

SAFE JOBS SAVE LIVES



FOUR DECADES AGO, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, promising every worker the right to a safe job. Unions and our allies have fought hard to make that promise a reality—winning protections that have made jobs safer, saved hundreds of thousand of lives and prevented millions of workplace injuries and illnesses.

But our work is not done. Many job hazards are unregulated and uncontrolled. Some employers, like Massey Energy and BP, cut corners and violate the law, putting workers in serious danger and costing lives. Each year thousands of workers are killed and millions more injured or diseased because of their jobs.

The Obama administration has moved forward to strengthen protections with tougher enforcement on serious violators and proposed new safeguards for workplace hazards. But business groups and the Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives are attacking these stronger measures, falsely claiming they kill jobs. They are pushing legislation to make it difficult, if not impossible, to issue needed safeguards to protect workers and the public.

We cannot and will not let them turn back the clock and destroy the progress we have made to make jobs safer and save lives. Safety laws and regulations don't kill jobs—but unsafe jobs do kill workers.

On April 28, the unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have suffered and died on the job and to renew the fight for safe workplaces. This year we will fight to create good jobs in this country that are safe and healthy. We will fight for the freedom of workers to form unions and, through their unions, to speak out and bargain for respect and a better future. We will demand that the country fulfill the promise of safe jobs for all.

KEEP THE PROMISE ALIVE

MOURN FOR THE DEAD. FIGHT FOR THE LIVING.

Observe Workers Memorial Day • April 28 • AFL-CIO

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY • APRIL 28, 2012

DECADES OF STRUGGLE by workers and their unions have resulted in significant improvements in working conditions. The Obama administration has moved forward to strengthen worker protections. But business groups and the new Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives are trying to block stronger measures and roll back existing protections. It is time to organize, take action and fight for safe jobs for workers, including:

- Defending safety and health protections and workers' rights from industry attacks.
- Requiring employers to find and fix hazards and implement a worksite safety and health program to prevent injuries, illnesses and deaths.
- Winning new workplace safeguards for silica, combustible dust and infectious diseases.
- Prohibiting employer policies and practices that discourage reporting of workplace injuries.
- Protecting workers from ergonomic hazards that still cripple and injure more workers than any other workplace hazard.
- Increasing attention to the safety and health of Hispanic and immigrant workers who are at much greater risk of death and injury.
- Strengthening protections for miners, including tighter standards for coal dust to protect against Black Lung.
- Passing the Protecting America's Workers Act to provide OSHA protection for all workers who lack protection, stronger criminal and civil penalties for companies that seriously violate job safety laws and improved anti-retaliation protections for workers who raise job safety concerns.
- Ensuring workers' right to have a voice on the job, and to freely choose to join a union without employer interference or intimidation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO ON WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

- Organize a rally to demand creation of good jobs and safe jobs in your community.
- Hold a candlelight vigil, memorial service or moment of silence to remember those who have died on the job and to highlight job safety problems in your community and at your workplace.
- Create a memorial at workplaces or in communities where workers have been killed on the job.
- Distribute workplace fliers and organize a call-in to congressional representatives during lunch times or break times. Tell your members of Congress to oppose efforts to roll back protections and to support legislation to create good jobs and safe jobs.
- Hold a public meeting with members of Congress in their home districts. Bring injured workers and family members who can talk firsthand about the need for strong safety and health protections and the freedom to join a union. Invite local religious leaders and other allies to participate in the meeting.

**For additional information or
to order materials, contact:**

AFL-CIO Safety and Health Department
815 16th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20006
phone: 202-637-5366; fax: 202-508-6978
e-mail: oshmail@aflcio.org
website: www.aflcio.org/WorkersMemorialDay

