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WORKERS' RIGHTS

UFCW: Walmart forces Santa Claus to strike

Walmart workers across the nation will see about \$70 million less in their paychecks since Walmart eliminated holiday pay.

PHOENIX (PAI)—Walmart is forcing Santa Claus to strike.

Making Change at Walmart, a campaign sponsored by United Food and Commercial Workers to improve working conditions at the anti-union retailer, started "Santa Claus On Strike" at one of the firm's Phoenix stores to protest Walmart's refusal to give holiday pay to its 1.5 million employees.

Walmart also refused holiday pay to workers that it required to toil on Thanksgiving. The giant retailer eliminated holiday pay last year, an action that will cost workers about \$70 million this year. Walmart workers already are paid so poorly that tens of thousands qualify for food stamps, Medicaid and public housing.

In response, Santas will strike this holiday season in front of Walmart stores in 13 cities in 11 states. The first strike was held Dec. 8 in Phoenix. The picketing will run all through the holi-



SANTAS ON STRIKE! Workers, labor allies, activists, Santas and helpers gathering outside a Walmart store in Phoenix, Arizona, Dec. 8 to demand Walmart bring back the holiday pay it eliminated in 2016.

days.

Santa strikes also are planned for Portland, Seattle, Las Vegas, Cincinnati and Memphis. Exact

dates and locations had not been announced at press time.

Making Change at Walmart will also run a digital and social

ONLINE EXTRA

Sign a petition demanding Walmart reinstate holiday pay:
<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/walmart-holiday-pay>

media campaign and regular television ads on the lack of holiday pay, to warn shoppers about the exploitation.

"Santa Claus is on strike for one simple reason: It's time Walmart do the right thing and provide holiday pay for its hard-working men and women — the same holiday pay it used to provide in 2015 before it decided to 'Grinch' its workers," said Making Change at Walmart Director Randy Parraz.

"To be very clear, this initiative is about more than Santa Claus and Christmas, it's about the values that the holidays represent and which Walmart has chosen to ignore.

"Walmart earns millions of dollars from not paying its workers holiday pay. This is wrong and it must stop. The extra pay millions of other American workers earn during the holidays makes a difference, and Walmart workers deserve no less," Parraz said.

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