.

- Does not mean workers can’t enter contracts that remove their right to strike
- Does not mean procedural suggestions can not be in place--companies can still temporarily replace workers, we’re not prohibiting that

the **value** for the round is **morality**, defined as “a particular system of values and principles of conduct”.

The criterion is minimizing structural violence. Two reasons to prefer:

- 1.) Structural violence is a manifestation of biases that separate people into in and out-groups, making certain groups invisible, and is unjust

Winter and Leighton 99:

Winter and Leighton | Deborah DuNann Winter and Dana C. Leighton. Winter | [Psychologist that specializes in Social Psych, Counseling Psych, Historical and Contemporary Issues, Peace Psychology. Leighton: PhD graduate student in the Psychology Department at the University of Arkansas. Knowledgeable in the fields of social psychology, peace psychology, and justice and intergroup responses to transgressions of justice] "Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology in the 21st century." Pg 4-5 ghs//VA

Finally, to recognize the operation of structural violence forces us to ask questions about how and why we tolerate it, which often have [can be] painful answers for the privileged elite who unconsciously support it. A final question of this section is how and why we allow ourselves to be so oblivious to structural violence. Susan Opatow offers an intriguing set of answers, in her article Social Injustice. She argues that our normal perceptual cognitive processes divide people into in-groups and out-groups. Those outside our group [which] lie outside our scope of justice. Injustice that would be instantaneously confronted if it occurred to someone we love or know is barely noticed if it occurs to strangers or those who are invisible or irrelevant. We do not seem to be able to open our minds and our hearts to everyone, so we draw conceptual lines between those who are in and out of our moral circle. Those who fall outside [They] are morally excluded, and become either invisible, or demeaned in some way so that we do not have to acknowledge the injustice they suffer. Moral exclusion is a human failing, but Opatow argues convincingly that it is an outcome of everyday social cognition. To reduce its nefarious effects, we must be vigilant in notic[e]ing and listen[ing] to [the] oppressed. invisible, outsiders. Inclusionary thinking can be fostered by relationships, communication, and appreciation of diversity. Like Opatow, all the authors in this section point out that structural violence is not inevitable if we become aware of its operation, and build systematic ways to mitigate its effects.

(Cx explanation if needed): As this card explains, we as humans naturally classify others as someone we care about or someone we don't. Those outside our sphere of care don't get the same justice for harms against them. Consider if someone punched your best friend. You would try to get justice for your them, but you're less likely to help if it's a stranger, or someone you see as different from you. On a societal scale, this means that minorities and their issues become systematically invisible. Therefore to achieve justice we must actively counter this natural bias by addressing the issues of marginalized communities.

2.) Second, policies and ideas are mainly influenced by the interests of dominant groups. Incorporating the perspectives of the marginalized is necessary. This applies to restrictions on the right to strike.

Charles W. Mills. "Ideal Theory" as Ideology. *Hypatia* vol. 20, no. 3 (Summer 2005). / MM

The crucial common claim—whether couched in terms of ideology and fetishism, or androcentrism, or white normativity—is that all [moral] theorizing, both moral and nonmoral, takes place in an intellectual realm dominated by concepts, assumptions, norms, values, and framing perspectives that reflect the experience and group interests of the privileged group (whether the bourgeoisie, or men, or whites). So a simple empiricism will not work as a cognitive strategy; one has to be self-conscious about the concepts that "spontaneously" occur to [us] one, since many of these concepts will not arise naturally but as the result of social structures and hegemonic ideational patterns. In particular, it will often be the case that dominant concepts will obscure certain crucial realities, blocking them from sight, or naturalizing them, while on the other hand, concepts necessary for accurately mapping these realities will be [are] absent. Whether in terms of concepts of the self, or of humans in general, or in the cartography of the social, it [is] will be necessary to

scrutinize the dominant conceptual tools [as] and the way the boundaries are drawn. This is, of course, the burden of standpoint theory—that **certain realities tend to be more visible from the perspective of the subordinated than the privileged** (Harding 2003). The thesis can be put in a strong and implausible form, but weaker versions do have considerable plausibility, as illustrated by the simple fact that for the most part the crucial conceptual innovation necessary to map nonideal realities has not come from the dominant group. In its ignoring of oppression, ideal theory also ignores the consequences of oppression. If societies are not oppressive, or if in modeling them we can abstract away from oppression and assume[s] moral cognizers of roughly equal skill, then [so] the paradigmatic moral agent can be [is] featureless. No theory is required about the particular group-based obstacles that may block the vision of a particular group. By contrast, nonideal theory recognizes that people will typically be [are] cognitively affected by their social location, so that on both the macro and the more local level, the descriptive concepts arrived at may be misleading.

Moving on to the contention level

Contention 1: Any limitation on the right to strike is a manifestation of structural violence

Policymakers in any society are part of in groups

Nicholas **Carnes**, 9-11-20**18**, "The Cash Ceiling," Princeton <https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691182001/the-cash-ceiling>

Millionaires make up only three percent of the public but control all three branches of the federal government.

Uberoi, 10-23-20**20**, "Ethnic diversity in politics and public life," House of Commons Library, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01156/>

Following the 2019 General Election, **65 or 10% Members of the House of Commons were from ethnic minority backgrounds.** Four ethnic minority MPs were elected in 1987, the first since 1929: Diane Abbott, Paul Boateng, Bernie Grant and Keith Vaz. Their number has increased at each general election since then, most notably from 2010 onwards. But **if the ethnic make-up of the House of Commons reflected that of the UK population, there would be about 93 Members from ethnic minority backgrounds.**

These cards show that in **any** society, in-groups are formed, and policymakers tend to belong to more powerful groups. Because of this, ANY policy made would come from an in-group, and as I state in my Winter and Leighton card, any policy made by an in-group would inevitably exclude the perspectives of an out-group.

- 1. Because of this, ANY limitations on the right to strike would be a manifestation of structural violence, which MUST be avoided. Also, more underprivileged**

workers depend on strikes than non underprivileged, meaning that they would be disproportionately hurt by any limitation on the right to strike.

2. Unless the right is unconditional, a manifestation of structural violence will exist, and the precedent for more conditions that hurt the oppressed will come. So, under minimizing structural violence, the resolution must be affirmed.

Jackson Lewis Firm, ⁴⁻¹⁵⁻²⁰⁰⁹, "NLRB Ruling Extends 10-Day Notice of Intent to Strike," Jackson Lewis, <https://www.jacksonlewis.com/resources-publication/nlr-ruling-extends-10-day-notice-intent-strike>

In [MLPNA] Minnesota Licensed Practical Nurses Assoc. v. NLRB, [National Labor Relations Bureau] the Eighth Circuit extended Beverly Health, and upheld a Board ruling stating that even a four hour-strike delay violated section 8(g). The striking nurses consequently lost their protected status, and their employer legally fired them. Although the Court found that patient care had not been affected, it also noted that the employer had replacement workers ready based on the time specified in the union notice, and that strikers did not even bother to alert the clinic of the four-hour delay

This shows that unless the right to strike is made unconditional, more and more conditions will be made, and more manifestations of structural violence will exist. Current conditions will also be made stricter. The nurses lost their jobs and their protection just because of something as trivial as a four hour delay with no harm to patient care. Because of this, a just society **must** ensure that the right to strike is made unconditional.

[CLARIFYING DON'T READ]: when policy makers actually made the laws, they would be excluding the voices of minorities in the whole process and the law itself. Also, for the nurses example, say that "basically all they caused were some inconveniences for their employer. They did not deserve to be fired."

Contention 2: Worker-Employer Power Balance

Subpoint A) Recognizing the right to strike strengthens unions

Visser, '19 [Jelle Visser is emeritus professor of sociology at the University of Amsterdam, Published: 10/04/2019, "Trade Unions in the Balance", International Labour Organization, https://www.ilo.org/actrav/pubs/WCMS_722482/lang-en/index.htm] /Triumph Debate

In comparative studies of union membership and union density, **the institutions that contribute most to the explanation of variations across countries and over time are: organization and reach of collective bargaining, workplace representation, union administration of unemployment insurance and benefit provision**

(Brady, 2007; Checchi and Visser, 2005; Ebbinghaus and Visser, 1999; Rasmussen and Pontusson, 2017; Scruggs and Lange, 2002; Western, 1997). All of these studies consider a selected group of about 20 advanced industrial countries with annual data going back to the 1960s or even 1950s. Here I want to explore to what degree these institutions deem the unions 'secure' and explain the variation in union density rates across the world. I begin with considering the organization and reach of collective bargaining, defining collective bargaining as centralized when at least two-third of its coverage is achieved through negotiations and agreements with employers' association rather than with single firms. When sectoral negotiations account for less than one-third of bargaining coverage, and most or all bargaining takes place at firm or enterprise level, collective bargaining is decentralized. In between we have a situation of medium centralization. I only consider bargaining that affects wages, implemented through agreements that bind firms in wage setting in substantive or procedural terms. Applying these criteria, the dataset can be divided into three categories: 44 countries with only or mainly firm-level bargaining, 19 countries with medium-level centralization and 25 countries with centralized bargaining. The mean bargaining coverage rate doubles at each step, from an average 14 per cent of all workers under decentralized bargaining, to 28 per cent under medium centralization and 65 per cent under centralization. For the remaining 52 countries, excluding China, Cuba, Belarus and some Arab countries, there is not enough data on the coverage or organization of collective bargaining. In the three groups, with centralized, partly centralized and decentralized bargaining, there is a

reasonably equal distribution of countries at different levels of development. This gives some confidence that we actually identify the effects of institutions on the level of unionization. **Centralization lowers the organizing costs of trade unions. Industry-wide bargaining allows unions to establish sector-wide wages and limits the risk that 'bad' employers drive out 'good' employers. It also alleviates the need for unions to seek and gain recognition in each firm, and makes unionization of workers in small firms more feasible and less necessary.**

Under centralized bargaining conditions, unions need only to organize and mobilize workers in large or strategic firms in order to set the pattern for the entire industry. Unions can therefore worry less about the unionization of workers in small firms, as long as these firms stay members in the employers' federation that sign the national or sectoral collective agreement, or as long as these agreements are legally extended to them (Hayter and Visser, 2018). This is one of the reasons why bargaining centralization and bargaining coverage rates are much more strongly correlated ($r = 0.78$) than centralization and union density ($r = 0.51$) and also why the gap between unionization in large and small firms can be significant under conditions of centralized bargaining, an issue to which I shall return in the final section of this paper. The second institution of importance is union recognition and union access to workplace

representation. This is often found to be the decisive factor, together with union involvement in the provision of unemployment or health insurance. **Uncontested workplace representation allows unions to concentrate on** issues of productivity, pacify employers, and police the 'social custom' of membership through **direct benefits and contacts in the workplace**. This can be regulated in different ways. In some countries like the United States or the United Kingdom, trade unions must fight for recognition on a firm-by-firm basis, showing that they represent a majority among the workers they claim to represent. In other countries such as Germany or Austria, workplace representation is indirectly guaranteed as a statutory right through the mandated works council. Recognition can also be guaranteed by nationwide agreement between the main union and the employers' organization, as in Scandinavia. Compared to a statutory obligation on employers, a central agreement signed by employers raises fewer issues of compliance and may therefore be considered a stronger guarantee of union recognition and access rights. Using a simple '0' (firm-based), '1' (statutory) and '2' (agreement) coding, it turns out that recognition of union representation rights is strongly correlated to the union density rate, $r = 0.69$.

Strikes can push back against monopsony power to ensure workers see the benefits of production

Bahn 19 [Kate Bahn, the director of labor market policy and interim chief economist at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, August 29, 2019, "The once and future role of strikes in ensuring U.S. worker power," The Washington Center for Equitable Growth, <https://equitablegrowth.org/the-once-and-future-role-of-strikes-in-ensuring-u-s-worker-power/>] /Triumph Debate

In the United States, Labor Day, which falls on the first Monday of September, is when we honor the history of the U.S. labor movement in striving for benefits and empowerment of workers across the economy. **Strikes play an important role in empowering workers vis-à-vis their employers. By withdrawing their labor power, workers are able to balance the scales against the owners of capital, who rely on workers for production and providing services.** Strikes have declined in frequency, popularity, and success over the past four decades, yet today, amid rising economic inequality, they are once again becoming an important tool in exercising worker power to ensure that the gains of profitability and economic growth can be broadly shared.

The history of strikes in the United States Washington University in St. Louis sociologist Jake Rosenfeld examines the role of work stoppages in his recent book What Unions No Longer Do, and finds that strikes at large firms began declining in the mid-1970s, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Work Stoppages file. Rosenfeld then digs deeper to estimate the trends of strikes at firms both large and small by calculating a broader measure using data from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service from 1984 to 2002. He finds a peak in strikes in the late 1980s and then a stark decline after. The decline of strikes is a result of a variety of factors. One is the increased use of replacement hires, especially after the PATCO strike of 1981, when President Ronald Reagan summarily fired 11,000 air traffic controllers who were striking for higher pay and a reduced work week. President Reagan quickly replaced those striking workers with 4,000 air traffic control supervisors and Army members, sending a powerful message to U.S. workers about the use of strikes in labor disputes. But even before this historic turning point, the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 limited the ability of workers to strike. This included restrictions on secondary boycotts and picketing, both of which make striking especially difficult in today's increasingly fissured workplace, where you cannot strike against the corporation that is at least partly responsible for your workplace conditions but not technically your direct employer. For example, workers at the franchises of McDonald's Corporation who attempt to unionize are not protected by the Fair Labor Standards Act when picketing against McDonald's because they are, most commonly, the employees of a franchisor, rather than of the main corporation. These factors, along with a general increasing business hostility toward unions and lack of

enforcement of labor protections, have ultimately made strikes less effective as a tool for collective bargaining in the United States. Increasing interest in unions among U.S. workers today At the same time, **there is an increasing consensus today that unions are a positive force for increasing worker power and balancing against economic inequality.** In polling of support for unions and specific aspects of collective bargaining, Equitable Growth grantee Alex Hertel-Fernandez of Columbia University, along with William Kimball and Thomas Kochan of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, find that support for unions has grown overall, with nearly half of U.S. workers in 2018 saying they would vote for a union if given the opportunity. This is a significant increase from one-third of workers supporting unionization in 1995. According to their research, workers primarily value unions' role in collective bargaining and ensuring access to benefits such as healthcare, retirement, and unemployment insurance. **Strikes have historically been one of the strongest tools used by unions to ensure they have power to engage in collective bargaining.** But striking was viewed as a negative attribute in the survey done by Hertel-Fernandez, Kimball, and Kochan. Yet, when they presented workers with the hypothetical choice of a union exercising strike power with other attributes of unions, such as collective bargaining, support increased. But strikes, of course, do not take place in a bubble. The wider climate of worker bargaining power and institutions that support labor organizing plays a role in making this historically crucial tool effective again. So, too, does the power of employers to resist these organizing efforts when the labor market lacks competition that would increase worker bargaining power. The role of monopsony power in the U.S. labor market Monopsony power is a situation in the labor market where individual employers exercise effective control over wage setting rather than wages being set by competitive forces (akin to monopoly power, where a limited number of firms exercise pricing power over their customers.) **In a new Equitable Growth working paper by Mark Paul of New College of Florida and Mark Stelzner of Connecticut College, the role of collective action in offsetting employer monopsony power is examined in the context of institutional support for labor.** Paul and Stelzner construct an abstract model with the assumption of monopsonistic markets and follow the originator of monopsony theory Joan Robinson's insight that unions can serve as a countervailing power against employer power. Their **[A] model shows that institutional support for unions, such as legislation protecting the right to organize, is necessary for this dynamic process of balancing employers' monopsony power.** In an accompanying column, the two researchers write that they "find that a lack of institutional support will devastate unions' ability to function as a balance to firms' monopsony power, potentially with major consequences ... In turn, labor market outcomes will be less socially efficient."

Subpoint B) Recognizing this right leads to tangible change

The strikes in the Fight for Fifteen movement have seen raises in wages and benefits for millions

Ashby 17

(Steven Ashby, Clinical Professor at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2017, "Assessing the fight for fifteen movement from Chicago." Labor Studies Journal, 42(4), 366–386. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0160449X177427941>/ Triumph Debate

My goal in this paper is to dissect what makes the Fight for Fifteen movement special and praiseworthy; give some examples from the Fight for Fifteen movement in Chicago based on interviews and four years of conversations at Fight for Fifteen actions; add some perspective as a labor historian; and reply to left critics of the campaign.¹ I will discuss the scope and duration of the campaign; its viability; the tactics of one-day strikes and civil disobedience; the degree of worker involvement and the idea of a militant minority in historical context; the role of community participation in Fight for Fifteen actions; and messaging and a media campaign.² There has been extensive reporting, much of it listed in the endnotes, and two books on Fight for Fifteen. Beyond \$15: Immigrant Workers, Faith Activists, and the Revival of the Labor Movement (New York: Penguin Random House, 2017) by Jonathan Rosenblum, the campaign director of the SeaTac Airport campaign, and The Fight for Fifteen: The Right Wage for a Working America (New York: New Press, 2016) by David Rolf, the president of the Seattle-based Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 775, make the case for the \$15 an hour minimum wage and describe in detail the Seattle campaign. My view is that the movement should be honestly analyzed as it is, and not clouded by criticisms of past actions by the SEIU—which, too often, is the case. We should, for example, view Fight for Fifteen through the same lens that we view the CIO and its central leader John L. Lewis during the 1930s labor upsurge. Lewis was simultaneously a great and a deeply flawed leader, but this does not detract

from our praise of the CIO in the 1930s.³ My paper is an emphatic defense of Fight for Fifteen as innovative in multiple important ways that point in the right direction for a labor movement that needs to fully resist the anti-labor onslaught. Scope and Duration **The huge scope of the movement is impressive.** In most traditional union organizing, the scope of the campaign is limited to one employer at one worksite in one city. **Fight for Fifteen, instead, seeks to organize all the fast-food workers in the downtown area of a city.** The campaign targets scores of worksites and multiple employers. (Although, over the past two years, **the movement has especially targeted McDonald's, the industry leader with 17 percent market share, \$25 billion annual sales, and the second largest private employer** in the world with more than 1.9 million employees working at 36,000 stores.) Moreover, Fight for Fifteen has organized workers in 340 U.S. cities—doubling its number from just two years ago. As the Guardian newspaper headlined about the April 15, 2015 protests involving an estimated 60,000 people, "Fight for Fifteen Swells

into Largest Protest by Low Wage Workers in U.S. History.”⁴ The fast-food workers often refer to their movement as a continuation of the Poor Peoples’ Campaign, a national effort to unite and mobilize low-wage workers, which disintegrated after Dr. King’s assassination in 1968.⁵ That movement, too, had its critics within the civil rights movement and among progressives. And, recently, the campaign has spread beyond organizing the 3.7 million fast-food workers to organizing many other sectors.⁶ Airport workers, United Parcel Service (UPS) warehouse workers, adjunct professors, Wal-Mart workers, childcare workers, hospital workers, home healthcare aides, Brinks guards, and other low-wage workers have joined protests demanding a raise in pay and a union. The duration of the movement is praiseworthy. Most traditional union organizing campaigns are relatively brief, lasting a few months. Workers at a company get together to talk about grievances they have with their employer. They call a union for assistance. They form a worker committee to plan the union campaign and to talk to every worker about signing a union card and getting involved. They submit signed cards to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB; or if they are public sector, to the state’s public employees’ labor board), and a union recognition vote is scheduled weeks later. Meanwhile, the worker committee has to deal with the employer’s anti-union campaign.⁷ A vote, administered and monitored by the labor board, is held on one day usually at the worksite. If the union gets a majority, the company is legally required to bargain a contract. If the majority of the workers who vote indicate they do not want a union, then the union staff leave, the worker committee dissolves, and often members of that committee quit their jobs.⁸ The Fight for Fifteen movement is not focused on a labor board-administered election. They, instead, seek to build a workers’ movement with popular support that pressures the companies to recognize the union and negotiate a contract—a strategy first pioneered by the SEIU’s Justice for Janitors campaign in the 1990s. The strategy is in response to weak labor law that makes the election period too rigged in favor of the employer illegally intimidating and harassing workers who have signed union cards into voting against the union. The Fight for Fifteen movement began with a one-day strike in November 2012 in New York City. To date, there have been twelve one-day walkouts, with the number of participating stores and cities steadily increasing. And there have been marches and rallies including at the McDonald’s headquarters in Oak Brook outside Chicago. While the SEIU cannot, one would assume, indefinitely fund a campaign that costs millions of dollars a year, they so far have shown no signs of withdrawing. The union said in 2012 that they were committed to a multi-year campaign, and they are fulfilling that pledge. They have spent at least \$30 million on this one campaign (with some estimates as high as \$70 million); recent news reports point to a \$12 million expenditure in 2016 alone.⁹ No other union is putting these kind of resources into a multi-year organizing campaign. Viability Fight for Fifteen has won unprecedented victories. Numerous journalists have described the stunning successes of the movement, particularly in city and state minimum wage laws.¹⁰

Fight for Fifteen boasts that ten million workers are now on the path to \$15 an hour, which well exceeds the 7.1 million total private-sector union members. Nineteen million low-wage workers have gotten a raise since 2012, including significant raises such as hundreds of thousands who will reach \$13 an hour in Chicago (by 2019) and Cook County (by 2020).

Contention 3: Marginalized groups

Unions disproportionately help those most in need, and therefore are a tool to help close the racial wealth gap.

Weller & Madland, ‘18 [Christian E Weller is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and a Professor of Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts, David Madland is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, Published: 9/4/18, “Union Membership Narrows the Racial Wealth Gap for Families of Color”, Center for American Progress, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2018/09/04/454781/union-membership-narrows-racial-wealth-gap-families-color/>] /Triumph Debate

Being a union member creates a number of venues for workers to build more wealth than would be available for nonunion members.⁴ Union members bargain collectively for wages, benefits, and procedures that affect their employment, such as when and how an employer can fire an employee. As a result of being covered by a collective bargaining agreement—the contract that employers and unions regularly sign and that governs these employment-related issues—

union members have higher wages, on average; more benefits; and more stable employment than is the case for nonunion members.

Higher wages then translate into more savings in absolute terms, as well as more tax incentives to save.⁵ Furthermore, more job-related benefits—such as health insurance, defined benefit plans, and life insurance—mean that union members need to spend less money than do nonunion members to protect their families against future income

losses. Therefore, they can save more money to pursue their own goals, such as paying for their children’s college education.⁶ Lastly, **union membership leads to greater employment stability and job protections that translate into longer tenures with one employer.**⁷

This employment stability translates into more savings, as union members are more likely to be eligible for key benefits such as retirement savings and can better plan for their futures.⁸ This issue brief considers the relevant data broken down by union membership separately for whites and nonwhites. The data show that: Union members have greater wealth than nonmembers, **and the difference is much larger for nonwhites than whites.**

From 2010 to 2016, nonwhite families who were also union members had a median wealth that was almost five times—485.1 percent, to be exact—as large as the median wealth of

nonunion nonwhite families.⁹ The difference between union and nonunion white families was much smaller, with the former having a median wealth that was only 139 percent that of the latter during that period. (see Table 1) Union members have higher earnings, more benefits, and more employment stability than nonunion members. Union members' total annual earnings are between 20 percent and 50 percent greater than those of nonunion members. (see Table 2) The gap in income, benefits, and employment stability by union membership is larger for nonwhite families than for white families. The chance of having a 401(k) plan, for instance, is about 50 percent greater for nonwhite union members compared with their nonunion counterparts, but the gap among whites is only 21.7 percent. (see Table 1) The data suggest that nonwhite union members receive a particular boost in their wealth because they see larger increases in pay, benefits, and employment stability than white union members. This is primarily a result of the fact that nonwhite workers work more frequently than whites in low-paying jobs with few benefits, so they often have much more to gain.¹⁰ This disparity in working conditions is due to a wide array of factors, including but not limited to unequal access to education, occupational segregation, and discrimination.¹¹ **Unions help all workers, and they do the most for those with less advantages. As a result, union membership can help shrink that racial gap in labor market outcomes.** And this partial equalization translates into a boost in median wealth for nonwhite union families.

Unions help to raise wages, increase the chance of health insurance and retirement plans, and aid in the development of long-term wealth.

Spieevack, '19 [Natalie Spieevack is a research analyst in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute, Published: 2/1/2019, "Can labor unions help close the black-white wage gap?", Urban Institute, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/can-labor-unions-help-close-black-white-wage-gap>] /Triumph Debate

The steep decline in unionization rates among workers of all racial and ethnic groups over the past four decades has occurred in tandem with rising racial wage inequality. In 1983, [31.7 percent of black workers and 23.3 percent of the entire workforce](#) were unionized. In 2017, those numbers had fallen to [12.6 percent and 10.7 percent](#), respectively (largely because of global competition, deindustrialization, and the passage of right-to-work laws in several states). Meanwhile, from 1979 to 2016, [average hourly earnings of black men](#) in the US fell from 80 percent of white male earnings to 70 percent of white male earnings. For black women, average earnings fell from near parity with white women to 82 percent of white female earnings. Strong unions play a role in the racial wage gap largely because of [black workers' overrepresentation](#) in labor market sectors that have higher rates of union membership.

Union jobs pay, on average, 16.4 percent higher wages than do nonunion jobs **because of workers' ability to bargain collectively for higher pay, more transparent hiring and promotion policies, and heavier regulation of grievance procedures.** Recent research also finds that union membership delivers a larger wage premium to black workers than to white workers. Hourly wages for black union workers are 14.7 percent higher than those of their nonunion counterparts, while white unionized workers make 9.6 percent higher hourly wages than do nonunionized white workers. The impact of increased unionization on racial equality could extend beyond hourly wage increases. **A 2016 study found that black union workers are 17.4 percentage points more likely than nonunion workers to have employer-provided health insurance and 18.3 percentage points more likely to have an employer-sponsored retirement plan, advantages that are even greater among workers with no high school degree.** Higher union membership also narrows the racial wealth gap by supplying a [larger wealth dividend](#) to nonwhite workers than to white workers. The increase in earnings, benefits, and employment stability afforded by union

membership [translates to](#) a higher likelihood of homeownership and larger contributions to 401(k) plans. Between 2010 and 2016, the median wealth of nonwhite union members was nearly [five times greater](#) than that of their nonunion counterparts, while the median wealth of white union members was only 39 percent greater than that of white nonunion workers. Research and history provide a compelling case for the role of strong unions in furthering economic progress for African Americans and in reducing [economic inequality among all Americans](#). That's why conversations about the importance of unions should be not only class based but racially conscious.

For these reasons I urge an AFF ballot