

House Speaker Hinders Pro-Freedom Candidates

Inaction on H.R.391 Makes Close Contests Tougher to Win

In the 1994 mid-term elections, GOP candidates gained a walloping 52 U.S. House seats and eight U.S. Senate seats.

Today political analysts from both major parties agree that the Republicans were able to make such sweeping gains 10 years ago only because they confronted then-President Bill Clinton time and time again on matters of principle.

Every single Republican in Congress voted against the Clinton tax hike of 1993.

Strategy of Confrontation Helped Right to Work Cause

And 90% of Republicans voted against the pro-forced unionism "Striker Replacement Bill" backed by Mr. Clinton and Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.).

Although the tax hike was enacted and the strike bill easily passed the House, the GOP confrontations with Mr. Clinton on cutting issues like Right to Work hurt pro-forced unionism politicians.

As Mr. Clinton himself has conceded, votes like these actually had devastating electoral consequences for Big Labor Democrats.

After the 1993-94 confrontations over issues such as the Kennedy strike bill ushered in a GOP-controlled Congress, pro-Right to Work Americans were eager to continue the battle over compulsory unionism.

In the Senate, then-GOP Majority

Leader Trent Lott (Miss.) held the first-ever vote on national Right to Work legislation in July 1996.

As expected, Big Labor defeated the bill with every Democratic member voting against it.

But in that November's elections and their immediate aftermath, Right to Work supporters picked up a net of five Senate seats, including one incumbent who had voted "no," but switched his position in early 1997.

This occurred even as the Clinton-Gore team was reelected in an Electoral College landslide.

Right to Work Bill Would Repeal Federally-Imposed Forced Union Dues

Unfortunately, GOP House leaders never allowed a parallel vote on the National Right to Work Act, known in this Congress as H.R.391. This bill would repeal all federal labor-law provisions that authorize the firing of employees for refusal to pay dues or "fees" to an unwanted union.

And soon House leaders virtually jettisoned the strategy of confrontation on other cutting-edge issues.

As a consequence, senior National Right to Work Committee officers believe GOP leaders will be lucky not to see their already razor-thin 227-205 House majority trimmed further in next month's elections.

"A roll-call vote this year on H.R.391 would have exposed the anti-Right to Work bias of union-boss owned House incumbents, including several who are in very close races," said Mark Mix, the Committee's president.

No Vote Means Voters Pay Less Attention To Right to Work Issue

"Now I expect the vast majority of endangered Big Labor incumbents to keep their seats in part because they didn't have to vote on H.R.391," he continued.

As examples, Mr. Mix cited Reps. Dennis Moore (D-Kan.), Stephanie Herseth (D-S.D.), Baron Hill (D-Ind.), and Jim Matheson (D-Utah).

A recent scientific survey taken by the Research 2000 firm found that 79% of regular voters agree that no worker should be forced to affiliate with a union to get or keep a job. (Research 2000 polls are frequently cited in world-renowned news sources like CNN, the *Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.)

However, without a vote on H.R.391, too many citizens' attention will not be focused on Right to Work.


That could also seriously hurt pro-Right to Work nominees in competitive races for "open" House seats, such as Greg Walcher (R-Colo.) and Dave Reichert (R-Wash.).

GOP Leader's Failure To Learn From Experience Difficult to Explain

"Since House GOP leaders' ability to do their jobs is greatly constricted in an almost even-divided chamber, and the vast majority of pro-Right to Work candidates are Republicans, Speaker Hastert's [D-Ill.] failure to act on the popular and politically potent H.R.391 is baffling," said Mr. Mix.

"Mr. Hastert should have known better.

"His own experience during the nineties should have told him it's a foolish strategy to divert the public's attention away from a winning issue that is backed by the vast majority of your party caucus.

"Mr. Hastert and other GOP leaders have a lot to answer for." 



Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) and other GOP leaders have harmed many pro-Right to Work candidates'

prospects by refusing to allow a recorded vote on H.R.391, the National Right to Work Act.