

# Supreme Court Deals Big Setback to Public Unions

Conservatives on the Supreme Court said Wednesday that it was unconstitutional to allow public employee unions to require collective bargaining fees from workers who choose not to join the union, a major blow for the U.S. labor movement, reports *The Washington Post*.

Reporter **Robert Barnes** writes that the 5-to-4 decision overturned a 40-year-old precedent and said that compelling such fees was a violation of workers' free speech rights. The old rule could force the workers to give financial support to public policy positions they oppose, the court said.

"States and public-sector unions may no longer extract agency fees from nonconsenting employees," Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. wrote for the majority. "This procedure violates the First Amendment and cannot continue."

**Read the *Post* article.**