

Right to Work Heads to Indiana



[Freedumb In America Today](#)

Dear Friends,

This would be an excellent Educational piece for those who do not currently understand how detrimental the "Union" is to America's weak economy-in-general and with regard to the "Public-Sector Unions" specifically – how completely subversive to the middle-class and American's economic freedom!

Robert



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In 22 states in the Union, workers have the freedom under "Right-to-Work" laws to decide whether or not to pay union dues, and now Indiana is poised to become the twenty-third state on that list, bringing the workers there renewed hope in an economy that has seen few glimmers of light.

Last week, Indiana's House and Senate [passed a right-to-work bill](#) after weeks of political maneuvering by pro-union politicians hoping to stop the proposal in its tracks. Today, the legislation returns to the state's Senate for a final vote, and Governor Mitch Daniels

(R) has promised to sign the bill into law. Meanwhile, [a dozen labor unions have protested the measure](#), with threats to "occupy" the Super Bowl to be held in Indianapolis next week. Nationally, right-to-work states have become a target, as well. Last year, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) took aim at the Boeing Corporation for its decision to locate a new factory in South Carolina, a right-to-work state. The NLRB attempted to stop Boeing from making fundamental decisions about where to do business -- ultimately, it [dropped the case](#) after union negotiators reached a deal that benefited their members in a union state.

Proponents of Indiana's measure -- which protects workers from being fired for not paying union dues -- say that the law will help the state attract more businesses and jobs, spurring economic growth. And there's data that proves it. Heritage's James Sherk [writes](#) that right-to-work states have lower unemployment rates (9.2 percent) than states without right-to-work laws (9.9 percent). And though critics say that could be a result of regional differences (right-to-work states are mostly in the South and West), research comparing counties across state lines shows that, "The share of manufacturing jobs in counties in right-to-work states is one-third higher than in adjacent counties in non-right-to-work states," as [Sherk explains](#).

It's understandable that states would want the benefits that right to work brings, but it's also understandable why unions oppose it so strongly. When Idaho and Oklahoma passed right-to-work laws, union membership fell 15 percent. Likewise, all the dues the unions collect plummeted right along with their membership. Sherk writes that in Indiana, right to work would save private-sector workers \$18.4 million a year. In union-stronghold Michigan, where some are pushing for the law, workers would save \$46.4 million a year. And though unions claim that right to work undermines their ability to keep wages high -- truly the bread-and-butter of the union movement -- most studies show that right-to-work laws have little effect on wages in either direction.

All that said, while workers are rejecting unions, they still want their voices heard in the workplace. Sherk [explains](#) how systems like these can operate in non-union workplaces: Many employees (and employers) would like employee involvement (EI) programs and work groups in which workers and supervisors can meet to discuss workplace issues. These programs can take many forms. Examples include self-directed work teams, safety

committees, and production committees. The essential element is advancing employee interests through employee involvement.

Polls show that 60 percent of workers prefer EI programs to improve working conditions over either more government regulations or labor unions. Examples of effective EI programs that advance worker interests abound.

The trouble is that current law prohibits non-union employers and employees to work together to improve working conditions. Sherk writes that Congress banned these kinds of programs in order to prevent companies from creating and negotiating with employer-dominated "company unions" to fight off organizing drives -- a senseless prohibition today given that few workers want to unionize, anyhow.

Employee involvement programs can improve working conditions, help companies attract valuable employees, and create an environment that's beneficial to the workers -- and to the company. Congress should give employees and employers this kind of flexibility. And in states where employees are still forced to pay union dues, governments ought to give their employees the right to work without fear of big labor reprisal.



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