



*Rise to the Challenge of Leadership*

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#### **AFRAM Office**

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Dear Fellow AFRAM members,

Happy Holidays Sisters and Brothers:

We are facing the most profound attack on working families in our history, inclusive of regressive federal and state legislation, punitive executive actions and a court case (Janus vs AFSCME) which threatens the ability to join unions. These attacks threaten our vision for a just society.

Janus vs AFSCME is a case that once again raises the question of whether public employees have to pay dues, even if they disagree with their union's position. The case, like two others that have reached the high court in recent years, pits unions, who say mandatory fees are necessary to prevent 'free riders' from benefiting negotiated union contracts, and against dissenting members, who argue being forced to pay dues violates their First Amendment rights. If the Supreme Court rules against us means unions could see a huge loss in membership and the ability to change working conditions and other terms and conditions of employment for our members. The forces behind this case are wealthy corporate greed interest groups, billionaire CEOs like the Koch brothers and other anti-worker organizations.

These attacks threaten our vision for a just society. The Janus decision, which are Right to Work laws and other restrictions on labors political activities are not only a detriment to public sector unions as a whole, but weaken us all. In short, this court case is about the aggressive assault on "our" liberties and freedoms, which curtail voting rights and will hurt our communities immensely.

To us, workers' rights go hand-in-hand with civil rights and immigrant rights because they are about the same thing: The fundamental respect that each person deserves.

As the forces of greed and intolerance seek to increase their grip on the lives of working people, we must stand together to resist.

Why do unions exist? Why does AFRAM exist?

- Because they must, to empower working people on the job and in our communities.

Together, we all have accomplished amazing feats, both recently – and, had many victories in our longer march towards a nation where workers, seniors, women, veterans, the disabled and people of all nationalities are treated with dignity and respect.

- And while we neither underestimate the impact of yesterday's victory, nor the power of tomorrow's dream, we must focus all of our energy on the present and what we need to do to not only survive but thrive in these challenging times.
- We urge you to focus on why our collective voices are voices that cannot be silenced!!!
- Think about why so many out there are seeking to discredit our voices.

To continue our historic leadership on the road to justice, we need to greatly increase member involvement in our movement. Very shortly we will have 2018 membership applications available and we encourage you to talk to your peers and coworkers to help expand our network. We urge you to rejoin AFRAM and call on each of you to sign up 5 other members.

In Unity,

Faith Culbreath  
President

Leonard Simpson  
Treasurer

Veronica Turner  
Secretary