

## **“RIGHT TO WORK”**

### **LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN INDIANA**

As you may already know, the November elections were not good for Organized Labor. Not only did we lose nationally, but we lost tremendously at our state level. Governor Mitch Daniels and the Republican Party now have free reign to introduce anti-labor legislation. State Representative Wes Culver, R-Goshen, has already done so by filing “Right to Work” legislation.

To most people, “Right to Work” sounds like something that we should all be in support of. State Rep. Wes Culver would like us to believe that this legislation simply means that everyone should have a right to a job here in Indiana. However, the “Right to Work” legislation that is proposed should be called “The Free Rider Law” as it allows workers to pay nothing and get all the benefits of union membership along with a collectively bargained contract.

Unions would have to represent all eligible employees, whether they pay dues or not. This forces unions to use their time and member’s dues money to provide union benefits to free riders who are not willing to pay their fair share. Just imagine waiting in line behind a non-union free rider, to have your grievance heard.

### **The Facts about “Right to Work”**

Workers in states with Right to Work laws have a consistently lower quality of life than in other states—lower wages, higher poverty and infant mortality rates, less access to the health care and poorer education for their children.

**“Right to Work” means lower wages for all workers.**

The average worker in a Right to Work State makes about \$5,333 a year **less** than workers in other states (\$35,500 compared with \$30,167). Weekly wages are \$72 greater in free-bargaining states than in Right to Work States (\$621 versus \$549)

**Unions benefit all workers by raising wages and benefits for everyone!**

In 2009, among full-time wage and salary workers in The United States, union members had average weekly earnings of \$908, while those who were not represented by unions had average weekly earnings of \$710.

Union membership narrows the pay gap for women. Nationally, the salary gap between men and women is 32 percent – but for Union workers, the gender gap is only 5 percent. Union women earn on average \$149 more each week than non-union women!

### **Higher Poverty and Infant Mortality Rates**

Right to Work States have a poverty rate of 12.5 percent, compared with 10.2 percent in other States. Moreover, the infant mortality rate is 16 percent higher in Right to Work States

### **Fewer People with Health Care**

21 percent more people lack health insurance in Right to Work States compared to free bargaining states.

### **Lower Workers' Compensation Benefits for Workers Injured on the Job**

Maximum weekly worker compensation benefits are \$30 higher in Free states (\$609 versus \$579) in Right to Work States

### **More Workplace Deaths and Injuries**

According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 51 percent higher in states with Right to Work, where unions can't speak up on behalf of workers.

### **Federal law already protects workers who don't want to join a union to get or keep their jobs.**

Supporters claim Right to Work laws protect employees from being forced to join unions. Don't be fooled—federal law already does this, as well as protecting nonmembers from paying for union activities that violate their religious or political beliefs. This individual freedom argument is a sham!

### **Right to work laws are not fair to dues-paying members.**

If a non-union worker is fired illegally, the union must use its time and money to defend him or her, even if that requires going through a costly legal process. Everyone benefits, so all should share in the process. To top it off, non-members can even sue the union if they think it has not represented them well enough!

### **We are not alone in this effort.**

The State General Assembly convenes on January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010. We will keep you up to date as to how this legislation is developing. The bill may move very quickly through the State House. We will be joining with other union members from throughout the state in an effort to stop this legislation. We may organize a rally at the State Capitol building. Our other efforts may include calling, writing, or e-mailing your State Senator and/or State Representative..

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