Oregon AFSCME: 'No endorsement, no financial support'

In response to the passage of Senate Bill 1049, which reduced employer contributions to public employee retirement accounts, the Executive Board of Oregon AFSCME voted unanimously to disqualify legislators that voted for the bill from the union's 2020 endorsement process.

"Legislators that voted for SB1049 devalued the work we do on behalf of the people of Oregon," said Jeff Klatke, president of Oregon AFSCME, which represents over 26,000 public sector employees.

"No interviews, no endorsement, no financial support. Our members generously donate their time and money to our political efforts to support legislators who fight for workers regardless of political party" Klatke said.

"Legislators that voted 'yes' turned around and told our members they were paid too much and the work they do is worthless. AFSCME members support those elected officials that support them and the work that they do" Klatke said.

DOL's overtime pay cap hike abandons millions

By Heidi Shierholz
Senior Economist & Director Economic Policy Institute

The U.S. Department of Labor announced its final overtime rule, which will set the salary threshold under which salaried workers are automatically entitled to overtime pay to $35,568 a year. While the Trump Administration may be trumpeting this rule as a good thing for workers, that is a ruse. In reality, the rule leaves behind millions of workers who would have received overtime protections under the much stronger rule, published in 2016, that the Administration abandoned.

The background of the 2016 rule is important for understanding the impact of the Administration's move. The 2016 rule would have increased the threshold to $47,476 and then indexed it to wage growth going forward. That rule was the result of an exhaustive rulemaking process spanning more than two years.

EPI was instrumental in advancing the 2016 overtime rule that was later abandoned by the Trump Administration. I estimate that, under the new rule, roughly 8.2 million workers who would have benefited from the 2016 rule will be left behind.

Shortly before the 2016 rule was set to go into effect, a single district court judge in Texas, using highly flawed logic, enjoined the Department of Labor from enforcing the rule, and the court later erroneously held the rule to be invalid.

Despite what the judge claimed, the 2016 rule was by no means overly expansive. In fact, it covered far fewer workers than the threshold had covered historically. In 1975, more than 60 percent of full-time salaried workers earned below the threshold. By 2016, the share of workers covered had dropped to less than 7 percent. The 2016 rule would have only partially restored this coverage, to roughly 33 percent.

Despite the fact that the 2016 threshold was well within historic norms, the Trump Administration abandoned it and finalized an overtime rule with a dramatically lower threshold. It's worth noting that if the rule had simply been adjusted for inflation since 1975, today's threshold would be roughly $56,500. This is more than $20,000 higher than the Trump Administration's level.

> At its heart, the Trump Administration's rule is based on the notion that someone making $35,568 a year is a well-paid executive who doesn't need or deserve overtime protections.

This 8.2 million is made up of 3.2 million workers who would have gotten new overtime protections under the 2016 rule and won't get them under the Trump rule, and 5 million who would have gotten strengthened overtime protections under the 2016 rule and won't get them under the Trump rule.

That means this Administration is turning its back on millions of workers—including 4.2 million women, 2.9 million people of color, 4.6 million workers without a college degree, and 2.7 million parents of children under the age of 18.

Further, the annual wage gains are $1.4 billion less under the Trump Administration's rule than under the 2016 rule—and these annual earnings losses will grow enormously over time as the threshold erodes, because the Trump Administration neglected to include automatic indexing in their rule.

Even further, the rule is dramatically out of step with historic precedent for setting the threshold, leaving it open to legal challenge.

At its heart, the Trump Administration's rule is based on the notion that someone making $35,568 a year is a well-paid executive who doesn't need or deserve overtime protections. The Administration did not need to undertake a new rulemaking—they could have defended the 2016 rule, and supported middle-class workers and their families. Instead, once again, President Trump has sided with the interests of corporate executives over those of working people.