



# NATIONAL RIGHT TO WORK NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 55, NUMBER 2

www.nrtwc.org

February 2009

## 'Card Check' Proponents Already Feeling the Heat

### *Opponents of Compulsory-Unionism Scheme Mobilizing as Obama Era Begins*

In the middle of this extraordinarily chilly winter, Big Labor bosses across the country are celebrating the fact that they have helped make unabashed forced-unionism proponent Barack Obama the 44th President of the United States.

Top union officials are also pleased as punch about their success in substantially tightening their grip over both the U.S. House and Senate in last fall's congressional elections.

At the same time, the union hierarchy is not unaware of the fact that freedom-loving Americans are already turning up the pressure on key members of Congress to oppose forced union dues and union monopoly bargaining this year and in 2010.

In fact, public opposition, led by National Right to Work Committee members and supporters, could potentially stall much of Big Labor's forced-unionism agenda in Washington, D.C., over the next two years -- even though Barack Obama will be sitting in

the Oval Office.

First and foremost, union strategists already know, even if they are not yet publicly admitting it, that the top item on their 2009-2010 legislative agenda, the cynically mislabeled "Employee Free Choice Act," faces stiff Capitol Hill resistance, and its enactment is far from assured.

This scheme was sponsored in the last Congress by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) and his frequent collaborator in concocting forced-unionism power grabs, Congressman George Miller (D-Calif.).

### **Bill Would Both Extend And Intensify Union Bosses' Monopoly Privileges**

Kennedy/Miller would make it far easier for Big Labor to obtain "exclusive" (monopoly) bargaining control over employees.

In non-Right to Work states, this

legislation would also make it far easier for Big Labor to browbeat employers into consenting to fire employees who refuse to join or pay dues or fees to a union.

The Kennedy/Miller scheme's best-known provision would rewrite federal law concerning "card checks" to help union bosses shove hundreds of thousands of small businesses and millions of additional workers under Big Labor control.

Under current law, union bosses are already able to acquire monopoly power to negotiate employees' pay, benefits, and work rules solely through the collection of signed "union authorization cards."

Consequently, individual workers under the peering eyes of union organizers may be intimidated into signing not just themselves, but all of their nonunion fellow employees, over to union-boss control.

See **Bill Facilitates** page 2



CREDIT: AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION



CREDIT: AP/BILL ROSS



CREDIT: TIMJEY/WIRED BLOG NETWORK

U.S. Sens. Blanche Lincoln (left) and Byron Dorgan (right), who both voted last year to help Big Labor ram the

Kennedy/Miller "card-check" scheme through the Senate, are now officially sitting on the fence. Brand-new Sen.

Michael Bennet (center) is also self-avowedly "neutral" on this anti-Right to Work scheme.

# Bill Facilitates Forced Dues

Continued from page 1

However, as stacked as current law is in favor of Big Labor's forced-unionism power, employers nevertheless retain the right to stand up for their independent employees against union-boss intimidation tactics.

But the Kennedy/Miller legislation would empower union officials to impose forced unionism through card check automatically, with no recourse for any pro-Right to Work employee or employer.

Moreover, under Kennedy/Miller, if union heads and employers negotiating a first contract fail to make a deal within roughly four months, then a federal "arbitration panel" will unilaterally implement a contract binding for two years on union members and nonmembers alike.

"Today, union officials sometimes aren't successful in getting anti-worker provisions like forced union dues and fees in union contracts, because workers resolutely oppose such provisions," commented Committee President Mark Mix.

## Blanche Lincoln and Byron Dorgan 'Obviously Know Kennedy/Miller Is Unpopular'

"Kennedy/Miller would enable union bosses with monopoly-bargaining power to circumvent altogether the wishes of workers by prevailing upon federal bureaucrats to give them forced-dues privileges. And workers couldn't do

anything about it for a minimum of two years!" Mr. Mix concluded.

The November 2008 presidential and congressional election returns put union lobbyists in an excellent position to ram Kennedy/Miller into law this year.

But within a few days after Election Day, the Committee began mobilizing hundreds of thousands of freedom-loving Americans to fight back.

In late November and December, anti-Kennedy/Miller postcards, letters, and phone calls from countless citizens contacted by the Committee began arriving on Capitol Hill.

Several senators who in the past have regularly voted according to Big Labor's dictates, and have supported Kennedy/Miller in particular, are getting the message.

For example, Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.), who in 2007 had voted to help union officials steam-roll the Kennedy bill through the Senate, said late last year that she doesn't think "there is a need for such legislation right now."

"Ms. Lincoln, who must face the voters of Right to Work Arkansas in a November 2010 re-election bid, or give up her seat, is calculating she can't afford to ignore what her constituents think right now," commented Mr. Mix.

Similarly, Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), another U.S. senator from a Right to Work state who voted for Kennedy/Miller in 2007 and is up for reelection

in 2010, is now saying he is "undecided" on the legislation.

"Blanche Lincoln and Byron Dorgan obviously know Kennedy/Miller is unpopular with their constituents," said Mr. Mix. "But they also remain reluctant to anger Big Labor by simply announcing publicly that they will oppose Kennedy/Miller and any similar legislation on all votes.

"That's why Right to Work members and supporters, especially constituents, will have to keep turning up the pressure on these two senators."

## New Colorado Senator Also a Key 'Swing' Vote

Mr. Mix added that Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), who was recently appointed to replace pro-Kennedy/Miller Democrat Sen. Ken Salazar after the latter took a job in the Obama Cabinet, is another key "swing" vote on Kennedy/Miller.

After conducting an interview with Mr. Bennet just before he was sworn in as a senator, the Denver *Post* reported January 9 that he "doesn't have a position and wants to hear from the various constituencies involved."

"That should encourage freedom-loving Colorado employees and employers to call Mr. Bennet's Capitol Hill office at 202-224-5852 right away if they haven't already done so," noted Mr. Mix.

"Of course, defeating Kennedy/Miller in 2009 and 2010 won't be easy. In the House, where Big Labor politicians are firmly in control, the measure is basically unstoppable.

"And union lobbyists are very close to getting the 60 out of 100 senators to shut down a Right to Work debate so that such a bill can be brought up for a final vote, when it can be adopted by a simple majority.

"However, if Committee members can mobilize millions of other pro-Right to Work Americans for this fight, the Kennedy/Miller scheme can still be stopped by a full Senate debate.

"This legislation simply cannot withstand public scrutiny, both because it would trample on individual employee rights and because it would gravely damage a national economy that is already mired in a recession."

(See the table at left for examples of the harm Kennedy/Miller could do by increasing dramatically the number of workers who are subject to monopoly bargaining. -- Editor.)

## Union Monopoly Hurts Workers

### Growth in Real Personal Income, 1997-2007

High Union-Monopoly States: 22.1%  
Low Union-Monopoly States: 41.1%

Sources: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA),  
Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

### Increase in People Covered by Private Health Insurance, 1999-2007

High Union-Monopoly States: -3.0%  
Low Union-Monopoly States: +6.3%

Source: Census Bureau

### Growth in Non-Farm, Private-Sector Jobs, 1997-2007

High Union-Monopoly States: 6.4%  
Low Union-Monopoly States: 19.5%

Source: BLS

### 2007 Cost of Living-Adjusted Disposable Income Per Capita

High Union-Monopoly States: \$29,699  
Low Union-Monopoly States: \$33,542

Sources: BEA, Missouri Economic  
Research & Information Center

By a wide array of measures, employees in the 10 states where union monopoly-bargaining power is greatest are faring

significantly worse than employees in the 10 states with the lowest monopoly-bargaining density.