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Right to Work Making a Comeback

In more than half of the 50 states, a worker has the option of not joining a union in order to hold a job. In those states where such an elementary freedom exists, the economic condition is more vibrant than in states where union membership, once it is gained at a place of business, is mandatory.

Indiana legislators want to make their state the newest right to work state. But state law requires two-thirds of the 100 House members to be in session before business can be conducted. The current makeup at the Indiana state house has 60 Republicans seven short of the two-thirds quorum mandated in state law and 40

Democrats. So, because enough Democrats who are customarily in Labor's back pocket decided to stay away from their jobs, the plan to enact right to work legislation has been stymied. The tactic is reminiscent of Wisconsin's Democrat state senators fleeing to Illinois to stymie legislation in their state earlier this year. Eventually, the Wisconsin senators did not succeed.

Coincidentally, a group calling itself "The Center for Union Facts" (CUF) has placed a full-page ad in the *New York Times* promoting the Employee Rights Act. Likening conditions where unionism is compulsory in our country to the condition of workers in totalitarian North Korea, the ad states in part, "Fewer than 10 percent of employees in unions voted to join their union. In most cases, the employees who voted for the union are dead or gone." What they mean is that the choice given the states regarding compulsory union was acted upon decades ago and the workers who voted to have the union represent them are no longer working.

In Washington, Congress is considering the Employee Rights Act sponsored by Representative Tim Scott (R-S.C.) and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). The measure would give employees a chance to vote in a secret ballot every three years on whether they want to continue being represented by their current union. In support of this Act and in hopes of enlightening many more Americans about the power held by unions over many Americans, CUF plans to place more print ads and also display its message on cable TV stations. "This country needs to update labor laws to give employees more democratic rights on the job," said CUF executive director Rick Berman.

Expect Big Labor to use all its resources, including the dues received from many workers who would rather be union-free, to maintain its grip on millions of working people.





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