

Harry Reid Genuflects Before Big Labor Bosses

Plans to Push Forced-Unionism Agenda as Senate Session Winds Down

With only three months to go until the U.S. Senate adjourns so that some of its members can run for reelection full time, while others try to swing the presidential race in their home states, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) could seemingly tell union lobbyists he's done enough for them already.

In the year-and-a-half since he took charge of the Senate, Mr. Reid has certainly done his darnedest for the union bosses.

Take just the biggest two items on the union hierarchy's agenda.

Last June Mr. Reid brought to the Senate floor H.R.800, the already U.S. House-passed version of the cynically labeled "Employee Free Choice Act."

H.R.800, now also introduced in the Senate as S.1041, would rewrite federal labor law concerning so-called "card checks" to make it even easier for union bosses to seize monopoly-bargaining power over millions of employees in the American private sector.

Following Mr. Reid's lead, every single Senate Democrat, except for then-incapacitated Tim Johnson (S.D.), voted to cut off debate on, and thus clear the way for passage of, this special-interest measure. Habitual union-boss appeasing Republican Arlen Specter (Pa.) also voted with Mr. Reid.

However, through no fault of Mr. Reid's, the bill did not secure the 60 votes needed to prevent Right to Work allies from continuing debate.

Harry Reid Also Tried to Sneak Through Public-Safety Monopoly-Bargaining Bill

This spring, Mr. Reid tried to sneak through the Senate Big Labor's second key objective in the 2007-2008 Congress, the so-called "Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act."

This scheme, now numbered H.R.980 and S.2123, would establish a new federal mandate imposing union monopoly bargaining over state and local firefighters and other public-safety employees across the country.

In May, after Big Labor Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) had first quick-snapped floor action on H.R.980, Mr. Reid filed a "cloture" motion to prevent Senate Right to Work allies from waging any substantial debate on the bill before it was rushed through the chamber.

And only the efforts of the National Right to Work Committee, its 2.2 million members, and a handful of other H.R.980 opponents such as the League of Cities prevented Mr. Reid from succeeding.

***Congressional Quarterly:* Mr. Reid Will Keep Bringing Up Forced-Unionism Bills**

Organized Labor is widely expected this fall to make substantial electoral gains in the Senate as well as the House.


Mr. Reid could therefore plausibly now tell union lobbyists that it makes no sense for him to bring up the card-check or firefighter monopoly-bargaining schemes for Senate floor action again until 2009, when their prospects for passage could be much better, and will almost certainly be no worse.

Nevertheless, union lobbyists reportedly are still pushing for additional Senate floor action on H.R.980/S.2123 and several other forced-unionism measures, including perhaps H.R.800/S.1041.

And on May 30, *Congressional Quarterly* forecast confidently that Mr. Reid will "keep queuing . . . up for floor action . . . the bills on [O]rganized [L]abor's wish list" until the Senate goes home this fall.

"Although he didn't prevail upon his chamber to rubber-stamp the top two items of Big Labor's forced-unionism agenda the first time he tried, Harry Reid is so eager to please union bigwigs that he will keep trying as long as they want him to," commented Committee President Mark Mix.

"Mr. Reid's only apparent stipulation is that he doesn't want extended floor debates on pro-forced unionism measures. Being no fool, he knows these measures aren't popular with the public, and he doesn't want a media spotlight on them.

"That means, if self-avowedly pro-Right to Work senators stick to their guns and insist on robust debate and ample consideration of amendments before any Big Labor power grab receives a final vote, then Mr. Reid will likely back down." 



Mark Mix: Self-avowedly pro-Right to Work senators should "stick to their guns and insist on robust debate and

ample consideration of amendments before any Big Labor power grab receives a final vote."