

Right to Work: Magnet For College Graduates

Research Shows Forced-Unionism States Suffer From 'Brain Drain'

Using migration data from the 2000 census, University of Michigan demographer William Frey recently compiled a table showing that a net total of nearly 384,000 college graduates moved from forced-unionism states and Washington, D.C., to Right to Work states between 1995 and 2000.

As Dr. Frey points out, elected state officials recognize that attracting college graduates and retaining them are essential to "enriching their tax bases and staying competitive."

'Many Are Moving Out . . . In Pursuit of . . . Better Economic Conditions'

In an article appearing in the June 2004 edition of *American Demographics*, which he kindly furnished to the National Right to Work Newsletter along with key back-up data, Dr. Frey was blunt:

"Fact is, competition among places for smart migrants . . . creates winners and losers."

The four states suffering the worst losses, in absolute terms, of college graduates as a result of domestic "out-migration" between 1995 and 2000 are New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Not one of these states has a Right to Work law. Furthermore, the share of employees who are forced to accept a union as their "exclusive" bargaining agent in the workplace has regularly ranked far above the U.S. average in all four states.

Meanwhile, the four states that benefited from the greatest net immigration, in absolute terms, of college graduates are Florida, Georgia, Arizona and North Carolina.

All four have state Right to Work laws, which bar the firing of any employee for refusal to join or pay dues or "fees" to an unwanted union.

Author/consultant Joel Kotkin reported on the findings of Dr. Frey and several economists in a September 12 article for the *Washington Post*. As political commentators often do nowadays, Mr. Kotkin referred to states carried by Al Gore in 2000 as "blue" and those carried by George W. Bush as "red" or "scarlet."

He concluded that "educated workers, particularly young families, . . . are moving out of [Big Labor-dominated] blue states in pursuit of the better economic conditions in the [mostly Right to Work] scarlet ones."

As of 2000, fewer than 47 million out of the 281 million Americans counted by the census had a bachelor's degree or more.

Right to Work Leader Urges Congress to Terminate Pro-Forced Dues Policies

"If the trend identified by Dr. Frey continues, the 28 remaining forced-unionism states will lose a net total of nearly 800,000 college graduates to Right to Work states during the current decade," noted Right to Work President



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Demographer William Frey: States need to attract and retain Americans of higher degree to stay competitive.

Mark Mix.

"The reason is clear. Where compulsory dues are legal, union bosses use their power to disrupt labor markets, jack up costs, and bankroll Tax & Spend, regulation-happy politicians.


"As a consequence, employees, especially the younger ones, have relatively few opportunities for advancement and earn wages and salaries that are lower when regional differences in living costs and taxes are taken into account.

"Economic forces that drive people to move from state to state are often benign, or at least cannot be effectively changed by government policy.

"But misguided federal labor policy dating back to the 1930s is responsible for the outflow of young people, especially educated young people, from forced-unionism states."

Mr. Mix called on congressional leaders to bring up for a vote, without further delay, H.R.391/S.1765, which would over time stop the "brain drain" from states like New York and Illinois.

Also known as the National Right to Work Act, H.R.391/S.1765 would strike all provisions authorizing forced union dues and "fees" from federal law.

"Too many hard-working young Americans are being uprooted from their homes and their parents as a result of compulsory unionism. Congress must stop perpetuating this problem," Mr. Mix concluded. 

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