

534 S. Second Street, Suite 200
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1764
217/544-4014 • Fax: 217/544-0225



999 McClintock Drive, Suite 100
Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527-0844
312/251-1414 • Fax: 312/251-1420

OFFICERS

Michael T. Carrigan, President
Timothy E. Drea, Secretary Treasurer

March 31, 2011

www.ilaff-cio.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Beth Spencer 217.544.4014, 217.725.7424

Illinois Workers to Hold Solidarity Rallies Statewide April 4-9 ***Rallies Honor Dr. King's Death, Call for Protection of Collective Bargaining Rights***

"We must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as 'right to work.' It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights... Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone. Wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer and there are no civil rights."

– Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking on right-to-work laws in 1961

April 4-9, hundreds of thousands of workers across the country will hold WE ARE ONE rallies calling for the protection of workers' rights on the job. In Illinois there are 14 rallies and worksite activities planned during the week from Carbondale to Chicago. The rallies are in response to state laws being proposed in surrounding Midwest states and here in Illinois that will curtail or eliminate collective bargaining rights of public workers, including teachers, fire fighters, police, prison guards and health care workers, as well as enact Right To Work for Less laws, cut pensions and curtail workers' compensation and unemployment benefits.

The solidarity rallies coincide with the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in Memphis where he joined striking sanitation workers (AFSCME members) in the fight for their right to bargain for fair wages and safe working conditions.

"Never before have we seen such a blatant attack on workers' rights in the work place or such a strong response from working-class people fed up with the abuse," said Michael T. Carrigan, president of the Illinois AFL-CIO. "In Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio and Missouri we have seen hundreds of thousands of workers take to the streets demanding their voices be heard. Workers have the right to join unions, to bargain for a fair contract that includes decent wages, benefits and safety, and they deserve to have those rights upheld by their state and federal governments. During the week of April 4, lawmakers will see democracy in action as we take to the streets in solidarity. Hopefully they will watch and listen to their constituents."

Attached is a complete list of WE ARE ONE events in Illinois, starting on Monday, April 4 and culminating on Saturday, April 9 with an all-Illinois rally in downtown Chicago.