

Right to Work States Drive Economic Growth

Big Labor Apologists Can't Explain Away Commerce Department Data

With every passing year, the federal labor-law provisions that authorize the firing of roughly 7.3 million American employees should they refuse to pay union dues or fees as a job condition get even harder to defend.

In June, the web site of the U.S. Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) posted its latest estimated and revised Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by state data for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Between 2002 and 2007, according to the Commerce findings, the combined real output of the 22 states with Right to Work laws barring all forced union dues grew by 3.44% a year.

Had Whole Country Grown at Right to Work Pace, GDP Would Be Half-Trillion Dollars Higher

That's roughly half again as fast as the combined real annual growth of states that do not protect employees from forced union dues.

In fact, had the entire country grown as fast as Right to Work states just since the year 2000, by 2007 our national gross domestic product (GDP) would have been \$11.974 trillion in constant, "chained" 2000 dollars, \$506 billion more than the actual estimated figure of \$11.468 trillion.

National Right to Work Committee President Mark Mix said that the recent BEA data should embolden the 93 U.S. House and Senate sponsors of national Right to Work legislation in their respective chambers to push for action on these measures.

Forced Dues Not Justified, Morally or Economically

"The House and Senate Right to Work Bills [H.R.697 and S.1301] would abolish the federal labor-law provisions that force workers to pay dues to an unwanted union, or be fired," noted Mr. Mix.

"The right to do something becomes coercion if it is not accompanied by a corresponding right to refrain.

"As long as the law of the land explicitly denies employees the right to refuse to associate with or financially support a union, all Americans' freedom will be threatened.

"Even most forced-unionism apologists sense the strength of this moral argument.

"That's why they typically try to change the subject to economics. But BEA and other official government statistics keep undercutting this gambit."

Mr. Mix elaborated that the Right to Work economic-growth advantage has been apparent in every region of the country:

"Between 2002 and 2007, the real GDP of Right to Work states in the West grew nearly half again as fast as in non-Right to Work states in that region.

"In the Midwest, the real GDP of Right to Work states grew more than twice as fast as that of non-Right to Work states. Across the South, GDP grew roughly 34% faster in Right to Work states than in forced-dues states.

"And the economies of Right to Work states nationwide grew 33% faster than did the aggregate economy of the U.S. Northeast, the only region of the country with no Right to Work states."

'Mind-Boggling' That Big Labor Would Push 14(b) Repeal Now

"The already enormous cost of federally-imposed forced unionism is bound to keep getting steeper as long as Congress perpetuates it," Mr. Mix continued.

"The remedy is H.R.697 and S.1301, which would completely repeal federally-imposed forced union dues and fees.

"Yet incredibly, forced-unionism zealots in Congress, led by Big Labor Rep. Brad Sherman [D-Calif.], are not only opposing a National Right to Work law, but also pushing for the destruction of existing state Right to Work laws.

"H.R.6477, introduced by Mr. Sherman and five original cosponsors July 10, would eliminate Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act, which explicitly authorizes states to protect private-sector employees from forced union dues by passing Right to Work laws.

"If this scheme were enacted, tens of millions of private-sector workers who are currently protected by a state Right to Work law would be at risk of being forced to pay dues or fees to an unwanted union, or be fired.



Committee President Mark Mix: "In politics, as in sports, the best defense is often a good offense."

"It is mind-boggling that union-label politicians would push such a wrongheaded and economically destructive piece of legislation at a time when the U.S. is already on the brink of recession." (See page three for more about H.R.6477.)

Committee to Pursue 'Amendment Strategy' to Secure Roll-Call Vote

"However, there is a silver lining to union lobbyists' efforts to ram schemes like 14(b) repeal and the Kennedy 'card-check' measure [S.1041 and H.R.800] through Congress," Mr. Mix continued.

"Union-label Democrat leaders of the House and Senate are highly unlikely to allow votes on freestanding Right to Work legislation. However, Senate rules generally allow individual members of the chamber to force votes on any amendment that is 'germane' to the legislation on the floor.

"Whenever Big Labor pushes to the Senate floor a power grab this fall designed to expand union bosses' federal forced-unionism privileges over employees, the Committee and its Senate allies will fight back by seeking recorded votes on an amendment to revoke those forced-unionism privileges.

"In politics, as in sports, the best defense is often a good offense." 📞