

Right to Work Laws Help Keep Good Jobs in U.S.

Oklahoma City Center Offers Alternative to Foreign 'Outsourcing'

Despite notable improvements in the national economy since the summer of 2003, many Americans remain anxious regarding the so-called "outsourcing" of high-paying jobs to foreign countries.

Until recently, the impact of outsourcing has been felt almost exclusively in the manufacturing sector, but economic forecasters now believe that many information technology (IT) jobs will also be at risk in the coming years.

That's why last month's opening in Oklahoma -- America's newest Right to Work state -- of a "made in America" application development center by the Colorado-based IT company CIBER Inc. is such encouraging news.

CIBER says it has already lined up a \$30 million pipeline of prospective contracts for its Oklahoma City facility, where it aims to create roughly 200 IT jobs.

Over the next 18 months, CIBER plans to open a total of four other such centers, first in Right to Work Florida and then in several as yet unknown locations, and create an additional 800 jobs as part of its "model to compete domestically."

Viewed in conjunction with IBM's December 2004 announcement that it plans to bring as many as 1000 new jobs to its Tulsa, Okla., office because of the expanding need for outsourcing by other companies, the opening of the Oklahoma City CIBER center portends a brightening economic future for the Sooner State.

Forced-Unionism States Overwhelmingly Have Glum Business Climates

At first blush, there may seem to be little connection between Oklahoma's surprising emergence as an IT investment hub and its September 2001 enactment of a Right to Work law barring Big Labor from collecting forced union dues and "fees." After all, IT jobs are only rarely unionized.

However, every credible index ranking the 50 states for overall business climate has the 22 Right to Work states clustered in the highest ranks.

For example, the thoroughly researched U.S. Economic Freedom Index, created by San Francisco's Pacific Research Institute with the help of two

economists, evaluates 143 variables for each state, using the most recent data.

Fifteen of the 20 states that the 2004 index rates as the highest in economic freedom have Right to Work laws. But 19 of the 20 ranking lowest are forced-dues states.

Since the presence of a Right to Work law is just one of 143 variables, why is there such a strong correlation between this factor and a state's overall ranking?

The answer is simple:

In states where forced dues are legal, union campaign operatives use a large chunk of the forced dues they grab to elect politicians who are beholden to Big Labor's agenda of higher taxes, more government spending, and straight-jacket regulation of business.

And this high-tax, high-regulation agenda is deadly for union-free as well as unionized businesses.

Right to Work Laws Benefit Citizens at All Income Levels

While the positive impact of Oklahoma's Right to Work law was for the first couple of years mitigated by intense, but ultimately unsuccessful Big Labor legal efforts to overturn the law, it is already helping to raise Sooners'

incomes.


Between 2000-2001 and 2002-2003, Oklahoma's constant-dollar median household income increased by \$779, while the national median fell by \$1014 as a result of the 2001 recession and subsequent slow recovery, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

During the same period, the Sooner poverty rate dropped by 1.5 percentage points, while poverty increased by 0.8 percentage points nationwide.

"The evidence is overwhelming that Right to Work laws benefit citizens at all income levels," said Doug Stafford, vice president of the National Right to Work Committee.

"And improved public understanding of the salutary economic impact of state Right to Work laws is helping to spur popular movements to ban forced union dues in more and more states.

"Early this year, grass-roots proponents are seeking recorded votes on Right to Work measures in New Hampshire, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, Colorado and Montana.

"The Committee and its 2.2 million members are greatly encouraged by these efforts at the state level. And we will do everything possible to ensure their success." 



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Even as many Americans worry about information technology jobs being "outsourced" overseas, computer

programming centers are being built and expanded in Oklahoma -- America's newest Right to Work state.