

# Forced-Unionism Abuses Exposed

The facts Big Labor bosses would rather you didn't hear about.

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Vol. 8, No. 10 – October 2009

*Compulsory unionism breeds corruption. In each issue of "Exposed," the National Right to Work Committee will highlight yet another example of union-boss abuse spawned and perpetuated by Big Labor's government-granted privilege to force workers to pay union dues, or be fired.*

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## **Will Congress Infect Entire Country With 'New Jersey Disease'?**

At this writing, the *Asbury Park Press* and other Gannett New Jersey newspapers are running an eight-day series of reports showing how out-of-control government spending growth and excessive taxation are driving hardworking people and businesses out of the Garden State.

The facts presented in the series, entitled "Fighting New Jersey's Tax Crush," are certainly alarming.

Every year, New Jerseyans fork over an average of over \$7000 per household in property taxes, far more than the residents of any other state. According to the nonpartisan Tax Foundation, New Jersey has the worst state business tax climate in the U.S. Last year, *Chief Executive* ranked New Jersey a dismal 48th among the 50 states for doing business, based on a survey of 543 CEOs.

And the perceptions of business leaders are borne out by the state's abysmal employment data, as reported by the U.S. Labor Department. From the trough of the last nationwide recession in November 2001 until this June, a period of nearly eight years, New Jersey suffered a net private-sector employment loss of 68,300, or 2.0%.

And, as the Gannett series notes, the Garden State has over the course of this decade suffered major job losses not just in the intensely competitive manufacturing sector, but also in trade, transportation and utilities, financial services, and professional and business services.

However, New Jerseyans can take cold comfort in one fact not likely to be cited in the Gannett series: For a state in which more than half of public-sector employees are compelled by law to let an "exclusive" (monopoly) union bargaining agent speak for them in virtually all their significant dealings with their employer, New Jersey's economic performance is typical.

As of 2001, the year of the last national recession prior to the current one, 41.7% of public-sector workers nationwide were under “exclusive” union representation, according to labor economists Barry Hirsch and David Macpherson. But in 16 states, including New Jersey, more than half of public-sector workers were unionized.

From November 2001 until this June, these 16 public-sector union strongholds lost a net total of nearly 1.6 million jobs. And seven of the 16 suffered percentage job losses worse than New Jersey’s 2.0%. For example, California’s private-sector job decline was 296,700, or 2.4%. Massachusetts’ was 82,000, or 2.9%. Michigan’s was 583,500, or 15.2%!

In stark contrast, states in which fewer than a quarter of public-sector workers were unionized actually enjoyed an aggregate private-sector employment increase of nearly 1.2 million, or 3.9%, from November 2001 to this June.

Pervasive public-sector union monopoly bargaining helps government union bosses build up giant political machines, which in most cases are fueled by workers’ compulsory union dues and fees. Government union officials use their political machines to bankroll Tax-and-Spend state legislators and governors. And the onerous taxes such politicians foist on families and businesses result in less job and income growth. New Jersey’s experience is far from unique.

Moreover, Big Labor politicians in Washington, D.C., are now poised to ram through Congress, and onto President Barack Obama’s desk, legislation that could infect the entire country with the “New Jersey disease.”

H.R. 413 and S. 1611, both now pending on Capitol Hill, would rewrite the public-sector labor laws of the vast majority of the 50 states to make them more pro-forced unionism.

In states that don’t currently authorize public-safety monopoly bargaining, H.R. 413/S. 1611 would impose it, mandating that localities grant a single union the power to speak for all front-line employees, including those who don’t want to join. And in most states that already authorize public-safety union monopoly bargaining, the legislation would widen its scope.

And H.R. 413/S. 1611 would also constitute a major step towards Big Labor’s decades-old goal of enacting a federal law that imposes union monopoly bargaining on rank-and-file state and local government employees of all types across America.

With federal personal and business tax burdens already poised to skyrocket over the next few years and many cities, towns and counties facing their worst fiscal crisis in decades, H.R. 413/S. 1611 couldn’t be more ill-timed. But the fact is, there is never a right time for Congress to impose forced unionism on the states.

That’s why the National Right to Work Committee is ready to wage a full-scale campaign over the next few months to strengthen congressional opposition to H.R. 413/S. 1611, and ultimately to block this measure through an extended Senate debate that prevents it from coming up for a final vote.

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