

Just the Facts on Right to Work for Less

Right to Work: What is it?

In 1947, the United States Congress amended the National Labor Relations Act to allow states to make union shops illegal in their state. In other words, Right to Work laws make it illegal for unions to equally collect fees from all members for services that the law requires them to provide.

Michigan has never seen the need for right to work laws and continues to stick to the original intent of the Labor Relations Act. Michigan employers and unions together usually decide that all workers at the company should pay their fair share of dues.

Right to Work: Who's Behind It?

Right to work is supported by a nationwide, radical right-wing organization named the National Right to Work Committee. The committee includes:

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Grover Norquist of the anti-union Alliance for Worker Freedom
- Former indicted Congressman Tom DeLay
- Wal-Mart Corporation
- For-Profit Unionbusters – big money consultants and lawyers
- Holland Coors of the Coors beer dynasty
- Dick and Betsy DeVos

Ask yourself why these powerful people and organizations want to weaken unions in Michigan and make us a Right to Work for Less state...

<u>Economic Indicators</u>	<u>Michigan</u>	<u>RTW States</u>
Average Annual Wages	\$39,443	\$31,832
Average Weekly Wages	\$776	\$637
Percent of private sector workers with pensions	51.4%	44.4%
Percent without health insurance	11.6%	15.4%

National Elections

While nationwide Democrats receive 49% of the vote and Republicans receive 49%, union households vote 74% Democratic. The right wing knows that they will prevail in elections if unions are weakened.

Right to Work: Bad for Michigan's Working Families

- Michigan workers have higher annual pay than workers in right to work states - \$7,600 higher and more workers have health insurance in Michigan than in right to work states.
- The rate of workplace deaths is 41 percent higher in states with right to work, where unions can't speak up on behalf of workers.
- 70 percent of union workers are covered by a defined benefit pension plan versus only 16 percent of non union workers!
- Right to work states have a higher poverty rate (12.5 %), compared to other states (10%). Also, infant mortality rates are 16 percent higher in right to work states.
(All data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, BLS, and the U.S. Census)

RTW Myth #1 Right to Work will help Michigan's manufacturing crisis

Fact: The idea that RTW for less gives states a competitive edge is not true, especially in today's global economy. Between 1994 and 2005, North Carolina, a right to work state, suffered manufacturing job loss, both in absolute numbers and the decline in the overall share of manufacturing employment that was far greater than that of Michigan. Between June and July 2007, North Carolina (a right to work for less state) lost more jobs than any other state in the nation including Michigan.

Oklahoma, the only state to go right to work in 46 years, has now lost over 22,000 manufacturing jobs after RTW took effect.

RTW Myth #2 Right to Work will help Michigan's economy

Fact: RTW for less will hurt consumer spending in Michigan, which is why the Small Business Association in Oklahoma opposed right to work in that state. Union membership means higher wages, higher unionization within a community means consumers have more to spend. That's good for Michigan's economy and local business, especially those in retail and service.

RTW Myth#3 Workers support Right to Work

Fact: Very few union workers want RTW for less. Some members might be mad they lost a grievance or are otherwise unhappy with their union. The large majority of union members know that a unified organization is stronger and will produce a better deal for working families. Most members don't want to work next to someone who doesn't pay their fair share.

For more information on Right to Work for Less visit: www.miaflcio.org.

