

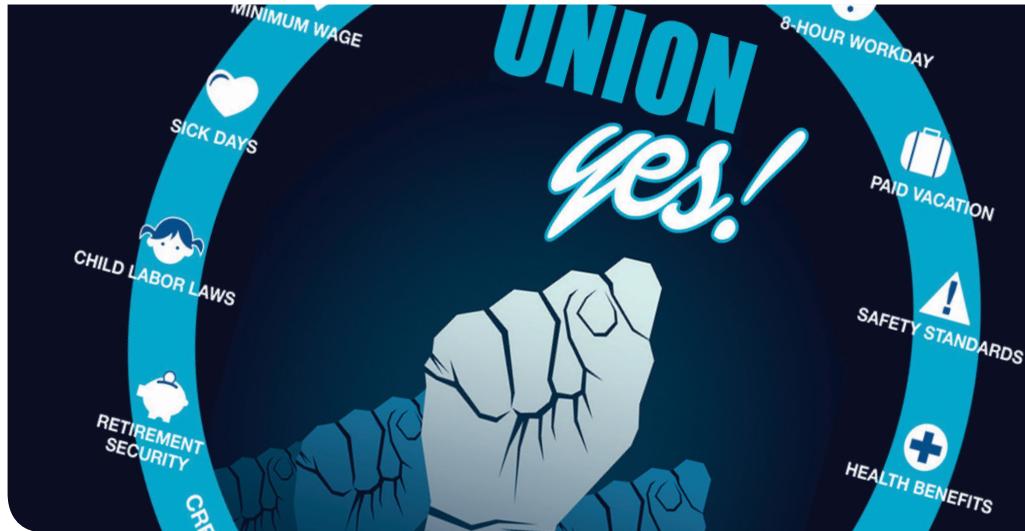


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A Union of Professionals

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FALL 2015



## Mr. Governor, have mercy on the working man and woman

*An open letter to Governor Rauner from IFT President Dan Montgomery*



**Daniel J. Montgomery**  
President

*In light of his continued attacks on dedicated public servants and middle-class families, I couldn't help but wonder what our Governor was doing over the Labor Day holiday while the rest of us were (hopefully) enjoying a few hours of some precious time with friends and family. I was inspired to write this open letter to him and wanted to share it with all IFT members.*

Dear Governor Rauner,

I am a high school English teacher and have been a professional educator for the bulk of my adulthood. Currently, I'm on leave from teaching to serve as president of my state union, the Illinois Federation of Teachers. While we have never met or even spoken, that hasn't stopped you from calling me names in the press, like a "corrupt union boss," whatever that means. As I said, I'm a high school English teacher. I'm also a resident of the state you now lead and have noticed your ceaseless attacks on labor and working people.

Please forgive my impertinence in writing to you and assuming that you know very little about Labor Day, but as a teacher it's my inclination to want to educate and uplift, and the events of the day suggest that you may have a limited understanding of work and the nature of this national holiday.

Don't feel too badly: you are certainly not alone. Most Americans are not in labor unions, and fewer people understand the history and value of unions. **It was the union movement that agitated for a five-day, 40-hour work week, the weekend, fair wages, a minimum wage, the right to organize, and equal pay for women and men, not to mention nearly every workplace safety protection on the books.** And far more.

*continued*

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