



Vote Alert

July 25, 2007

To: All C&T Locals

Attached below, for everyone's information, are details about a recent vote taken to eliminate card check from all Collective Bargaining Agreements that could impact our future organizing. You should know who voted for it and who voted against it, and remember that in the next elections. You should also share this with your membership.

In Unity,

Ralph V. Maly
Vice President

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Late last week, the Senate and House rejected amendments aimed at nullifying the legality of the card-check procedure, a key component of the Employee Free Choice Act.

While CWA has been urging Congress to build the positive labor relations that card-check produces into the architecture of American labor law by passing the Employee Free Choice Act, right-wing lawmakers sought Thursday night to exterminate this procedure as a device for attaining union recognition.

On Thursday evening, Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC) offered a surprise anti-labor amendment to an unrelated bill pending on the floor, the Higher Education Access Act, H.R. 2669.

The DeMint amendment would have changed the National Labor Relations Act so as to invalidate the recognition of a union as an exclusive employee representative if it had not been chosen by a secret-ballot election.

Senators scuttled this Pearl Harbor-like attack by a vote of 54-42. No Democratic Senator voted for this anti-labor proposal.

Of special significance, six Republican Senators voted against the DeMint amendment, raising the possibility that CWA's lobbying campaign on behalf of the Employee Free Choice Act is making progress on the GOP side of the aisle. The six Republican Senators who voted against the anti-card-check amendment are, in alphabetical order, Norm Coleman (MN), Susan Collins (ME), Gordon Smith (OR), Olympia Snowe (ME), Arlen Specter (PA) and George Voinovich (OH). From this group, only Senator Specter had voted for the Employee Free Choice Act a month earlier, on June 26, when the Senate voted 51-48 to terminate a filibuster against the legislation. Sixty (60) votes are required to end "extended debate."

That same night,, in what appeared to be a coordinated attack, Congressman Mark Souder (R-IN) offered an amendment to the fiscal 2008 Labor-Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill, H.R. 3403, that paralleled the DeMint amendment. Prior to his election to the Senate in 2004, then Congressman Jim DeMint served in the House with Congressman Souder for six years.

The Souder amendment would have prevented the use of funds by the National Labor Relations Board to recognize a union as an exclusive employee representative if it had not been chosen in a secret-ballot election.

The House rejected the anti-card-check amendment by a vote of 255-167.

Unfortunately, three Democrats voted for the anti-card-check amendment. They are Congressmen Dan Boren (OK), Gene Taylor (MS), and Mike McIntyre (NC). Congressmen Boren and Taylor voted against the Employee Free Choice Act when the House passed the bill, 241-185 on March 1. However, Congressman McIntyre voted for the Employee Free Choice Act on March 1, but then voted last week for the Souder amendment that would have denied the card-check procedure that he voted for four months earlier.

In contrast to the three Democrats who voted for the Souder amendment, 31 House Republicans voted against it.

These GOP lawmakers are Don Young (AK), Robert Aderholt (AL), Chris Shays (CN), Ilena Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Lincoln Diaz-Balart (FL), Mario Diaz-Balart (FL), Judy Biggert (IL), Tim Johnson (IL), Rodney Alexander (LA), Peter Hoekstra (MI), Candice Miller (MI), Thaddeus McCotter (MI), Sam Graves (MO), JoAnn Emerson (MO), Jon Porter (NV), Frank LoBiondo (NJ) and Jim Saxton (NJ).

Also, Chris Smith (NJ), Mike Ferguson (NJ), Peter King (NY), Vito Fossella (NY), John McHugh (NY), Jim Walsh (NY), Randy Kuhl (NY), Steve LaTourette (OH), Ralph Regula (OH), Phil English (PA), Jim Gerlach (PA), Tim Murphy (PA), Dave Reichert (WA), and Shelley Moore Capito (WV).

Twelve Representatives were absent when the House voted on the Souder amendment. They are Mary Bono (R-CA), Corrine Brown (D-FL), Barbara Cubin (R-WY), Danny Davis (D-IL), Jo Ann Davis (R-VA), Bob Filner (D-CA), Jane Harman (D-CA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Bobby Jindal (R-LA), Jim Marshall (D-GA), Ron Paul (R-TX), and Tom Tancredo (R-CO).

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Communications Workers of America

Our mission is to stop the destruction of our Union by our employers. It is to protect and better the lives of our retired, current and future members. We will re-grow our Union by educating, strengthening and uniting our membership in order to impact our employers through strategic use of our power.

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