



Laborers' International Union of North America

Midwest Regional Office

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Illinois Legislative Update

May 15, 2015

Right-to-Work (for Less) Rejected

The Illinois House of Representatives resoundingly rejected the centerpiece of Gov. Rauner's so-called "Turnaround Agenda" yesterday when a Right-to-Work (for Less) bill did not receive one vote. Every Democrat and one Republican, **State Rep. Raymond Poe (R-Springfield)**, voted 'no' on the bill. The final vote was 0 'yes,' 72 'no' and 37 'present'.

More than two dozen Democrats spoke passionately about protecting the rights of unions and the middle class while Republicans complained about how the bill came to be considered. The "argument" heard most often from the Republicans was that bill was not drafted by Gov. Rauner, so it could not be his plan.

In truth, Rauner has been campaigning all over the state for months seeking support in dozens of communities for his concept of Right to Work (for Less) "zones." His scheme, which has consistently and repeatedly been rejected by the courts over the last 50 years, is to allow counties, cities and even smaller units of local government to prohibit provisions in union contracts that require workers in bargaining units to, at least, pay their "fair share" toward the cost of union representation.

Since Rauner would not introduce his legislation – even though he indicated he'd had it written – **House Speaker Michael Madigan (D-Chicago)** carefully crafted a bill reflecting each point Rauner had publicly made time and again and introduced it as **HB 1285**.

While a 'present' vote does not help a bill pass, Labor asked members from both parties to clearly reject any attempt to weaken workers' rights by voting 'no.' This would clearly show who truly opposes the idea of Right to Work (for Less). Unfortunately, it is difficult to tell since among the Republican 'present' votes were two G.O.P. representatives who'd introduced their own Right to Work (for Less) bills. Among the Republicans who did not vote at all included **State Reps. John Anthony (R-Morris), John Cabello (R-Loves Park) and Bill Mitchell (R-Forsythe)** who said in debate that he opposed Right to Work (for Less) laws.

Dozens of LiUNA leaders traveled to the Capitol Thursday to lobby against the bill because:

- Workers in Right to Work (for Less) states earn \$5,900 less per year than workers in states like Illinois
 - Workers in construction are estimated to earn 22% less in Right to Work (for Less) states
- Workers in Right to Work (for Less) states are 25% less likely to have health insurance than workers in states like Illinois
- States with Right to Work (for Less) laws are less safe; they have 54% more on-the-job deaths than in states like Illinois

If you haven't already, please call the Democrat state representatives (and Rep. Poe) in your area and thank them for protecting the wages and benefits of all working people in Illinois.

IDOT Releases Road Construction Plan

One of the other issues LiUNA lobbied this week was for more road funding. As it turns out, they did so on the day that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) released its next Multi-Year Plan for transportation construction projects and it showed the incredible need for more funding.

While Fiscal Year 2016, which starts on July 1, 2015, will see a decent-sized \$1.85 billion construction program, the remaining five years will only see \$1.3 billion in funding on average. That figure will be the lowest since 1999 if no funds are added. And IDOT projects that the current level of 83% of state roads being in "acceptable" condition will fall to only 62% in 2021. The link to the IDOT plan can be found at <http://www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/transportation-management/transportation-improvement-programs-multi-modal-transportation-improvement-program/index>

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LIUNA!

Feel the Power

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