

Submitter: Araceli Brambila Perez
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB916

My name is Araceli Brambila Perez and I'm an RN, mother, spouse, community volunteer and more and a member of OFNHP union. I support SB 916 which would repeal the law blocking unemployment benefits to workers on strike. This bill would help ensure that workers are able to stay afloat while fighting for a fair contract.

We can all agree that no one would like to go on strike. Corporate likes to paint it otherwise, but the reality is that it is an immense sacrifice that the working society makes to improve safety concerns, working conditions, and prevent fraud and corruption. Let's be realistic, we live in Oregon, we know the likely weather we will have to endure if going on strike. Most are not fond of this weather. For some it triggers their asthma symptoms.

Unemployment insurance benefits means workers making the above mentioned sacrifice can have stronger voices in support of improvements to the above, without worrying that their savings will be depleted, if any, or losing their home or family going hungry.

This will also ensure that management truly comes to the bargaining table in good faith in a more timely manner and prepared.

Ending this exclusion of UI benefits for strikes that go over 7 days will help make sure that workers like me can continue to pay our rent, feed our families, afford prescription drugs or pay our COBRA health care payments while out on strike. This will mean that we aren't forced into an unsafe or unfair contract just because the employer can starve us out. And those UI payments will work as intended: to also put money back into the local economy at times of economic distress.

Strikes are always a measure of absolute last resort. Please help ensure that workers like me – nurses, teachers, 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.

Thank you so much for being an advocate of our communities in Oregon!