

## **Rally at UConn aims to promote union rights**

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STORRS – Students, faculty, staff and visitors gathered at the University of Connecticut this afternoon in a rally to protect union freedom.

The event was hosted by the UConn Labor Coalition, which consists of the UConn American Association of University Professors (AAUP); the UConn Health Center AAUP; University Health Professionals, Local 3837; UNITE-HERE Local 2527T, New England Joint Board; NP-2 CEUI Local 511; GEU-UAW Local 6950; NP-3 AFSCME Local 610; UConn Professional Employees Association (UCPEA); and NP-5 CT Police and Fire Union.

The rally, held in the Storrs Student Union Ballroom, was one of four across the state held today.

The events are in responses to the Janus versus AFSCME Council 31 Supreme Court lawsuit, with union reps in Storrs rallying to support AFSCME.

The suit was filed on behalf of Mark Janus, a union-represented state child support specialist in Illinois who didn't want to pay his fees to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the union which represents his bargaining unit.

Reportedly, Janus disagrees with the union regarding its lobbying efforts and aims to not have to pay his dues.

If the Supreme Court rules in his favor, Janus would not have to pay dues. Opponents claim not requiring union employees to pay dues, especially public sector unions, is an attempt to break the union.

The Supreme Court is hearing the case today. A ruling is expected later in the year.

State Rep. Gregg Haddad, D-Mansfield, attended the event and said his family greatly benefited from unions.

"From fast food workers demanding \$15 an hour, and a union, to teachers and public service workers fighting for great public schools and great services, American workers are standing up and speaking out today across the country," Haddad said.

Haddad said it doesn't make sense that people are working longer hours for less money and fewer benefits.