

EPI Issues Powerful Report on Impact of Kentucky River Finds Union Rights of Eight Million Workers Are At Stake

- o On Wednesday, July 12 the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) issued a report on the impact of the pending NLRB decisions in Kentucky River. According to EPI, bad rulings in these cases could strip remaining federal labor law protections of the freedom to form unions and bargain collectively from eight million private sector workers.
- o Workers who are at risk of being deemed “supervisors” by the Labor Board and who could therefore lose their union rights can be found in nearly every occupation and industry. EPI finds, for example, that 843,000 registered nurses—more than one-third of all the private sector RNs in the country—may be stripped of union rights coverage. Nearly 400,000 computer systems analysts—more than one in four—could lose coverage.
- o All told, there are 35 occupations in which more than 50,000 workers are at risk of losing union rights. Examples include electricians (152,000), LPNs (124,000), machine operators (99,000), assemblers (92,000), mechanics (77,000), pharmacists (70,000), and guards (50,000).
- o In 24 occupations, more than 30 percent of workers are at risk of losing their rights. Examples include physicians’ assistants (63%), power plant operators (37%), and aerospace engineers (34%).
- o Examples of other heavily impacted occupations include freight, stock and material handlers (44,000 workers at risk), post-secondary teachers (43,000), production checkers and inspectors (29,000), printing press operators (25,000), editors and reporters (24,000), tool and die makers (22,000), and glaziers (10,000).
- o The eight million workers at risk do not hire, fire or discipline other workers. They commonly perform the same work as their co-workers, except that, as skilled and experienced workers, they may give instructions and guidance to those with lesser skills and experience.