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Protect Embezzler Forced-Unionism Privileges? *Workers Compelled to Fund Union Whose Dons FBI Is Investigating*

As this Newsletter edition goes to press, three former high-ranking officers of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union have recently been indicted for allegedly participating in a years-long scheme to pilfer millions of dollars from a worker training center funded by Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA).

One of these ex-union bosses has already pleaded guilty. And media reports indicate multiple additional former and current UAW bosses are currently under investigation by the FBI for misappropriation of training center funds.

Among those publicly reported to be objects of FBI “interest” are current General Motors-UAW Vice President Cindy Estrada, who is running for reelection this year, and former GM-UAW Vice President Joe Ashton.

Auto Executive Confesses to Shoveling Money Into Dubious Union Boss-Run ‘Charities’

According to federal prosecutors, starting in 2009, then-FCA head of labor relations Al Iacobelli and then-UAW Vice President General Holiefield began using training center funds as their personal piggy bank.

Mr. Holiefield (who passed away in 2015) allegedly pilfered a total of \$1.2 million from the UAW-Chrysler training center. Since the center is a tax-exempt charity, taxpayers as well as workers were victims of the scam.

In August 2017, former UAW Associate Director Virdell King admitted to one felony count of conspiracy to violate the Labor Management Relations Act (LMRA).

Ms. King, who had been accused of stealing more than \$40,000 in worker training funds, is expected to be sentenced



Credit: Gan Khoon Lay, adapted by NRTWC

In the 28 states where Right to Work laws protecting individual choice have been adopted, employees can simply refuse to bankroll a labor union after one or more officials of the union are indicted.

soon to up to 16 months in prison and ordered to pay a fine of up to \$16,000.

Early this year, Mr. Iacobelli entered a guilty plea, admitting that he and other FCA executives had transferred hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal payments to shadowy personal “charities” controlled by UAW officials.

At the end of February, *Automotive*

News reported that so-called “charities” linked to at least seven former and current UAW bosses, including Ms. Estrada, current President Dennis Williams, and current Ford-UAW Vice President Jimmy Settles, are an “area of interest” for federal prosecutors.

On March 13, a second former
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Right to Work vs. Corruption

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UAW boss who had previously wielded monopoly control over FCA production employees was indicted for violating the LMRA.

Keith Mickens, who once was the late Mr. Holiefield's administrative assistant, is accused of "buying designer clothes, luggage and golf equipment with money that was supposed to help train rank-and-file autoworkers," according to a report appearing in the *Detroit Free Press*.

As Scandal Unfolds, Workers Are Forced by Federal Law To Keep Paying Dues to UAW

Just a couple of weeks before this Newsletter edition went to press in early April, Nancy Johnson, the onetime second highest ranking official in the UAW's Chrysler Department, was indicted for allegedly using training center funds for her personal benefit.

As the *Free Press* reported, Ms. Johnson is accused, for example, "of pampering herself and associates with \$6900 steak dinners and first-class airline tickets with money that was meant for autoworkers."

National Right to Work Committee President Mark Mix said: "Forced unionism is an important and underreported aspect of the widening scandal implicating UAW bosses and executives of Big Labor-impaired auto companies.

"Under Section 9(a) of the Taft-Hartley Act and under similar provisions of other federal labor laws, Big Labor bosses wield the power to force individual employees, whether they want a union or not, to accept it as their monopoly-bargaining agent.

"And as a consequence of a handful of other special-interest provisions in federal labor law, thousands of production employees in auto assembly plants located in Illinois and Ohio, two states that still lack Right to Work laws, continue to be forced to pay union dues or fees to the tainted UAW.

"If they refuse, they can be fired.

"On the other hand, FCA, GM and Ford employees in Right to Work states like Michigan, Texas, Kentucky and Indiana are free to protest allegedly rampant union corruption by resigning from the UAW and cutting off all financial support for it, without having to lose their jobs."

Mr. Mix added that, among the 28 states that have enacted Right to Work laws, Missouri is the only one where auto assembly workers are still being forced to

pay union dues or fees to the UAW, whose bosses are being investigated by the FBI for embezzlement.

Missouri Is 'Different From Other States That Have Adopted Right to Work Laws'

He explained: "Missouri is different from other states that have enacted Right to Work laws.

"Big Labor has been able to use a quirk in the Missouri legal code to block implementation of a 15 month-old Right to Work statute by gathering petitions from roughly one-sixth as many citizens as those voting for the state's unabashedly pro-Right to Work governor in 2016.

"The union bosses' petition drive also put on a statewide ballot a measure that will, if all goes according to union strategists' plan, permanently wipe Missouri's Right to Work law off the books.

"A Big Labor win in Missouri would mean that employees who suspect union bosses are misappropriating funds will continue to be prevented from fighting back by refusing to pay any union dues or fees."

Auto union officials who are now personally being investigated or whose "charities" are being investigated by the FBI are far from the only unsavory Big Labor figures who are benefiting from the barricade against Right to Work in

Missouri.

Since August 2016, St. Louis-Kansas City Carpenters Regional Council Executive Secretary-Treasurer Al Bond and every other member of the STLKCCRC union have been defendants in a state civil case filed by Jonathan Gould, a floorlayer and a former compliance officer for the council.

The lawsuit charges that Missouri carpenters union kingpins have for years been "embezzling money from members to inflate their own pensions and cash in on travel perks for spouses."

And according to an April 2017 exposé appearing in the *Kansas City Star*, in 2016 International Brotherhood of Boilermakers union President Newton Jones and his wife, brother and son raked in a total of roughly \$1.6 million in forced dues-funded IBB salaries and "reimbursements."

Meanwhile, jobs for rank-and-file IBB-"represented" workers were disappearing.

"Compulsory union dues and fees help Big Labor bosses run their organizations for their own benefit, at workers' expense," said Mr. Mix.

"It will be a shame if the massive Big Labor propaganda blitz now underway in the Show-Me State succeeds in enabling allegedly ethically challenged union bosses like Cindy Estrada, Al Bond, and Newton Jones to continue forcing Missouri workers to pay their unmerited salaries."

Mr. Mix vowed that Committee leaders and members would do everything reasonably possible to help Missouri citizens get back their Right to Work. 📣



Credit: boilermakers.org

In 2016 alone, IBB union President Newton Jones and his wife, brother and son raked in roughly \$1.6 million in forced dues-funded IBB compensation. Federal labor law fosters such ills. Right to Work laws stop them.

Worker Freedom Boosts Employment, Incomes

Right to Work Worth the Effort Needed to Defeat Big Labor Machine

At the end of February, the U.S. Labor Department issued new and revised data regarding the number of civilian household jobs (a broad measure that includes the self-employed and contractors as well as workers on employer payrolls) in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

In the aggregate, the data show household employment growth of under 6% from 2007 through 2017. But some states fared far better than others.

The 22 states that already had Right to Work laws prohibiting forced union dues and fees on the books back in 2007 enjoyed overall household employment growth of 8.8% over the next 10 years.

Meanwhile, aggregate employment in the 22 states that had not adopted Right to Work legislation as of the end of last year grew by just 4.2%, or less than half the Right to Work average.

(Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri passed Right to Work laws between 2012 and 2017. They are excluded from the analysis above.)

Five of the Six Worst Job Losers Are Still Forced-Unionism This Year

Six states suffered employment losses of at least 1.5% from 2007 to 2017. Of these, five are non-Right to Work states, and one became Right to Work only in 2016.

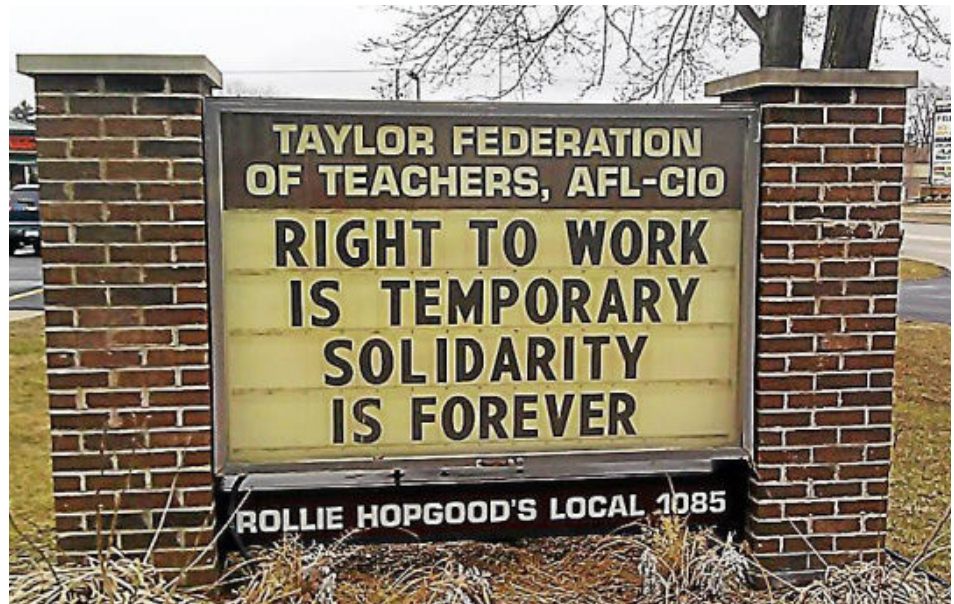
Meanwhile, seven of the top nine states for 10-year employment growth are Right to Work states.

In addition to being correlated with faster job growth, Right to Work is correlated with higher real disposable incomes.

U.S. Commerce Department data, adjusted for interstate cost-of-living differences according to an index calculated by the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center, a state government agency, show that the average disposable income per capita in Right to Work states in 2017 was \$42,857.

That's nearly \$2250 higher than the average for forced-unionism states.

Six of the nine states with the highest cost of living-adjusted disposable incomes are Right to Work. But six of the eight states with the lowest cost of living-adjusted disposable incomes are forced-unionism.



Credit: Ars Technica

This year, freedom-loving Missourians need help from around the nation. Without it, they may not be able to stop forced dues-funded union political operatives from destroying the Show-Me State's fledgling Right to Work law.

"The ample evidence linking forced unionism to diminished growth in jobs and lower real, spendable incomes is one reason prompting more and more Americans to get involved in efforts to pass Right to Work laws in their states," said National Right to Work Committee Vice President John Kalb.

Big Labor Rakes in Roughly \$14 Billion a Year in Mostly Forced Dues, Fees and Assessments

Mr. Kalb continued: "But despite lopsided public support for Right to Work laws, which has been confirmed by six decades of scientific polling, and despite all the evidence of their economic benefits, passing a state prohibition on forced union dues and fees normally requires a long and difficult fight.

"It's not hard to understand why.

"Drawing on disclosure forms private-sector union officials are required to file with the federal government as well as other sources, the National Institute for Labor Relations Research has estimated that Big Labor rakes in a total of roughly \$14 billion a year in mostly compulsory dues, fees and assessments.

"Enacting a Right to Work law," Mr. Kalb explained, "requires persuading public officials that, despite the vast resources available to the union political

machine, it is in their best interest to stand up to it."

Over Next Few Years, Up To Six More States May Ban Forced Union Dues

Thanks to intensified local grass-roots activism as well as persistent, effective mobilization efforts by National Right to Work Committee staffers and members, freedom-loving citizens' hopes are rising that new Right to Work laws can be enacted in at least half a dozen states over the next few years.

Among the possibilities are Montana, New Mexico, Delaware, Maine, and New Hampshire.

But Right to Work supporters will also have to fight hard to defend some of their recent gains.

In Missouri, for example, a Big Labor-instigated ballot measure to wipe off the books the Right to Work statute adopted by Show-Me State lawmakers just last year is expected to come before voters roughly six months after this Newsletter edition goes to press.

"There's no denying that pro-Right to Work Americans have accomplished a lot over the past few years," said Mr. Kalb.

"But it's also plain to see that the nationwide battle against compulsory unionism is far from won." 📌

Government Union Bosses' Forced-Dues Blackmail

In Reality, Strikes Are Far Less Common in Right to Work States

On February 26, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in what *Washington Post* editors call “the most important labor case of the 21st century to date,” *Janus v. AFSCME*.

Mark Janus, the plaintiff in this case, is an Illinois civil servant and union nonmember compelled by state law to pay monthly fees to officers of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees union and its Chicago-based AFSCME Council 31 affiliate.

If he refused, he would be fired.

At the hearing, Mr. Janus' counsel of record, Right to Work staff attorney Bill Messenger, and U.S. Solicitor General Noel Francisco argued that pro-Big Labor laws in Illinois and other states are unconstitutional.

Such laws violate the First Amendment, explained Mr. Messenger and Mr. Francisco, when they force public servants like Mr. Janus to support union-boss political and ideological advocacy directed at public officials.

Ending Compelled Advocacy Raises ‘an Untold Specter Of Labor Unrest’??

If the Supreme Court ultimately agrees with Mr. Janus, governments at all levels will have to give their employees a choice about whether or not they pay union dues or fees.

Union officials are mortified that a large share of the estimated five to six million public workers across the U.S. who are currently forced to bankroll a union as a job condition will cease paying for any union activities.

Janus thus “has the potential to radically cut the power and funding available to state and local employees’ unions,” as *Financial Times* (London, UK) columnist John Dizard observes.

The counsels defending forced fees on behalf of AFSCME union bosses and the Illinois attorney general only half-heartedly challenged their opponents’ characterization of such fees as compelled political/ideological advocacy.

But they insisted the plaintiff’s petition must regardless be rejected because forced fees are “the tradeoff for no strikes.”

If Mr. Janus wins, declared the AFSCME lawyer, it will raise “an untold specter of labor unrest throughout the country.”



Credit: NRTWLDf

Right to Work Foundation attorney and *Janus* case Counsel of Record Bill Messenger: The Supreme Court would be ill-advised to allow public-sector forced fees to continue “effectively as a form of protection money . . .”

After the hearing, top union officials reiterated this threat again and again.

On March 2, for example, American Federation of Teachers union President Randi Weingarten tweeted her agreement with the warning of a former union organizer and current *Bloomberg Businessweek* reporter that Americans could expect government strike disruption to become “more common” once the Supreme Court makes the public sector “all ‘right-to-work.’”

As Mr. Messenger noted, it would be bad for the country and the High Court if a majority of justices allowed public-sector forced fees to continue “effectively as a form of protection money,” even if the alternative really were more strikes disrupting vital government services.

Government Union Lawyer’s Dark Scenario Is Extremely Improbable

Fortunately, history indicates the dark scenario envisioned by the likes of AFSCME lawyer David Frederick and Ms. Weingarten following a pro-Right to Work *Janus* decision is extremely improbable.

As a friend-of-the-court brief filed by attorney James Abernathy on behalf of the Olympia, Wash.-based Freedom Foundation shows, government-sector strikes have for many years been far less

common in states with Right to Work protections for employees than in states without them.

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service data show government workers in Right to Work states “went on strike at a lower rate” than public-sector workers in forced-fee states “in all 33 years studied” by Freedom Foundation researchers.

In what seems to be a concerted effort to counter all this history, Big Labor and its allies in the media recently trumpeted a nine-day-long K-12 public education strike in Right to Work West Virginia that conveniently started the Thursday before the *Janus* hearing.

“The three states with the most teacher strikes since 2010 are forced-unionism Pennsylvania, with 29, forced-unionism Illinois, with 18, and forced-unionism California, with seven. What just happened in West Virginia is obviously *not* evidence that Right to Work causes strikes,” commented Greg Mourad, vice president of the National Right to Work Committee.

He concluded: “Since a number of its own precedents have found that the forced subsidization of speech regarding matters of public policy violates the Constitution, the High Court really has no choice but to rule in favor of Mark Janus.”

“It certainly shouldn’t fail to do so in response to union-boss threats of labor unrest if Mr. Janus’ First Amendment rights are vindicated.” 📣

Big Labor Appeasement Backfires in Pennsylvania

Right to Work Advocates Left Without a Choice in Special Election

Will the politicians ever learn? How many times does it have to be demonstrated that waffling on national Right to Work legislation is no way to protect yourself from union bosses and their electoral machine?

Late this winter, Pennsylvania state Rep. Rick Saccone (R-Elizabeth) became the latest in an extraordinarily long line of professed fence sitters on the compulsory-unionism issue to learn this bitter lesson from personal experience.

Campaigning for a U.S. House seat left vacant after the resignation of GOP Rep. Tim Murphy, Mr. Saccone refused to say how he would vote on a national Right to Work law if elected.

But his waffling on this key issue did not dissuade union political strategists from spending vast sums of union treasury money, overwhelmingly derived from forced union dues and fees, to ensure his defeat.

“For years, foes of forced unionism in the Keystone State have been pressing their elected representatives in Harrisburg to pledge support for a state Right to Work law,” noted National Right to Work Committee Vice President Mary King.

“Thanks to their efforts,” she continued, “a record number of the state lawmakers elected in 2016 had pledged to support a state Right to Work law. Unfortunately, Rick Saccone was not one of them.”

Forced Unionism Is Destroying Opportunities In Keystone State

Grass-roots support for Right to Work in Pennsylvania is intensifying in part because of the ever-mounting pile of evidence that compulsory unionism is killing good job opportunities in the state.

For example, according to U.S. Labor Department data, manufacturing payroll employment in the 23 states that already had Right to Work laws on the books in 2012 grew by 5.5%, or 272,000 jobs, over the next five years.

Over the same period, factory jobs grew by only a third as much in the 22 states that still hadn’t adopted Right to Work laws as of 2017. In Pennsylvania, the number of manufacturing jobs actually fell.

Of course, state senators and representatives aren’t the only elected officials with the ability to prohibit forced

union dues and fees in Pennsylvania.

Since private-sector compulsory unionism is authorized and promoted by federal labor law, Congress can end it simply by repealing every provision in the U.S. Code that imposed it in the first place.

Through its federal candidate survey program, the National Committee asked every major-party candidate for the southwestern Pennsylvania U.S. House seat formerly held by Mr. Murphy to support federal forced-dues repeal and back Right to Work across-the-board.

Rick Saccone Refused to Take a Stand on Federal Forced-Dues Repeal

But Mr. Saccone refused to pledge to take away union bosses’ federally-granted forced-dues privileges or answer any of the other questions on his Right to Work candidate survey.

Three days before the March 13 special election, while Mr. Saccone was at a campaign event, a reporter directly asked him if he would support a national Right to Work law. Rather than answer, he called on another reporter.

“A few years ago, a scientific poll sponsored by the Harrisburg-based Lincoln Institute showed Pennsylvanians support Right to Work by a three-to-one margin,” recalled Ms. King. “But GOP nominee Rick Saccone gave pro-Right to Work citizens no reason to vote for him.

“Meanwhile, his Democrat opponent, former federal prosecutor Conor Lamb,

loudly opposed Right to Work and proclaimed his support for monopolistic unionism.

“Only a relatively small share of voters in Pennsylvania’s 18th U.S. House District agree with this stance, but Mr. Lamb made sure that minority was enthusiastic and motivated.”

Union kingpins repaid Mr. Lamb in spades. According to Pennsylvania AFL-CIO chief Rich Bloomingdale, over 1000 union operatives from around the country “volunteered” to visit targeted households throughout the 18th District to drum up support for Mr. Lamb and opposition to Mr. Saccone.

(Salaries as well as travel expenses for such Big Labor campaign “volunteers” are routinely financed with union dues and fees that millions of workers across America are forced to pay as a job condition.)

In the end, with massive support from Big Labor, Mr. Lamb defeated Mr. Saccone by under 800 votes in a district Donald Trump had carried in 2016 while unabashedly proclaiming his support for a national Right to Work law.

“If Rick Saccone had given Right to Work supporters a clear reason to vote for him,” concluded Ms. King, “he likely would have won.

“And now, in the wake of Mr. Saccone’s defeat, pro-forced unionism media outlets like the *Huffington Post* are brazenly claiming the very Right to Work issue on which he refused to take a meaningful stand caused him to lose. That’s the icing on the cake.” 📌



Three days before the special election, a reporter directly asked Republican Rick Saccone if he would support a national Right to Work law. His silence was deafening to voters. But Big Labor went all-out to beat him anyway.

Obama Judges Threaten Right To Work Laws

Big Labor Senators Aim to Cement Courts' Pro-Forced Unionism Bias

Even as the number of Right to Work states and the share of all U.S. employees protected from compulsory unionism grew rapidly from early 2012 through early last year, the federal judiciary, with the important exception of the U.S. Supreme Court, grew more and more protective of Big Labor monopolists.

Today a dismayingly large number of federal appellate judges are hostile to the individual employee's freedom to join or financially support a labor organization, or refuse to do either. And it's no mystery why this is so.

Over the course of former Democrat President Barack Obama's eight years in office, including two during which the U.S. Senate was controlled by the opposition Republican Party, the Senate confirmed 46 of his appellate court appointees.

And taken as a group Obama appointees have established an unmistakable and alarming pattern of "reinterpreting" federal labor law to undermine court precedents and statutes that protect, at least to a limited degree, employees' freedom not to affiliate with a union.

Judges Sidestep High Court Precedent, Call Forced Speech Subsidies Constitutional

An egregious case in point is the October 2017 ruling by two judges on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in *Riffe v. Rauner*.

In this decision, Judges Diane Wood (who was appointed chief judge of the Seventh Circuit by Mr. Obama in 2013) and David Frank Hamilton (appointed by Mr. Obama in 2009) found that Big Labor Illinois politicians and union officials had not violated the constitutional rights of in-



Credit: Justin Wan/Sioux City (Iowa) Journal

Judiciary Chairman Grassley is doing what he can to lessen the federal bench's anti-Right to Work bias.

home care providers.

Judges Wood and Hamilton claimed that the government does not inflict a First Amendment injury on such individuals when it forces them to subsidize Organized Labor speech without their prior consent.

They reached this conclusion even though the U.S. Supreme Court had already ruled in its 2014 *Harris* decision, argued and won by National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation attorneys, that forcing homecare providers to pay for union-boss advocacy is unconstitutional.

National Right to Work Committee Vice President Matthew Leen commented:

"The recent unfortunate ruling in *Riffe v. Rauner* illustrates the kind of uphill battle Americans whose rights are trampled by Big Labor will have to fight to obtain justice until the composition of the federal appellate judiciary changes

significantly.

"Foundation attorneys have already filed an appeal with the Supreme Court on behalf of care providers. But the High Court only agrees to hear a small fraction of the appeal petitions it receives. That's why activist appellate decisions like *Riffe* often stand despite their defective reasoning."

Trump Nominees Could Restore Balance to Appellate Courts, If Enough Are Confirmed


Mr. Leen added that Right to Work supporters do have reason to hope that the pro-union monopoly bias of appellate courts like the Seventh Circuit could diminish over the next few years.

He explained: "We're still early in the Trump years, and no one knows what will happen next, but so far the GOP President's judicial nominees have overwhelmingly been, based on what we know of them, the kind of jurist who will give a fair hearing to workers who have a disagreement with Big Labor bosses."

"Unfortunately, despite the fact Donald Trump's fellow Republicans wield formal control over the Senate, it has been taking an outrageously long amount of time for judicial nominees to come up for votes since the beginning of this Administration."

As of March 25, noted Mr. Leen, 10 Trump court of appeals nominees were awaiting confirmation votes in the Senate. This is in part because Big Labor Democrat politicians have taken the unprecedented step of requiring time-wasting cloture votes and up to 30 hours of floor debate on 28 of the 29 judicial nominees confirmed so far in this Congress.

But Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell (Ky.) also deserves some of the blame, Mr. Leen added, for structuring the confirmation process in such a way that empowers anti-Right to Work politicians to stall Trump nominees.

"Majority Leader McConnell could learn a thing or two," he said, "from Judiciary Chairman and National Right to Work Act cosponsor Charles Grassley [R-Iowa]," said Mr. Leen. "In mid-February, Mr. Grassley overruled the objections of union-label senators and pushed Seventh Circuit nominee Michael Brennan through his committee. And that's just one example of the good work the chairman is doing on judicial nominations." 

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Federally Mandated Union Monopoly

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sponsored by Big Labor Congressman Daniel Kildee (D-Mich.).

Police, Firefighters Would Be Dragooned Into Unions They Want Nothing to Do With

The Kildee legislation would force countless state and local policemen, firefighters and EMT's to accept as their monopoly-bargaining agent a union they never voted for, and want nothing to do with.

It would also constitute a major step towards Big Labor's decades-old goal of enacting a federal law that foists union monopoly-bargaining on front-line state and local employees of all types, including K-12 schoolteachers, across America.

Right to Work President Mark Mix commented: "Like its Harry Reid-sponsored precursor, H.R.4846 would, as the the Washington *Post* editorial page has put it, 'impose a permanent, one-size-fits-all federal solution in an area -- public-sector labor relations -- that has traditionally been left to the states'

"It would also trample public servants' personal freedom to affiliate or not affiliate

with a union in thousands of jurisdictions where it is currently protected.

"These are the two most important reasons H.R.4846 must be defeated.

"But it also has horrible fiscal ramifications."

Pervasive Government-Sector Unionization Linked to Insolvency

"States that give more special privileges to government-sector union officials routinely burden their citizens with more debt as well as heavier taxation," explained Mr. Mix.

In the aggregate, state public pension plans are underfunded by more than \$6 trillion, according to "Unaccountable and Unaffordable 2018," an American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) report published last December.

That adds up to \$18,676 "for every resident of the United States."

Moreover, there is a strong correlation between the share of a state's public employees who are subject to union monopoly control and its per capita indebtedness.

The seven states with the least responsibly managed state pension systems have (population-weighted) average unfunded pension liabilities of \$30,398, or nearly \$12,000 above the national average.


In these seven states, as a group, roughly 52% of public employees are under a union monopoly, compared to 38% nationwide.

Meanwhile, the seven states with the best-managed state pension systems have average unfunded pension liabilities of \$10,129, or more than \$8400 below the national average.

In these seven states as a group, roughly 23% of public employees are unionized. (See the chart below for additional information.)

Right to Work Mobilizing Freedom-Loving Citizens For Grass-Roots Counterattack

Mr. Mix vowed that Right to Work members and supporters would go all out to block passage of H.R.4846:

"By mobilizing freedom-loving citizens across America, the Committee can once again muster the Capitol Hill support we need to save America from federally mandated union monopoly bargaining. And the Right to Work mobilization has already begun." 

States With the Highest and the Lowest Unfunded Government-Pension Liabilities Per Capita

	Worst States	Gov't Sector Union Density	Unfunded Liabilities		Best States	Gov't Sector Union Density	Unfunded Liabilities
50	Alaska	47.1%	\$45,689	1	Tennessee	21.6%	\$7,601
49	Connecticut	66.7%	\$35,731	2	Indiana	29.2%	\$9,131
48	Ohio	45.3%	\$30,538	3	Nebraska	32.9%	\$9,799
47	Illinois	52.8%	\$30,336	4	Wisconsin	21.9%	\$10,314
46	New Mexico	20.1%	\$28,119	5	North Carolina	11.8%	\$10,944
45	Hawaii	50.8%	\$28,063	6	Florida	28.6%	\$10,990
44	New Jersey	62.5%	\$27,806	7	Idaho	17.6%	\$11,199
	Average	51.8%	\$30,398		Average	23.4%	\$10,129

Forced-unionism states shaded in gray.

Sources: American Legislative Exchange Council, "Unaccountable and Unaffordable 2017"
Drs. Barry Hirsch and David Macpherson, *Union Membership and Coverage Database*

In the seven states with the best-managed state pension systems, unfunded liabilities per capita are only a third as burdensome as in the seven states with the worst-managed systems. And public employees in the "best" states are less than half as likely to be unionized as those in the "worst" states.

‘Political Heavyweight’ Covets Even More Power

Relaunches Drive to Federalize Public-Safety Monopoly Bargaining

Thanks primarily to special-interest laws and other policies now in effect in more than 40 states that either force or allow local governments to hand monopoly-bargaining control over public-safety officers to Big Labor, Harold Schaitberger wields enormous clout over politicians across the country.

And Mr. Schaitberger, president since 2000 of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF/AFL-CIO) union, isn't the least bit shy about reminding elected officials at all levels who's the boss.

At the IAFF's 2018 legislative conference in Washington, D.C., this March, Mr. Schaitberger publicly congratulated himself and his fellow union bosses for wielding the reins over what, in his words, "can only be described as a political heavyweight of a union."

Federal Mandate Overriding State Public-Sector Labor Laws Is Key IAFF Objective

But one thing troubles Mr. Schaitberger and his cohorts.

As a consequence of the determined and persistent opposition of National Right to Work Committee members, government union chiefs have not so far succeeded in ramming through Congress legislation federally mandating union monopoly-bargaining control over state and local public-safety officers nationwide.

Nearly a decade ago, victory seemed to be at hand for government union bosses and the rest of Organized Labor.

In the fall of 2010, less than two years into the presidency of relentless forced-unionism advocate Barack Obama, the so-called "Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act" (S.3991) was by all appearances headed for passage.

The bill was sponsored by then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.).

It would have denied localities in all 50 states the option to refuse to grant a single public-safety union the power to speak for all front-line employees, including those who don't want to join, in discussions with their employer regarding pay, benefits, and other working conditions.

Monopoly bargaining, euphemistically

labeled as "exclusive representation," would have been foisted on firefighters, police, and other public-safety employees nationwide.

And in most states that already authorize public-safety monopoly bargaining, S.3991 would have widened its scope.

Unvarnished Threat Directed At Elected Officials Who 'Foolishly' Oppose H.R.4846

But despite enjoying the enthusiastic support of the Obama White House, the then-Democrat majority caucuses in both chambers of Congress, and half-a-dozen GOP senators who were sponsors of another virtually identical measure, S.3991 never became law.

The measure stalled in the face of persistent and passionate opposition from well-mobilized National Right to Work Committee members, who time and again flooded Capitol Hill with letters, postcards, petitions, emails, faxes, and phone calls calling on Congress not to federalize public-safety monopoly bargaining.

This was a bitter defeat for Mr. Schaitberger.

And he certainly recognizes, along with other Capitol Hill veterans who witnessed the battle, that Right to Work activism is the reason Mr. Reid failed to get S.3991 to Barack Obama's desk.

But this year, with polls and pundits indicating Republican officeholders may face an unusually hostile political climate in the fall elections, Mr. Schaitberger has reason to hope he can now achieve the victory that eluded him in 2010.

Through raw political intimidation, IAFF and other government union bosses are aiming to browbeat enough House and Senate Republicans into going along with union-label Democrats to ensure congressional passage of a barely revised version of the 2010 Police/Fire Monopoly-Bargaining Bill.

Mr. Schaitberger gave a preview of the tactics the union political machine will employ in his recent address to IAFF officials, militants and operatives:

"Let those politicians who foolishly choose to stand in opposition to us hear us loud and clear: We embrace our friends. Our enemies be dam*ed and beware."

H.R.4846, the 2018 edition of the narrowly defeated Reid power grab, is

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Credit: Joshua Roberts/Reuters

Government union kingpin Harold Schaitberger has a message for elected officials who dare to oppose his agenda of federally mandating Big Labor monopoly control over public-safety officers from coast to coast: "[B]e dam*ed and beware."