

“RIGHT TO WORK”

Submitted by Retiree Chairman Ted Fleming

Major changes in labor laws in our state and all across the country are being pushed to weaken or cripple labor unions' collective bargaining rights. The Chamber of Commerce, along with many state and local politicians, support this union busting legislation. What's even more frightening is that all the Republican candidates running for president also agree with and support the Chamber and the other “RTW” proponents on this issue.

It's called “right to work” and it remains a mystery why anyone who works for a living would remotely consider voting for such a devastating piece of legislation. However, I have been told that there are some among us who think this would be good for our state.

“Right to Work” legislation is designed to destroy Unions, reduce wages of workers and Encourage Corporate greed. I came to Ohio from a right to work state to escape the poverty and economic decline that right to work laws brought to my community. I know what it did to Unions and Union members families –the wages of non-union workers came down as well. Once the union was all but paralyzed, the Company's didn't have to compete with Union scale wages and benefits so wages declined. The only families that benefited from right to work were Corporate CEOs and their families – at the expense of cheap labor from their workers.

Indiana's Chamber of Commerce claims that the passage of a “RTW” law will lead to higher income for Indiana residents. The report goes on to say that these higher incomes will come about from more businesses relocating to Indiana due to “lower wage costs”.

This kind of logic by Right to Work proponents makes no sense and is contradictory. They claim that we need to lower wages of workers in order to improve incomes. That's right – **lower the wages of workers in order to improve incomes**. Whose income do you think they are referring to? It's sure not the workers of Indiana, especially not the unionized workers! You must listen carefully to what these folks are saying – don't be fooled. They promote “RTW” as freedom to pay union dues or not to pay. The right to chose, Sounds like freedom to me. Oh, but let's look deeper at the things they are not telling the public. They fail to mention that the Union must represent all the Workers, not just the dues paying members. The Union cannot deny them any benefit or contractual right that the dues payers receive or are entitled to. That's the law, that's the freedom ... the freedom to “FREELOAD” on the backs of others. This creates problems in the work force as you might imagine. It destroys morale and soon no one pays dues. I have yet to see the fairness in this type of labor law. As I said earlier, it's a mystery to me why any worker would support this legislation. However it is no mystery what will happen if the “right to work” law passes. Unions will lose members along with financial resources and they will disappear. Unions are no different than any other organization. They cannot operate without the funds and resources to negotiate collective bargaining agreements or enforce them. And the reality is, this will lead to lower wages for all workers, Union and non Union alike. This is what the Chamber of Commerce said is needed to attract more business, “Cheap wages for workers and higher income for CEO's”.

Right to work is bad for workers everywhere, union and non union!