

Localities Brace Themselves For H.R.413/S.1611

Big Labor-Appeasing GOP Politicians Abetting Obama Power Grab

This winter, state and local elected officials around the country are expressing their serious concerns about a proposed new federal mandate foisting union "exclusive representation" (monopoly bargaining) on state and local police, firefighters, and other public-safety employees nationwide.

The legislation pending in the U.S. Congress, H.R.413/S.1611, is cynically mislabeled by proponents as the "Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act," but in reality it would incite conflict between government agencies and employees and hurt taxpayers, many local officials charge.

For example, just last month, the supervisors of Yavapai County in central Arizona wrote to their U.S. representative, Democrat Ann Kilpatrick, and GOP Sens. John McCain and Jon Kyl to warn them the legislation would "place restrictions on counties that prohibit managing employees efficiently"

"I don't think it's the federal government's business what we're doing with our local government," supervisors Chairman Chip Davis told his local newspaper. "It also hamstring us."

Late last year, Charleston, W.Va., Mayor Danny Jones was even more blunt in a newspaper interview, starkly predicting the legislation could "bankrupt" his city and adding:

"It's going to change things. The relationship [between the city and the police union] will become adversarial. . . . If you look around the states, the most unionized states are the ones that are most broke."

Dozens of Republicans in Congress Greasing Skids For Government Union Kingpins

One key reason why some observers regard H.R.413/S.1611 as nearly a fait accompli, despite intense grass-roots opposition, is that dozens of Capitol Hill Republicans like Buck McKeon (Calif.) and John Kline (Minn.) have pushed such legislation in the past.

Mr. McKeon was previously ranking minority member of the House Education and Labor Committee, and Mr. Kline now holds that position.

But despite the wrongheaded and futile efforts by Mr. McKeon, Mr. Kline, and many other GOP politicians to appease Big Labor by going along with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), and the Obama Administration on this issue, the battle is not over yet.

Thanks to the ongoing financial and moral support of the 2.5 million National Right to Work Committee members and supporters, Committee

staff have since late 2008 succeeded in getting more and more groups and individuals actively involved in the fight against federal police/fire monopoly-bargaining legislation.

While organizations representing the interests of local governments and public-safety departments, such as the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), have opposed this scheme for years, members of Congress are now hearing much more from local public officials, thanks largely to Committee staffers' leadership.

And the Committee ranks available to fight H.R.413/S.1611 grew dramatically in 2009 as a result of mounting public concern about the "Card-Check" Forced-Unionism Bill (H.R.1409/S.560) and other higher-profile Big Labor power grabs before Congress.


Firefighters Union Czar: 'In Spite of Our Best Efforts,' Measure Hasn't Passed Yet

The fact that H.R.413/S.1611 is facing unexpectedly stiff grass-roots resistance was recently confirmed by none other than Harold Schaitberger, czar of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF/AFL-CIO) and the acknowledged leader of Big Labor efforts to get this legislation enacted.

In a late December letter to IAFF District vice presidents and other IAFF union officials, Mr. Schaitberger conceded that the union's lobbying machine had just tried without success to get H.R.413 attached onto H.R.3326, the "must-pass" Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill.

According to Mr. Schaitberger, this did not happen, "in spite of our best efforts," because a number of senators who have up to now supported police/fire monopoly-bargaining legislation vowed to oppose attaching it to H.R.3326.

"While Mr. Schaitberger and his cohorts are sure to try again soon to sneak the Police/Fire Monopoly-Bargaining Bill through Congress, their failure to do so up to now is encouraging," commented Committee President Mark Mix.

"Right to Work supporters still face an uphill battle against this power grab. But the battle is winnable." 



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In their quest to federalize union monopoly-bargaining control over state and local public-safety employees, Big

Labor Democrats Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid have all too many GOP collaborators on Capitol Hill.