

# 'RESPECT' Act or 'Chained and Bound' Act?

## *Measure Would Pave the Way For Forced Unionization of Millions*

In an obvious effort to appeal to Aretha Franklin fans, union strategists have cynically dubbed one of the top Big Labor power grabs now pending on Capitol Hill the "RESPECT" Act.

However, this legislation (S.969 and H.R.1644) derives no discernible inspiration from Ms. Franklin's 1967 smash hit.

"Chained and Bound," the title of another sixties soul classic, would be far more apt for S.969/H.R.1644.

Introduced by Big Labor U.S. Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) and Congressman Robert Andrews (D-N.J.), the "Chained and Bound" Act would reclassify virtually all employees who are currently deemed to be supervisors under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) as non-supervisors.

Effectively, that would pave the way for union officials to force millions of now-independent supervisory employees to fork over dues or fees to an unwanted union, or be fired from their jobs.

### **Union Monopoly Bargaining Detrimental For Millions of Employees**

Union-label politicians' motive for the reclassification isn't hard to discern: The NLRA explicitly exempts "supervisors" from being forced to accept a particular union as their "exclusive" (monopoly) bargaining agent in contract negotiations with their employer.

Under current federal monopoly-bargaining policies, non-supervisory employees may have taken away from them their individual right to bargain for themselves over their wages, benefits, and work rules, and be forced to accept a union agent negotiating in their stead, like it or not.

What impact does this so-called "representation" have on employees who don't want it?

As academic allies of Big Labor and union officials themselves have admitted repeatedly over the years, all too often the best workers are actually harmed by union monopoly bargaining.

For example, Richard Rothstein, a veteran researcher for the AFL-CIO-funded Economic Policy Institute and longtime New York *Times* columnist, has written in a review article that "union . . .



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**Otis Redding's (pictured) 1964 R & B single "Chained and Bound," rather than fellow soulster Aretha Franklin's**

**"Respect," would furnish an appropriate label for Big Labor bosses' S.969/H.R.1644.**

negotiated contracts reduce wage dispersion . . . by reducing pay of the most productive workers."

And a legal brief filed with the National Labor Relations Board in 2007 by the United Steelworkers of America and six other large, AFL-CIO-affiliated unions openly acknowledged that union nonmembers "benefit" when they aren't forced under a union monopoly, but rather left "free to bargain individually, without union representation!"

### **Monopoly Bargaining Furnishes a Pretext For Forced Union Dues**

Nevertheless, Big Labor continues cynically to exploit labor laws authorizing monopoly bargaining as a pretext for foisting compulsory union dues and fees on workers, including union members and nonmembers alike.

Contradicting even pro-forced unionism scholars like Mr. Rothstein, union propagandists falsely assert that workers who want nothing to do with a union nevertheless "benefit" from being unionized, and should therefore be forced to fork over union dues or fees as a job condition.

Besides corraling supervisors under union monopoly bargaining, the so-called "RESPECT" Act would also authorize the firing of supervisors for refusal to bankroll a union.

"Under current federal labor law, millions of American non-supervisory employees with above-average talents and work ethics earn less than they otherwise would because they are union controlled," noted Matthew Leen, vice president of the National Right to Work Committee.

"Incredibly, these workers are also typically forced to pay union dues or fees in order to keep their jobs.

"Genuine labor-law reform would eliminate monopoly bargaining and forced union dues and give employees who don't wish to join a union the option of negotiating their contracts individually, or through an alternative union," Mr. Leen added.

"But S.969 and H.R.1644 would instead extend pro-forced unionism federal policies to cover millions of employees who have been exempt from them up to now. This is a big step in the wrong direction."

Mr. Leen vowed that the Committee and its 2.2 million members would do everything necessary to ensure that S.969 and H.R.1644 do not become law.

Committee legislative staffers are already contacting members of both chambers of Congress to urge them to oppose this legislation on all votes.

Committee members who wish to reinforce the message may do so by using the Capitol Hill switchboard, 202-224-3121 or 202-225-3121, to get in touch with their U.S. representatives and senators. 📞