

Faith Leader Call to Action on Prop A- An Unjust Law

People of Missouri: A measure called "Prop A" - so-called "right to work" - will be on the ballot in Missouri on Tuesday, August 7. Prop A is an unjust law, which would destroy the remnants of our social fabric in Missouri. As faith leaders, we must Vote No on Prop A on August 7. We must encourage our congregations, our families, our friends and neighbors to do the same.

In Isaiah 10: 1-4 (NIV), the Prophet Isaiah declares, "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless." The prophet attacks those officials who have created unjust laws that favor the officials' own interests and the interests of the rich over the needs of the poor and vulnerable. The prophet predicts that unjust laws will lead to the disaster for all of God's people. Many of our elected officials in Missouri are God-fearing people, yet they have passed an unjust law that will lead to disaster for God's people in Missouri. Prop A is racist. Prop A would drive down wages in Missouri. Prop A would destroy the fabric - the infrastructure - of communities in Missouri.

Prop A has its roots in racism and anti-Semitism. So called "right to work" laws like Prop A originated as means to maintain Jim Crow labor relations and to beat back what was seen by white supremacists in the 1930's and 1940's as a Jewish plot to foment a revolution in the United States. Prop A would be disastrous for all workers, communities, and our economy in Missouri. The average median wage for workers living in so-called right-to-work states is \$8,700 less per year than workers in states without these laws. Workers have less access to health insurance and retirement security. Women and people of color in so called "right to work" states are hit even harder. Prop A is morally bankrupt and rotten to the core.

Proponents of Prop A falsely claim that Prop A would protect workers who don't want to join a union or disagree with a union's politics. But, we know that federal labor law already protects workers who don't want to join a union or make political contributions. In truth, Prop A is an unjust law that would "deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of God's people." Like the unjust laws passed by officials long ago in Israel and Judah, Prop A is about the rich taking power away from the poor. Prop A would destroy the power of workers in Missouri to advocate for themselves and it would destroy workers' ability to put a check on corporate greed.

If Missourians' wages were to go down, tax revenue would go down with them. Missourians would have even less money to pay for schools and roads and everything that we need to participate in communal life together. Prop A would result in the loss of a third of our public school funding. Poverty and despair would increase. The mental and physical health of Missourians would deteriorate. Prop A would lead us further down the path of isolation and individualism, straining the scarce resources of nonprofit organizations like churches, synagogues, and mosques, as we in faith communities would struggle to meet the increased needs of Missourians, unmet by public resources.

As faith leaders, as people of faith, we must reject unjust laws. We must vote No on Prop A on Tuesday, August 7. The future of the people of Missouri is at stake.

Signed, in faith,