

Today's Man Bites Dog Story: Public School Teacher Takes On Unions

[Rebecca Friedrichs](#) had a rude awakening as a young student teacher. Concerned about the physically abusive teacher in the class next door, she asked her own master teacher what they should do about the abuse.

The answer she got? "Nothing."

Finding that these children were in harm's way because their teacher was protected by unions and tenure made Rebecca realize that unions were something with which she wanted no part. However, as a teacher, Rebecca is still required by law to pay fees to the local teachers union.

Such a scenario [has lead Rebecca](#) and nine other teachers to the Supreme Court to argue that this policy violates their First Amendment rights. The Supreme Court has agreed to hear their case – known as [Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association](#) – during the 2015-2016 session.

According to Rebecca, their quest is "very simple." They are "asking for teachers to be able to decide for [them]selves, without fear and without coercion, whether or not to join or fund a union."

When asked whether or not such a move will destroy teachers unions, Rebecca responds,

"Unions won't be destroyed. We think that should we win, unions could actually improve because they would be forced now to show their membership what they can do for the membership. In other words, they'd have to start serving those who are paying the bill."

Is Rebecca one of only a few teachers who feels this way about being forced to join a union? Not necessarily:

“I get a ton of quiet high fives. I only get compliments in a dark room with the door closed. They make sure there is no one listening. ‘Rebecca, thank you. We’re grateful to you. Thanks for standing up, we’re afraid!’ That is what I hear 98% of the time.”

You can hear more about Rebecca’s Supreme Court suit in the video below. Do you think Rebecca and her fellow teachers have a leg on which to stand?

[Image Credit](#)