

# Right to Work Key Issue For 2008 GOP Primaries

## *Which Candidates Will Pledge Full Support For Forced-Dues Repeal?*

As the 2000 presidential primaries got under way a little more than seven years ago, five GOP candidates had already pledged that, if nominated, they would "insist both publicly and privately that [the] congressional leadership schedule a roll-call vote on the National Right to Work Act . . . ."

This important, common-sense bill, which was recently introduced again in the current Congress as H.R.697, would repeal the federal labor-law provisions under which American workers are forced to pay union dues, or be fired.

The GOP presidential candidates already on the record in support of the Right to Work Bill in January 2000 included publisher Steve Forbes, U.S. Sens. John McCain (Ariz.) and Orrin Hatch (Utah), former White House staffer Garry Bauer, and former ambassador Alan Keyes.

However, National Right to Work Committee members and supporters were concerned that then-GOP frontrunner George W. Bush, the governor of Texas, hadn't answered his Right to Work survey yet.

In New Hampshire, the site of the highly important first primary, the Committee alerted its members by mail and by phone to the fact that Mr. Bush hadn't taken a stand on the Right to Work Bill and asked them to request that he do so.

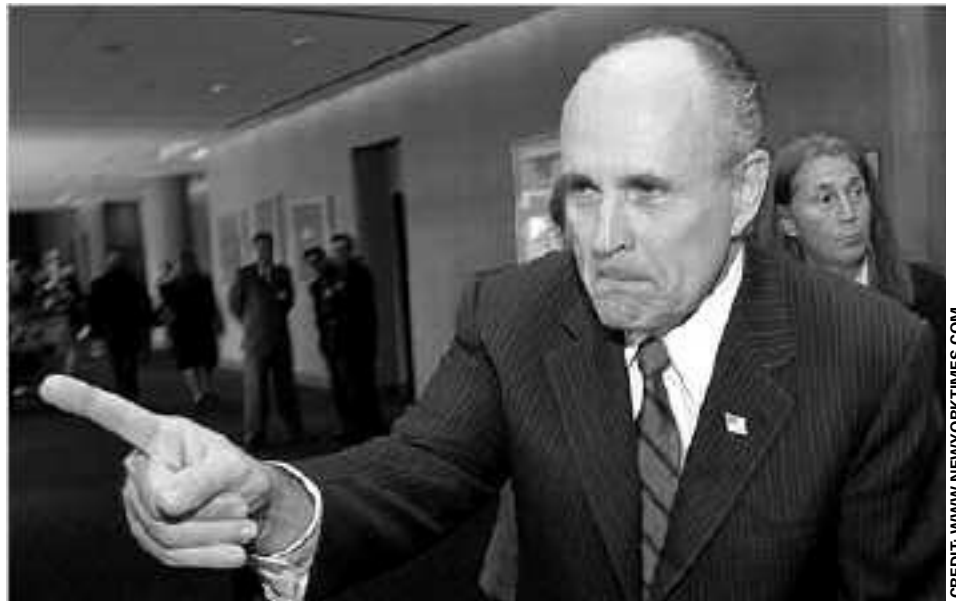
But the Bush campaign stonewalled such requests all the way up to the February 1 primary.

Mr. Bush's refusal to support Right to Work contributed to his stinging defeat by Mr. McCain in New Hampshire. And the Bush camp clearly recognized this was the case.

### **Right to Work Issue Helped George W. Bush In South Carolina**

In South Carolina, where another key primary was soon to be held, the Bush campaign began running TV ads attacking Mr. McCain on a point where the latter was weak with Right to Work allies: his championship of phony campaign "reform" that would tilt the electoral playing field even more steeply in Big Labor's favor.

The ads (now rather ironic in light of the fact that President Bush himself



**Rudy Giuliani and other 2008 GOP presidential hopefuls should be aware that 2000 frontrunner George W.**

**Bush's early campaign nearly ran aground before he came out in favor of a national Right to Work law.**

signed the McCain-Feingold campaign "reform" into law in 2002) took their toll, and Mr. Bush rebounded in South Carolina on February 19.

Obviously convinced of the power of the Right to Work issue, on February 25 the Bush campaign sent a fax to Committee headquarters in which the candidate vowed to "work with Congress to ensure that no worker is forced to join or support a union" unless he or she freely chooses to do so.

A few days later, Mr. Bush sailed to victory in the crucial Virginia primary. The campaign of the future President was back on track.

Within a short time after this Newsletter goes to press, the Committee's 2008 presidential survey will get underway.

And while national Democratic politicians who are vying with one another to win Big Labor's fealty will very likely ignore their surveys, Republican politicians would be well advised to recall how George W. Bush's 2000 campaign nearly ran aground before it recognized the importance of the Right to Work issue.

While the process through which GOP voters select their nominee is still near its beginning, Right to Work supporters nationwide are already noting the fact that several candidates, including early

poll- and media-anointed frontrunner Rudy Giuliani, have no clear position on the forced-unionism issue.

### **Current Anointed GOP Frontrunner Won't Be Able to Dodge the Issue**

Mr. Giuliani, the former mayor of New York, as well as at least one other top-tier candidate who is a virtual blank slate on Right to Work, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, should not forget that they will be competing with candidates with records of support for the Right to Work Bill.

"In addition to Mr. McCain, other declared GOP presidential candidates like Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback and Colorado Rep. Tom Tancredo were cosponsors of the Right to Work Bill in the 2005-2006 Congress," said National Right to Work Committee President Mark Mix.

"Neither Rudy Giuliani, nor Mitt Romney, nor any other GOP hopeful will be able to dodge the Right to Work issue. Either they will take a clear stand in support of a national Right to Work law, or they will have to deal with the response of the many pro-Right to Work citizens who will vote in the early primaries." 📌