On Target

AFT Local #2569

September 2018

Clarence Teachers Make the Difference

- **Unions!**

Opinion

Why You Should Care About Unions

(Even if you're not in one.)

By Meagan Day and Bhaskar Sunkara
Ms. Day is a staff writer at Jacobin, where Mr. Sunkara is editor.

- Aug. 8, 2018

Image

Pro-union organizers in New York City protested the Supreme Court's decision on union financing in June. CreditCreditJeenah Moon for The New York Times

First of all: We should all be celebrating that last night voters in Missouri **rejected a right-to-work law** by a 2-to-1 margin.

Why? The average person in the United States has essentially zero powerin society. That's why millions have organized into unions over the years. But the slow decline of unionism in the United States should concern you even if you're not in one.

Unions improve wages, benefits and working conditions for their members. But it's not just to members' advantage. Collective bargaining affects pay

standards across entire industries, meaning even nonunion workers benefit. Unions also secure legislation that protects all workers, from workplace safety guidelines to a guaranteed weekend. And they reduce gender and racial wage gaps across industries, which contributes to broader equality in society.

Owing largely to a sustained political assault on unions, their memberships have been declining since the mid-20th century — a trend that, not coincidentally, maps neatly onto rising economic inequality and falling wages. The Supreme Court's recent decision in Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees is the latest blow to unions, effectively instituting a nationwide "right-to-work" regime for public-sector unions. Right to work forces unions to represent even those who don't pay dues or claim membership, discouraging workers from joining and contributing. In short, it kills unions by attrition.

And that's the goal. A web of right-wing corporate elites, think tanks and foundations bankrolls union-busting campaigns like the one that led to Janus. The mission of the Bradley Foundation, which has pumped millions of dollars into right-to-work advocacy for 15 years, includes supporting "organizations and projects that reduce the size and power of public sector unions." Internal documents obtained by The Guardian show that one foundation supported by the anti-union Koch brothers expressly endeavors to "cause public-sector unions to experience 5 to 20% declines in membership, costing hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars in dues money."

In the wake of Janus, the labor movement faces a choice: It can passively watch members drift away, or it can return to its roots, renewing a commitment to internal democracy, face-to-face organizing and bold strike action — in other words, do the things to win concessions and actually give people a sense of belonging and purpose in the movement. And American workers should cheer labor on when they take this course — for example, by supporting the ongoing wave of teachers' strikes — knowing that the fates of union and nonunion workers are inextricable.

This article is part of the Opinion Today newsletter. David Leonhardt, the newsletter's author, is on a break until Aug. 27. While he's gone, several outside writers are taking his place. This week's authors are Meagan Day, a writer for the socialist magazine Jacobin, and Bhaskar Sunkara, the magazine's editor. You can sign up here to receive the newsletter each weekday.

- **Union Support**

AUGUST 30, 2018

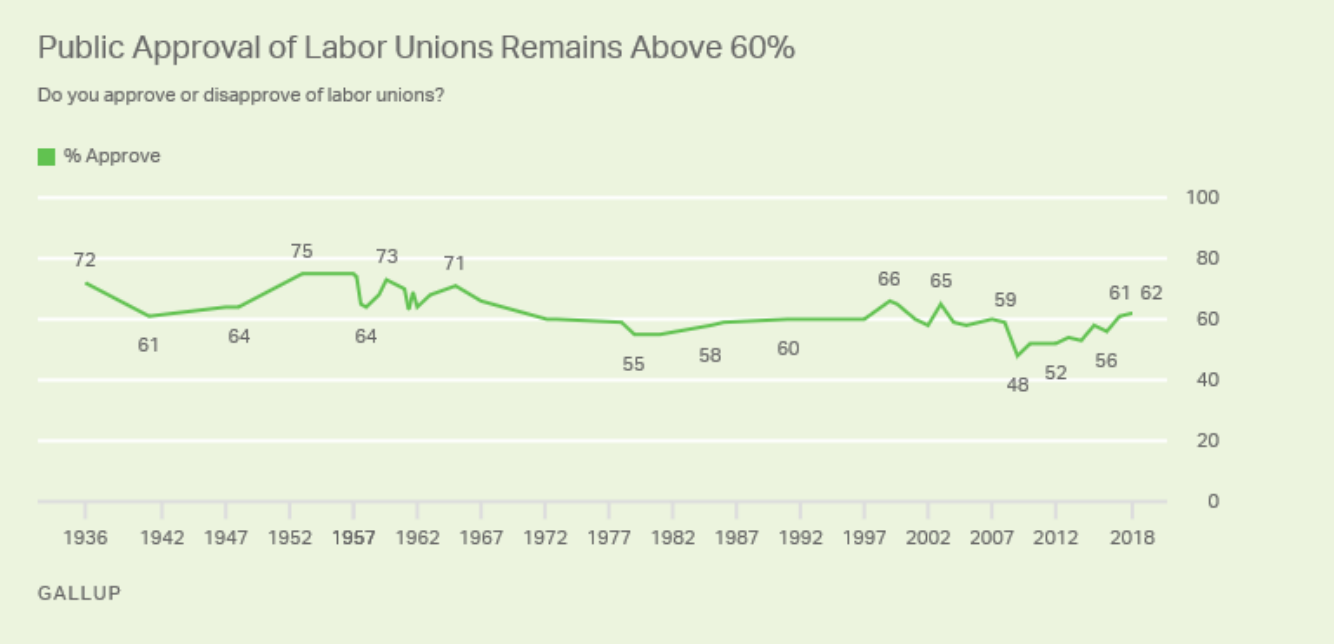
Labor Union Approval Steady at 15-Year High

BY LYDIA SAAD

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- 62% approval of unions roughly matches 2017 level, highest since 2003
- Most Democrats approve, while Republicans are evenly split
- Support for more influence remains at 39%, a post-recession high

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Sixty-two percent of Americans approve of labor unions today, which is consistent with the 61% who approved last year and up from 56% in 2016. Before 2017, public support for unions hadn't exceeded 60% since 2003, when 65% approved.



The American public has long supported organized labor, starting with Gallup's earliest measure, taken in 1936 at the dawn of the U.S. labor movement. In fact, support for unions was relatively high across the first three decades of measurement, averaging 68% from 1936 to 1967. During this period, approval never dropped below 61%, and twice -- both times in the 1950s -- it stretched to 75%.

Things changed in the 1970s when approval fell to 60%. Since then, the percentage of U.S. adults approving of labor unions has averaged 58%, dropping below a majority one time to 48%. That measure came in August 2009 during the recession, coinciding with congressional Democrats' push for expanded union rights during President Barack Obama's first year in office.

The long-term tapering of public support for unions bears little relation to the trajectory of union membership over the same period, described by one expert as an inverted U. Although official measures of union membership have changed, the available estimates indicate that the percentage of all employed adults belonging to unions rose sharply from about 9% in 1936 to roughly 27% in 1945. After peaking at 28% in 1954, it remained near 25% until 1972. It then dropped to about 20% in the mid- and late 1970s and then near 15% and lower in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Today, it is at roughly 11%.

Union Support Universally Strong, Except Among GOP

Current support for unions is fairly high across U.S. society, with majorities of all major gender, age, education and geographic groups approving.

At the same time, approval varies sharply by political affiliation, with 80% of Democrats versus 45% of Republicans approving. The rate among independents falls squarely in between, at 62%.

Majorities in Nearly All Major U.S. Subgroups Approve of Labor Unions

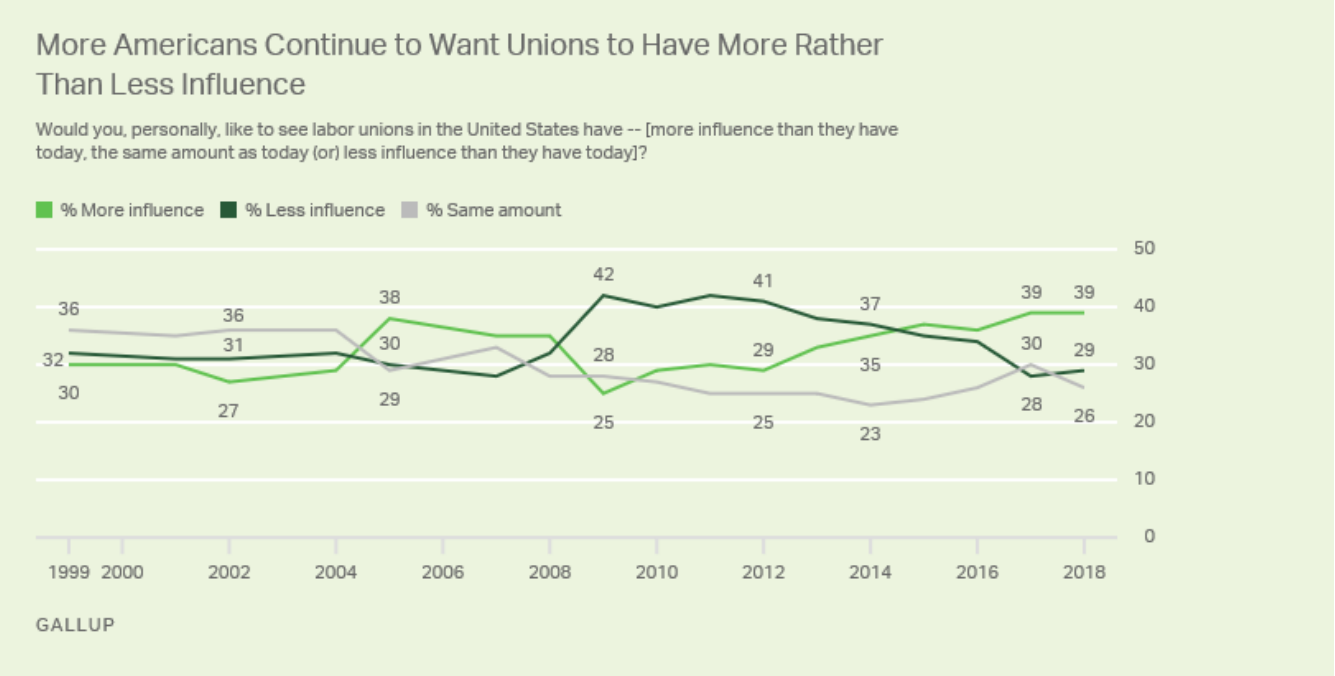
	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
	%	%	%
U.S. adults	62	30	8
Gender			
Men	60	32	8
Women	64	28	7
Region			
East	69	25	6
Midwest	65	26	9
South	60	32	8
West	58	35	8
Age			
18-34	65	24	11
35-54	60	33	7
55 and older	62	32	6
Education			
College graduate	70	25	5
Some college	61	33	7
No college	57	32	11
Party ID			
Republican	45	47	8
Independent	62	29	9
Democrat	80	15	5

GALLUP, AUG. 1-12, 2018

More Want Union Strength to Grow Than Shrink

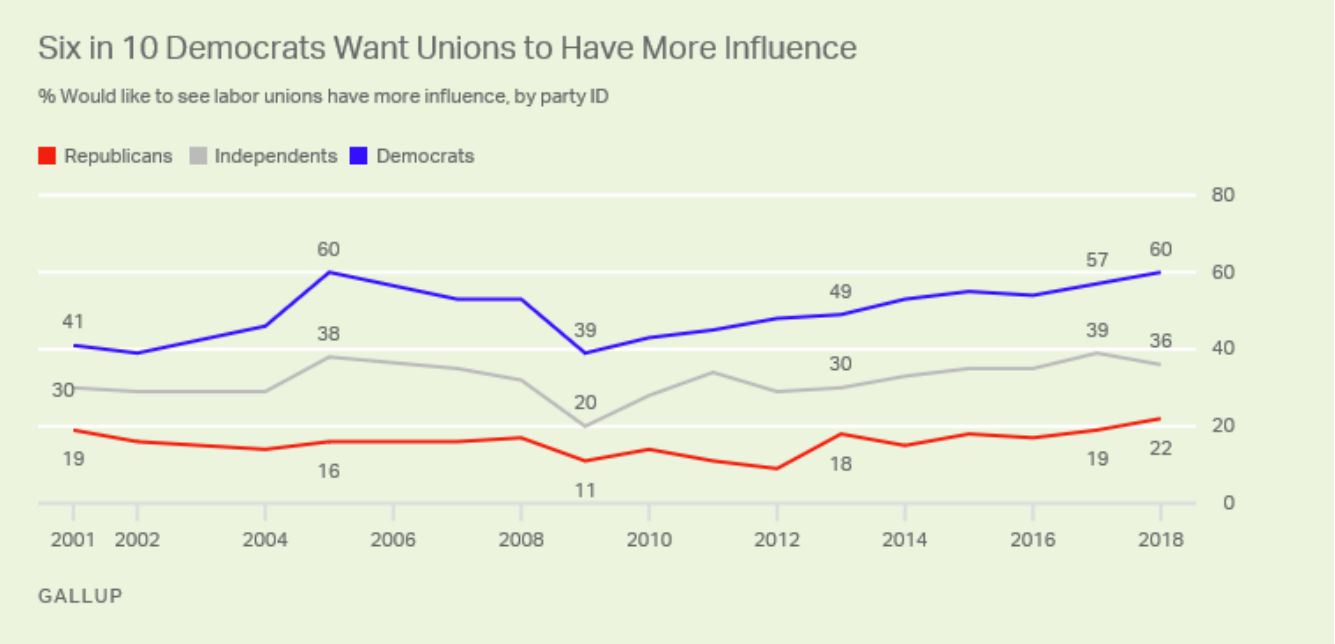
Although a majority of Americans approve of labor unions, fewer want unions' influence to grow. About four in 10 (39%) would prefer to see unions have more influence than they have today; 26% want their influence to stay the same, and 29% would prefer that they have less influence.

Americans' preference for union power is nearly identical to what Gallup found a year ago and represents greater support for strengthening unions than was the case for most of the previous decade.

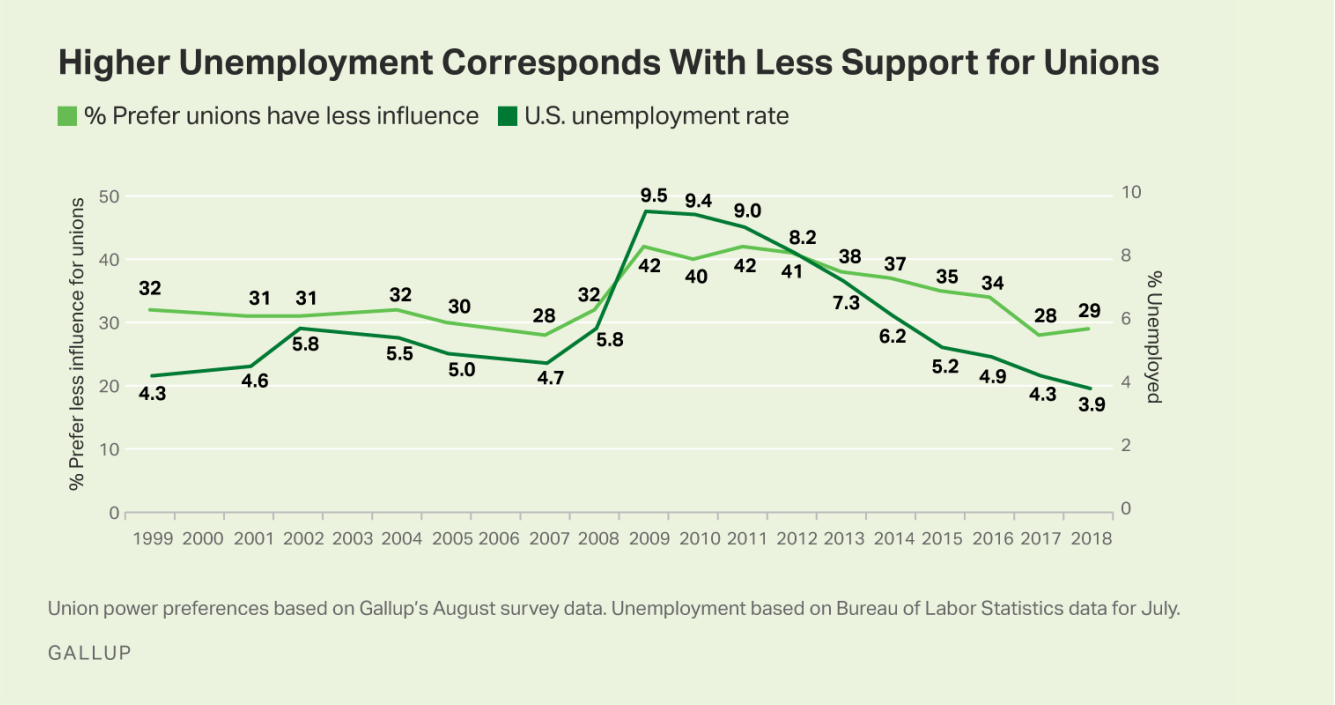


Democrats have consistently expressed much more support than Republicans and independents for unions enjoying greater influence. However, the partisan gap varied during George W. Bush's presidency, as the percentage of Democrats favoring more influence waxed and waned, while the percentage of Republicans stayed fairly flat.

Both parties' support for unions having more power dropped sharply in 2009, the first year of Barack Obama's presidency, amid the last recession, but their support has recovered gradually as the economy has improved.



As suggested by the shifts in views about union strength at times of economic decline or improvement, a strong connection exists between Americans' views about union strength and the economy. This is evident in the relationship between public attitudes about unions and the U.S. unemployment rate. The higher the unemployment rate, especially from 2009 to 2011, the higher the percentage of Americans who preferred to see unions have less influence. Conversely, as the unemployment rate fell after 2011, the percentage favoring less influence for unions also fell.

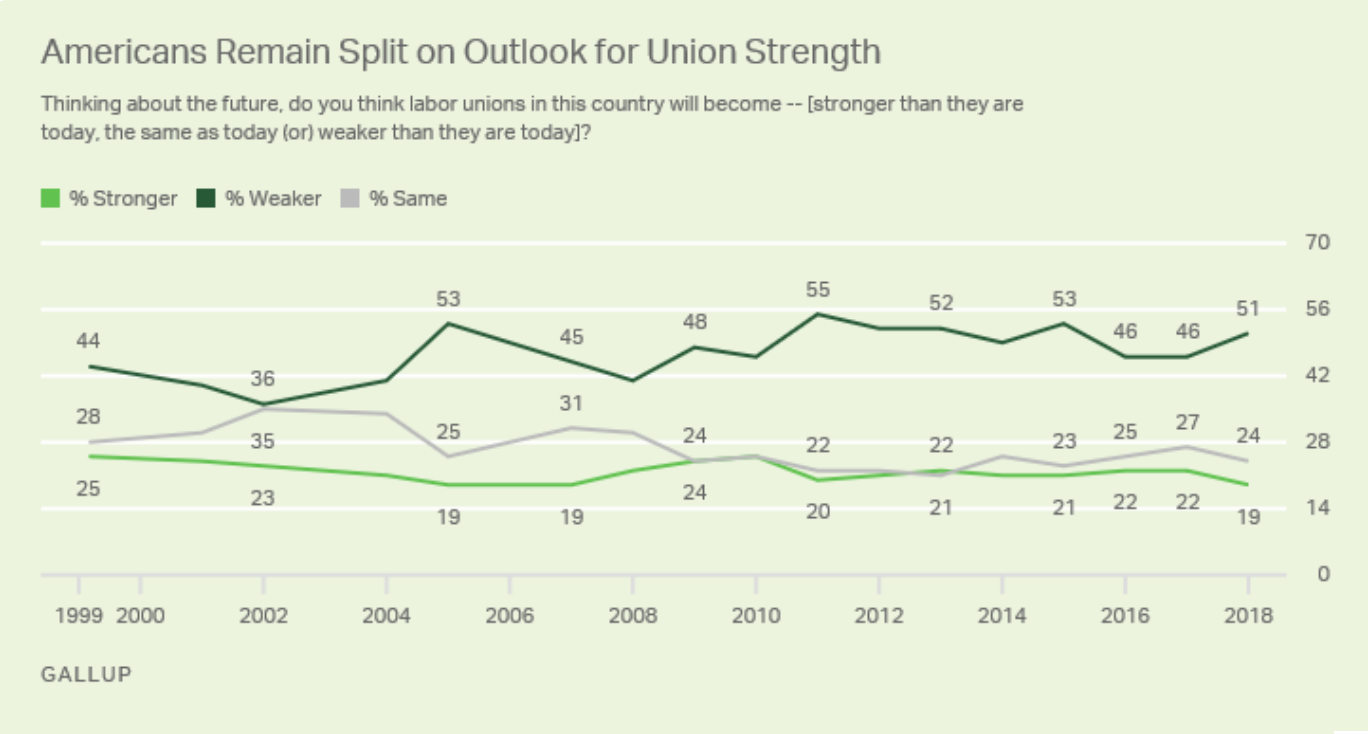


This relationship ties in with prior Gallup research showing that Americans generally believe unions hurt rather than help nonunionized workers in the U.S., even as they believe unions help union members. During the recession, Americans also tended to believe unions hurt rather than helped the economy.

Still, Majority Foresees Unions Weakening

Although more Americans want union influence to expand rather than shrink, a slight majority (51%) predict unions will weaken in the future. Fewer than one in five (19%) think labor unions will grow stronger, while 24% think their power will hold steady.

Americans' outlook on union power has been fairly consistent over the past decade. Before that, from 1999 to 2002 and from 2008 to 2010, they were a bit more confident in unions' futures, with 22% to 25% predicting they would grow stronger.



Bottom Line

At 62%, U.S. public approval of labor unions remains consistent with the improved level seen a year ago, marking a significant increase since the recession and slightly beating the average 58% approval recorded over the last half-century.

With the economy doing well, 39% of Americans, including a majority of Democrats, also say they would like to see unions' influence in the country increase. Still, with union membership on the low side, Americans believe they are more likely to see unions getting weaker rather than stronger.

SURVEY METHODS

Results for this Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted Aug. 1-12, 2018, with a random sample of 1,024 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error is ±4 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

Each sample of national adults includes a minimum quota of 70% cellphone respondents and 30% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using random-digit-dial methods.

View survey methodology, complete question responses and trends.

Learn more about how the Gallup Poll Social Series works.

• Editor's Note

Each month the On Target will come out near the end of the month.

If you have something that you would like included, please send as a **Word document** by the 20th of the month to: lpanek@clarenceschools.org

Items that could be included are: Articles dealing with education/unions, Good ideas for teaching, something humorous/light dealing with education, Information for sharing, Opinion pieces on education, Advertisement for a service you provide.

- **Union Victory**

Missouri voters defeat GOP-backed 'right to work' law, in victory for unions, Associated Press projects

Opponents of Proposition A listen to a speaker during a rally in Kansas City, Mo. Missouri voted Aug. 7 on a "right-to-work" measure, a voter referendum seeking to ban compulsory union fees in all private-sector workplaces. (Charlie Riedel/AP)

By **Jeff Stein** August 7

Missouri voters on Tuesday rejected a "right to work" law that would have hampered union organizing in the state, the Associated Press has projected.

The result deals a setback to state Republicans who have long sought to make Missouri a right-to-work state, while handing a victory to labor groups whose power has been diluted by the Supreme Court and GOP-dominated state legislatures.

With 95 percent of precincts reporting, the AP said 67.3 percent of voters opposed the measure, while 32.7 percent supported it.

State Republicans in February 2017 approved a right-to-work bill, preventing unions from signing contracts that require all workers to pay for union representation, effectively allowing employees to opt out of paying dues.

But under Missouri law, new legislation can be put to a public referendum if about 100,000 state residents sign a petition to overturn it. Unions and their supporters last summer gathered 310,000 signatures to temporarily nullify the law. Tuesday's vote means it will not take effect.

Organized labor considers the victory in Missouri just one sign that unions and their allies in the Democratic Party can stage a comeback after a decades-long decline and repeated defeats, including recently at the Supreme Court.

In June, the Supreme Court ruled in *Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees* that it was unconstitutional for public-sector unions to require collective-bargaining fees from workers.

Missouri is not the first state President Trump won by a large margin to show signs of a resurgent labor movement. Teachers frustrated with low pay and reduced benefits have held protests with thousands of people this year in Arizona, Oklahoma and West Virginia, among other traditionally conservative states, and dozens of teachers tied to their unions are now running for state offices.

Meanwhile, Democrats have a chance of winning control of Congress in the November midterm election, and that could put some of labor's top national priorities back on the agenda, including minimum-wage increases and paid sick leave. Labor organizers are also pondering how to undo right-to-work laws in some Midwestern states, although they first need Democrats to win back those statehouses.

Union membership nationwide has fallen markedly from the 1970s, with the percentage of American workers in a union decreasing from about one quarter in the 1970s to less than 11 percent in 2017, according to survey data.

"It shows just how out of touch the Republican legislature is with their constituents," said Richard L. Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO. "The workers in that state don't want anything to do with right to work."

During Barack Obama's presidency, Republican-dominated state legislatures enacted several curbs on unions at the state level, with Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Wisconsin and West Virginia adopting right-to-work legislation since 2012. (Twenty-seven states have right-to-work laws on the books.) Union membership has declined in 20 of 26 states that have adopted right-to-work laws, said Frank Manzo, policy director of the Illinois Economic Policy Institute.

Conservatives and business groups, including the ones financing the push in Missouri, say right-to-work laws give workers greater freedom, relieving them of having to pay fees to a union they may not support or whose political organizing they find objectionable.

Business groups in Missouri also have highlighted data they say shows faster economic growth in states that have adopted the laws and argued that workers can put more money in their pockets if they are not forced to spend it on the union.

"At a time when working families are struggling because wages are stagnant and health care and education costs are soaring, nobody should be forced to pay union dues," a spokeswoman for Josh Hawley, the Republican nominee for the state's Senate race, said in an email.

Unions have argued that employees who do not pay dues are "free riding," receiving the benefits of union-negotiated contracts without contributing to the costs of organizing. And they say workers would be hurt by the change, as weakened unions will struggle to negotiate higher wages and benefits.

"We are seeing an attack on unions being sustained all over the place — the courts, private employers, the administration," Janelle Jones, an analyst at the Economic Policy Institute, a left-leaning think tank, said in an interview before Tuesday's vote. "This vote could represent the pendulum swinging back to workers and away from corporate interests."

- **Betsy DeVos**

DeVos Ends Obama-Era Safeguards Aimed at Abuses by For-Profit Colleges

Image

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos scrapped a regulation that would have forced for-profit colleges to prove that the students they enroll are able to attain decent-paying jobs. CreditCreditMichael Reynolds/EPA, via Shutterstock

By Erica L. Green Aug. 10, 2018

WASHINGTON — Education Secretary Betsy DeVos formally moved Friday to scrap a regulation that would have forced for-profit colleges to prove that the students they enroll are able to attain decent-paying jobs, the most drastic in a series of policy shifts that will free the scandal-scarred, for-profit sector from safeguards put in effect during the Obama era.

In a written announcement posted on its website, the Education Department laid out its plans to eliminate the so-called gainful employment rule, which sought to hold for-profit and career college programs accountable for graduating students with poor job prospects and overwhelming debt. The Obama-era rule would have revoked federal funding and access to financial aid for poor-performing schools.

After a 30-day comment period, the rule is expected to be eliminated July 1, 2019. Instead Ms. DeVos would provide students with more data about all of the nation's higher education institutions — not just career and for-profit college programs — including debt, expected earnings after graduation, completion rates, program cost, accreditation and other measures.

"Students deserve useful and relevant data when making important decisions about their education post-high school," Ms. DeVos said in a statement. "That's why instead of targeting schools simply by their tax status, this administration is working to ensure

students have transparent, meaningful information about all colleges and all programs. Our new approach will aid students across all sectors of higher education and improve accountability."

But in rescinding the rule, the department is eradicating the most fearsome accountability measures — the loss of federal aid — for schools that promise to prepare students for specific careers but fail to prepare them for the job market, leaving taxpayers on the hook to pay back their taxpayer-backed loans.

The DeVos approach is reversing nearly a decade of efforts to create a tough accountability system for the largely unregulated for-profit sector of higher education. In recent years, large for-profit chains, which offer training for everything from automotive mechanics to cosmetology to cybersecurity, have collapsed under mountains of complaints and lawsuits for employing misleading and deceptive practices.

The implosions of ITT Technical Institute and Corinthian Colleges generated tens of thousands of complaints from student borrowers who said they were left with worthless degrees. The Obama administration encouraged the expansion of public community colleges as it forgave at least $450 million in taxpayer-funded student debt for for-profit graduates who could not find decent jobs with the degrees or certificates they had earned.

The regulations passed in the wake of those scandals remade the industry. Since 2010, when the Obama administration began deliberating the rules, more than 2,000 for-profit and career programs — nearly half — have closed, and the industry's student population has dropped by more than 1.6 million, said Steve Gunderson, the president of Career Education Colleges and Universities, the for-profit industry's trade association.

Even for-profit leaders concede the gainful employment rule has had its intended effect. Mr. Gunderson said that for-profit institutions had to adjust programming to be more affordable and responsive to the job markets.

"The other side should declare victory and go home," he said. "The reality is every school that has a program that was failing gainful employment metrics — and they knew it couldn't be fixed — they've already closed. The sector today is so much better."

Former Obama administration officials said this was no time to leave the field.

"By withdrawing the gainful employment regulations, the Trump administration is once again choosing the interests of executives and shareholders of predatory for-profit higher education institutions over protecting students and taxpayers," said John King, the Obama-era education secretary charged with enforcing the rule, who called the move "outrageous and irresponsible."

Ms. DeVos has brought into her administration former for-profit leaders who are known for their strong opposition to the industry's regulation.

Ethics filings show that Diane Auer Jones, a senior adviser on postsecondary education, lobbied against funding the rule while working for an operator of for-profit schools, Career Education Corporation. Another top-ranking official, **Robert S. Eitel**, who joined the department from a for-profit operator, Bridgepoint Education Inc., when it faced multiple government investigations. Mr. Eitel, who has also opposed the gainful employment regulations, recused himself from weighing in on the rule.

"Rescinding the rule is a derogation of the department's duty to protect students from exploitation and taxpayers from the waste of federal funds," said the New York attorney general, Barbara D. Underwood, whose office joined 17 other state attorneys general that sued the department for delaying its enforcement.

The 2014 rule required for-profit institutions to measure how much debt their students incurred against their post-graduation earnings and ordered them to disclose their failing marks in advertisements. A year ago, Ms. DeVos delayed those parts of the regulations for taking effect.

But one part of the rule that had already been put into place has identified hundreds of failing programs, many of which **went on to shut their doors** after they were measured against the new standards, according to an analysis by New America Foundation. That regulation will also be eliminated. In the first assessment of college graduates' debt-to-earnings ratios, about 800 programs, or 10 percent of those examined, had failed to meet the requirements laid out in the gainful employment rule, the department announced; of those, 98 percent were for-profits.

But industry leaders say the rules had ample collateral damage.

More than 15 years ago, Michael Halmon was selling beauty supplies in Florida when he got into the business of helping people who were not cut out for college attain a craft. His American Institute of Beauty trained beauticians and barbers. But the Obama administration treated Mr. Halmon and his colleagues like predators, he said.

The American Institute of Beauty was among several schools that successfully sued the Education Department over the gainful employment rule, arguing that their earnings data did not reflect all sources of income, such as tips, that are unique to their industry.

"We are mom-and-pop businesses, not these huge Wall Street entities getting rich off of tens of thousands of students," he said. "We have a thriving industry, and it could have been decimated."

Jarrod Thoma, 35, an Army veteran who has a claim pending with the Education Department against the for-profit DeVry University, said he was "at a loss for words" by the idea that such schools had nothing more to prove.

He graduated from DeVry with a degree in electronics engineering in March 2015, and he only recently secured his first full-time engineering job with benefits this July.

The **school agreed to a $100 million settlement** over claims that they misled prospective students with inflated employment and earnings success rates.

"I busted my butt for years, doing far more than what my jobs entailed, to prove that I was worth more than $18.50," Mr. Thoma said. "It's unbelievable."

In its notification on Friday, the department said Ms. DeVos was rescinding the gainful employment rule entirely based on research that undermined the "validity of using the debt and earnings comparisons." That research, the department contended, was not properly considered by the Obama administration when it was writing the rules in 2014.

Officials wrote that they also found "a troubling degree of inconsistency and potential error exists in job placement rates" that "could mislead students in making an enrollment decisions." The department also said that requirement that schools disclose their data had proved to be "more burdensome than originally anticipated."

The department also wrote that the Obama regulations "reinforce an inaccurate and outdated belief that career and vocational programs are less valuable to students and less valued by society, and that these programs should be held to a higher degree of accountability than traditional two- and four-year degree programs that may have less market value."

The move further divided congressional leaders on the direction of higher education, as **efforts stalled this year** to rewrite the federal law governing higher education. A House bill drafted by Representative Virginia Foxx, Republican of North Carolina, would eliminate the gainful employment rule by statute.

Senator Lamar Alexander, Republican of Tennessee and the chairman of the Senate Education Committee, praised Ms. DeVos's plan, saying that it gave Congress an opportunity to hold all schools accountable.

"Secretary DeVos's regulation proposes to end a clumsy rule that consumed 945 pages to define two words in the higher education law and targeted just one segment of our 6,000 colleges and universities," Mr. Alexander said.

Senator Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington and the ranking member of the Senate committee, said in a statement that Ms. Devos was undermining a "common-sense and effective consumer protection."

"Her extreme proposal to rescind this rule is further proof that there is no line Secretary DeVos won't cross to pad the pockets of for-profit colleges — even leaving students and taxpayers to foot the bill," she said.

A version of this article appears in print on Aug. 11, 2018, on Page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: DeVos Undoes Obama Curbs On For-Profits. Order Reprints | Today's Paper | Subscribe

- **Loan Forgiveness?**

If you are employed by a government or not-for-profit organization, you may be able to receive loan forgiveness under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program .
Learn more to see whether you might qualify.

Alert! You may still be eligible for loan *forgiveness* if your Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) application is denied because some or all of your payments were not made under a qualifying repayment plan for PSLF. Learn more about this temporary loan forgiveness opportunity.
The Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program forgives the remaining balance on your Direct Loans after you have made 120 qualifying monthly payments under a qualifying repayment plan while working full-time for a qualifying employer.

If you want to qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness now or in the future, complete and submit the Employment Certification form as soon as possible. Too many borrowers wait to submit this important form until they have been in repayment for several years, at which point they learn that they have not been making qualifying payments. In order to ensure you're on track to receive forgiveness, you should continue to submit this form both annually and every time you switch employers.

https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service

- **My Pay, My Say**

Behind The Campaign To Get Teachers To Leave Their Unions

July 19, 20185:29 AM ET

ANYA KAMENETZ

LA Johnson/NPR

Rachael McRae, a fifth-grade teacher in central Illinois, was sitting on the couch the other day with her 4-month-old when she saw the email.

"He was having a fussy day," she says, "so I was bouncing him in one arm, and started going through my emails on my phone, just to feel like I was getting something done." In her spam folder, she found an email from an organization called My Pay, My Say, urging her to drop her union membership.

Last month, the Supreme Court in *Janus v. AFCSME* dealt a major blow to public sector unions. The court ruled that these unions cannot collect money, known as agency fees, from nonmembers who are covered by collective bargaining agreements. Organizations on both sides across the country sprang into action.

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy, based in Michigan, is running My Pay, My Say as a national campaign. The Freedom Foundation, with headquarters in Washington state, is targeting teachers in Oregon, Washington and California with the slogan, Opt Out Today.

Other groups targeting teachers and public employees in specific states include: the Commonwealth Foundation, the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, the Center of the American Experiment, the Center for Union Facts and Americans for Prosperity.

The outreach tactics include paper mail, phone calls, emails, hotlines, Facebook ads, billboards, TV advertising and even door-to-door canvassing. Organizations are using publicly available email addresses to reach their targets, as well as purchasing mailing lists.

"The day after the decision was out," says Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, groups were already "spamming our members and trying to get them to opt out."

Her union just wrapped up its national convention, vowing to redouble its commitment to organizing and member outreach, with a pledge to "celebrate the activism and be somber about the challenges ahead." For the unions, the stakes are clear: Experts told NPR the decision could lead to a huge drop in membership and revenue in the 22 states where these fees had been allowed.

The groups behind the opt-out campaign, which describe themselves as conservative, libertarian or free-market, share many donors in common, such as the State Policy Network, the Donors' Fund and DonorsTrust. Many of these groups have long opposed not only agency fees, but teachers unions in general, on the grounds that they inhibit education reforms such as vouchers and charter schools.

According to an analysis of tax filings by the website Conservative Transparency, the top contributors to the Mackinac Center specifically include the Dick and Betsy DeVos Family Foundation, and the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative (formerly the Richard and Helen DeVos Foundation). These are the family foundations of the U.S. education secretary, Betsy DeVos, and her husband's parents.

DeVos reported resigning her position on the board of directors of her family foundation as of December 2016, before her confirmation as education secretary.

Greg McNeilly, a spokesman for DeVos in her nongovernmental capacity, says the DeVos family supports the Mackinac Center and similar organizations "because of their mainstream common commitment to freedom, the most universal civil liberty." The Mackinac Center did not return calls and emails requesting comment.

In a series of Supreme Court cases, ending with *Janus*, litigants backed by conservative groups argued that their First Amendment rights were infringed by unions' political activities.
"We know there are tens of thousands of educators who chafe under the left-leaning leadership of these unions," says Jami Lund, a senior policy analyst for the Freedom Foundation. "Making sure they know they now have an option will certainly have its effect."

Lund says the pitch to teachers is practical, not political: You can save money, perhaps $1,000 a year. "Our main promotional point is: Opt out today."

Their Opt Out Today website, like My Pay, My Say, includes a sample form that people can fill out to create an opt-out letter to then send directly to their union. The group says it is also deploying 80 door-to-door canvassers.

These groups are casting a wide net, even though a small percentage of people covered by union contracts currently choose to pay agency fees.

Lily Eskelsen Garcia, the president of the National Education Association, told NPRthese fees were just 3 percent of about a $370 million budget. The NEA is the nation's largest teachers union, with about 3 million members.
Lund says his organization estimates that agency fee payers amount to fewer than 2,000 teachers in Washington state, out of a workforce of more than 60,000.

It makes sense. Before the *Janus* decision, teachers and other public employees had the choice of paying perhaps $1,000 in union dues, or $650 in agency fees (the exact amount varies from state to state, but the ratio is similar in most places). So many teachers chose to pay a little more to get the benefits of full union membership.
Now, however, those same people, who may be facing stagnating wages, have the option to pay nothing at all, while still being covered by the union bargaining contract.

Lund and others are betting that they will choose to save that money.

One of the Mackinac Center emails sent to Rachael McRae in Illinois reads, in part:
"The U.S. Supreme Court just ruled that all government workers — teachers, state workers, local public employees, police, firefighters and more — now have a real choice when it comes to their unions ...

"Whether it's disagreements about politics, concerns about a lack of local representation, problems with union spending, or something else — you now have the right to stop paying for activities you don't support."

NPR Ed put a callout on Twitter, and we heard from McRae as well as teachers in Putnam County, N.Y., and Portland, Ore., who received a similar email and a postcard in the mail. None of the three said that they were dropping their membership.

Lund says a few thousand people filled out the opt-out form on the organization's website within the first few weeks.

But Weingarten, the head of the 1.7-million-member AFT, says union leaders from New York to Los Angeles are reporting that just a handful of people are actually dropping their membership so far. "What we're seeing is that members are sticking with the union and in fact getting more active and really pissed off," she says.

For her part, McRae thinks of her union as "like health insurance or car insurance ... like an extra safety net."

She says that she can see some people opting out, especially if they disagree with the union on political grounds.

McRae, a mother of three, says she pays union dues of $676 per year. She earns $38,000 as a veteran fifth-grade teacher with 10 years experience. "We don't get paid very much."

Welcome Back!
Have a
GREAT
schoolyear!

Exterior House Painting

Todd Banaszak
Clarence Middle School
Physical Education Teacher
25 years of Experience
553-0302

Painting
(trim, siding, shake shingle, stucco etc..)
Staining Cedar
Pressure Washing
Deck Refinishing
Fence Refinishing

- No job is too small.
- Many references, East Amherst and Clarence
- Professional crew with many years of experience.
- Complete customer satisfaction.

Call or text for a free estimate.

716-553-0302

MATT STASIAK GOLF

Looking to improve your golf game? Contact Matt Stasiak today. Matt brings over 20 years of experience to his teaching.

If you want to play your best, then you need to learn from the best!

For more information on lessons visit mattstasiakgolf.com.

Or, give Matt a call at 716-829-9027.

40% OFF NOW THROUGH JANUARY

3 Bedroom Condo for rent in New Smyrna Beach, Florida.

Short walk across the street to the beautiful beach.
About an hour from Orlando Airport or 18-hour drive.
Contact Kara/George Gallagher if you are interested!!