



Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on December 22, 2012

the same thing in Alabama, and Volkswagen and Nissan Motor Co. began assembling automobiles in Tennessee. Meanwhile, two of the Big Three automobile companies in Detroit declared bankruptcy and had to be rescued by Uncle Sam.

The results in the workplace support Snyder's comments. In the past 30 years, total employment in right-to-work states grew by 71 percent, while employment in non-right-to-work states expanded less than half as much, a mere 32 percent. The differences are even more dramatic for the past decade. Since 2001, right-to-work states added 2.4 percent more workers, while employment in other states actually declined by 3.4 percent. During the same period, wages rose in right-to-work states by 12.5 percent, compared to 3.1 percent in union states.

No wonder that a whole bunch of people have been voting with their feet. Between 2000 and 2010, five million people moved from compulsory union states to right-to-work states. I don't know if they all found jobs, but I'll bet most of them did. So it appears that right-to-work is not only good for business, it's good for workers, too.

The defeat in Michigan has to be a tremendous letdown for the United Auto Workers. The union was formed in the state and at one time had more than one million members. Today, its national membership is down to about 380,000. Now that workers in Michigan there can opt out of the union and know that they will still keep their job, UAW numbers — and revenue — are bound to decline even further.

Still, until recently, the right-to-work movement was pretty moribund. Prior to this year, Oklahoma was the last state to pass such legislation. And that was more than a decade ago — way back in 2001.

But that's when union leaders made a huge mistake. Confident of their support in Washington, they tried to get Congress to pass "card-check" legislation. The measure would have done away with a secret ballot for elections on whether to unionize. Thanks to conservative gains, especially in the House of Representatives, the measure never got approved.

So then they tried another approach. They filed suit against Boeing Corp. for having the unmitigated gall to build an aircraft assembly plant in South Carolina, a right-to-work state.

Lafe Solomon, a pro-union lawyer whom Barack Obama appointed general counsel to the National Labor Relations Board, issued a complaint against Boeing for what he called an "unfair labor" practice. Public reaction to this union/Washington gambit was extremely unfavorable. Prior to 2008, Gallup polls showed 60 percent approval of unions in America. That number had been pretty consistent going back 30 years.

But in 2009, the approval number had fallen to 48 percent. Today, it's only 52 percent. So it should come as no surprise that more and more states want to jump on the right-to-work bandwagon. The National Right to Work Committee reports that in the past two years, right-to-work legislation has been submitted in 19 states. The measures have passed in two of them, Indiana and Michigan.

In Washington, Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) said he will introduce the National Right to Work Act in the new Congress soon after it convenes. I'm sure Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) will make certain it never comes to a vote on the Senate floor — at least not next year.

But it's impossible not to see which way the wind is blowing. And once enough Americans support freedom of choice in the workplace and see how it benefits them, maybe they'll want the same thing for their healthcare — and even the education of their children.



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So don't despair, conservatives. If right-to-work can pass in Michigan, pro-freedom legislation is possible almost anywhere. Sooner or later, even in Washington, D.C.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

***Chip Wood** was the first news editor of The Review of the News and also wrote for American Opinion, our two predecessor publications. He is now the geopolitical editor of Personal Liberty Digest, where his Straight Talk column appears weekly. This article first appeared in [PersonalLiberty.com](#) and has been reprinted with permission.*



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