

Submitter: Amanda Powell
On Behalf Of: UAUO
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

My name is Amanda Powell and I'm a emerita faculty and a member of UAUO union. I support SB 916 to repeal the law blocking unemployment benefits to workers on strike. This bill would help workers to stay afloat while fighting for a fair contract.

No one wants a strike. Workers only take this measure when cuts to wages or benefits, safety concerns, or other matters force the issue.

Ending this exclusion of UI benefits for strikes that go over 7 days will help make sure that workers can pay rent, feed families, afford prescription drugs or pay COBRA health care payments while out on strike. No one should be forced into an unsafe or unfair contract just because the employer can starve them out. And those UI payments will work as intended: to also put money back into the local economy at times of economic distress.

Again, a strike is always a measure of absolute last resort. Please help ensure that workers like me – teachers, nurses, grocery and construction workers and so many more – are not forced into unsafe or unfair contracts simply because we can't afford to exercise our legally protected right to strike. Please vote yes on SB 916.