

The abuse that keeps **WAGE THEFT** in the dark

150,000 workers in Chicago & Cook County see 16% of their wages stolen each week.

Catching wage theft depends on workers shining a light on it.

Government agencies are not set up to catch bosses who steal wages on their own. Most of the time, when a wage cheat is caught it is because a worker spoke up, whether by making a complaint to a government agency, filing a lawsuit or by working with a local union or worker center.

Workers need to feel safe to blow the whistle on wage theft, but many do not.

Too many bosses are attacking whistle-blowers and are getting away with it. Recent studies with workers in low-paying jobs suggest that **1 out of every 2 times a worker complains about a problem like wage theft, their boss responds by illegally causing them harm.** Some of the ways documented include: firing them, threatening deportation and cutting hours or pay. For many of us living paycheck to paycheck to keep food on the table and a roof over our kids' heads, this risk is too big.

Laws that protect workers who defend our rights at work need to be fixed.

Gaps in the law can be covered so that all workers are protected, even in uncertain situations. That means, everyone is protected, including immigrants and temp workers. And the path to justice, which is too confusing, too slow and asks workers to bear too much of the burden, can be made reliable and simple. These laws are broken, but workers in the Chicago area are coming together to change them.

Speaking up should not be A RISK...

Attacking workers who speak up SHOULD be a risk.