

# Committee Prepares For Showdown Over S.2123

## *Will Press Congress to Remove All Police/Fire Forced Union Dues*

As many National Right to Work Committee members already know, the U.S. Senate is now dangerously close to rubber-stamping S.2123, one of the top items on Big Labor's legislative wish list in the current Congress.

S.2123, the so-called "Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act," would establish a new federal mandate imposing union "exclusive representation" (monopoly bargaining) over state and local police and firefighters and other public-safety employees.

Currently, each state has its own authority to set its own policies regarding the unionization of state and local government employees in general and public-safety officers in particular.

Unfortunately, elected officials in a number of states have caved into Big Labor demands by enacting state laws empowering union officials to seize monopoly-bargaining control over public-safety employees.

However, roughly half of the 50 states have so far either refused completely to grant union bosses monopoly control over public-safety employment, or have acquiesced to a relatively limited form of monopolistic unionization.

### **Bill's Backers: Being Forced To Be 'Represented' by an Unwanted Union Is a 'Right'**

It has long been a goal of government union officials to wield broad monopoly-bargaining power over state and local employees across the nation.

S.2123, introduced October 1 by Big Labor-appeasing GOP Sen. Judd Gregg (N.H.) and now cosponsored by 26 senators, including 14 Democrats, two Independents, and 10 Republicans, would be a first step toward achieving this objective.

Hundreds of thousands of policemen, firemen and paramedics who up to now have been free under state law to negotiate on their own behalf would be stripped of that freedom by S.2123.

Therefore, S.2123 and its nearly identical U.S. House companion, H.R.980 (which has already been rubber-stamped by the lower chamber), may accurately be labeled as "Police/Fire Monopoly-Bargaining" legislation.

"Contrary to the claims of union propagandists, S.2123 and H.R.980 have nothing to do with protecting the right of police, firemen and EMT's to join a union. The right to join a union is protected in all 50 states," noted Committee President Mark Mix.

"Nor is the aim of this legislation to uphold the right of union officials to bargain on behalf of their members.

"Any state law or local ordinance authorizing public-safety union bosses to bargain on behalf of their members only will get tossed in the scrapheap if S.2123 or H.R.980 becomes law.

"The only policies acceptable under these measures are those that empower union bosses to bargain on behalf of police and firefighters who have refused to join the union and want nothing to do with it, as well as those who have voluntarily joined.

"And historically, states enacting such monopoly-bargaining laws have experienced dramatic increases in public-safety strikes, both legal and illegal.

"Moreover, since monopoly bargaining also sharply increases government union bosses' political power, politicians courting Big Labor political support have regularly made state and local taxpayers foot the bill for such strikes.

"Proponents of this legislation believe it's public-safety officers' 'basic right' to be forced to accept union monopoly representation, even if they don't want it.

"Apologists for these measures also claim that ensuring union officials wield monopoly-bargaining power over public employees in communities large and small across the country is so important, Congress must abrogate the sovereignty of state and local governments to achieve that end."

### **Public-Safety Forced Dues Already Widespread**

"At the same time," Mr. Mix continued, "S.2123 and H.R.980 tellingly do not interfere in any way with labor laws in nearly two dozen states that force state and local public employees to join or pay dues to a union, like it or not, as a condition of employment.

"And the sad fact is, dozens of Big Labor-appeasing House GOP politicians voted for H.R.980 this summer, even though they purport to support the Right to Work without being forced to pay union dues or fees.

"Similarly, a number of weak-kneed GOP senators have already gone on the record in support of S.2123.

"Without the support of such senators, it is highly unlikely that S.2123 proponents could terminate an extended debate by opponents of forced unionism in the Senate and bring the measure to a final vote."

To force senators who claim to support both the Right to Work and S.2123 to reveal where their true allegiance lies, Committee leaders have recently worked closely with pro-Right to Work senators to prepare a draft amendment to S.2123.

This draft floor amendment is now



Committee Vice President Doug Stafford (left) and top legislative strategist Greg Mourad will press for a

vote on an amendment protecting the individual public-safety officer's Right to Work in all 50 states.

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