

This Labor Day, the Healthy Work Campaign predicts that union strikes will result in healthier work

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LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 4, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This Labor Day, the Healthy Work Campaign predicts that union strikes will result in healthier work



SAG-AFTRA Strike Picket, Los Angeles, July 2023

This Labor Day, Los Angeles, California is the [“epicenter” of the “hot labor summer”](#) where one hundred thousand hotel workers, writers, actors and city staff are enduring the heat to fight for fair pay, job security and better working conditions. “Actors and writers are asking for their fair

share of the enormous profits that studios and streaming platforms are making today, as well as protection against the use of artificial intelligence (programs) in creative projects by film studios,” says Dr. Peter Schnall, Founder and Director of the nonprofit Center for Social Epidemiology (CSE).

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Dr. Marnie Dobson, Director of the CSE's Healthy Work Campaign

“Although it might seem like there is little in common between these different kinds of workers, all are exercising their power to make a collective difference in the quality of their jobs,” says Dr. Marnie Dobson, Director of the CSE’s Healthy Work Campaign. “While strikes can be a financial strain for workers, achieving gains in wages, hours or

working conditions, by participating in legal actions, can actually protect your health.”

Today, over 70% of US workers say they approve of unions—the highest since 1965, according to Gallup. However, the interests of American corporations and of the wealthy to maximize the profitability of their enterprises, coupled with their enormous political power, has made the fight

for adequate and fair pay an ongoing struggle. The US has some of the lowest unionization rates in the world and, not coincidentally, the greatest income inequality compared with other high-income, Western democracies. The top 1% take home 21% of all the income in the United States ([EPI 2023](#)). The average income for the top 1% is \$1.3 million, whereas the average for the 99% is \$50,000.

Income inequality is associated with a surprising decrease in U.S. life expectancy compared to other high income countries. Sharp increases in “deaths of despair”, opioid overdoses, suicide, alcoholic liver disease, and increased heart disease among working age people is to blame. All of these health problems are associated with stressful work and poor economic conditions.

“Working conditions have become more arduous, with longer work hours and overtime, more precarious work, increased work-family conflict, and pay that has not kept up with inflation,” says Dr. Peter Schnall.

Unions increase [employee economic wellbeing and health](#). Workers covered by a union contract earn 10% more than workers without a union contract but with similar education, occupation and experience. Pay gaps due to gender or race are minimized by union contracts. States with higher union density tend to have less uninsured populations, more paid sick leave and family leave laws, and a lower rate of deaths on the job. Union members are also less likely to be depressed, worried, sad or lonely, and have higher job satisfaction, according to research among two million workers in Europe and the US.

There is a case to be made that unions contribute to healthy work, and that healthy work is good for workers as well as for businesses. Healthy work prevents illness, improves health & well-being, and increases job satisfaction and the productivity of employees.

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