



**New Mexico Federation of Labor Files Lawsuit Against  
Sandoval County 'Right to Work' Ordinance**  
*Union Workers and Businesses Lose Out Due to Illegal Ordinance*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 16, 2018

Contact: Shane Youtz  
505-980-1590

*Albuquerque* – The New Mexico Federation of Labor released the following statement:

“New Mexico’s Union workers filed suit today to invalidate a poorly constructed Sandoval County ordinance designed to disable the ability of New Mexico workers to bargain for fair wages and benefits for their families. The County’s so-called ‘Right to Work Ordinance’ makes it a crime for businesses to negotiate a contract with employees that contain provisions designed to fully fund a Union’s representational responsibilities. The Ordinance would insert the County into relationships between New Mexico businesses and workers and would make certain agreements illegal that are freely and frequently negotiated between those businesses and workers. The County’s effort to over-regulate business and take away the freedom of businesses to negotiate contracts will impair crucial business opportunities in Sandoval County’s private sector.

“The lawsuit identifies the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO, Local 611 (“IBEW Local 611”) and United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1564 (“UFCW Local 1564”), as Representative organizations which would be harmed by the ordinance. Legally, the Ordinance contains profound defects and exceeds the County’s authority to regulate business relationships. It also needlessly complicates the ability of Corporations to conduct business in Sandoval County. Examples highlighted would include the plight of an average Smith’s butcher: Some Smith’s butchers regularly work in Smith’s stores in Bernalillo County and Sandoval County. The County’s Ordinance would make the Smith’s butcher’s employment contract illegal some days and legal other days of the workweek. Similarly, the Ordinance would declare illegal contracts freely and fairly negotiated between New Mexico electricians and the Jemez Mountain Electrical Coop.

“Sadly, three Sandoval County Commissioners forced the ordinance through despite legal opinions which identified the Ordinance as illegal. The County’s own attorney, New Mexico’s Attorney General, and the opinion of other Sandoval County Commissioners coincide — the Ordinance violates New Mexico law. Throwing caution to the wind and the opinion of these respected and elected legal experts aside, these three commissioners insisted on passing the ordinance.

“The litigation over the legitimacy of the Ordinance will be costly and likely embarrassing for the County, marking it out as not a place for serious business consideration. The business concern will be clear — a County Commission willing to overly regulate business contracts and impair the ability of businesses to contract in haphazard fashion does not present an environment conducive to growth. New Mexico’s workers hope the citizens of Sandoval County will stand with them to oppose these new and burdensome business regulations.”

###