

American Farm Bureau among happy marksmen

Union labor bill shot down again

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Reed Larson, president of the National Right to Work Committee, has called Big Labor's failure last week to revive their so-called labor law "reform" bill "yet another victory in the ongoing battle between the public interest and the firmly entrenched system of political payoffs to union bosses."

"The inability of Big Labor and its allies in the Senate even to move this bill from subcommittee," Larson said, "can be directly attributed to the flood of cards and letters that Americans wrote earlier this year opposing Big Labor's phony 'reform' bill."

"Senators who had wrongly supported this unpopular bill in June didn't want to violate their constituents' trust again in October - with the election only a month away."

The misnamed labor law "reform" bill - buried in committee last June after a record-setting six unsuccessful attempts to silence debate against it - threatened to rise from its grave on Monday, September 25th, when Sen. Harrison Williams (D-N.J.) announced plans to introduce what he claimed was

a "bare-bones" version of the unpopular bill.

The American Farm Bureau Federation and other agricultural groups were among those who urged defeat of the measure.

But the scheduled resurrection soon proved to be futile, as senators on both sides of the aisle rose up in protest.

Even before the senators uttered their public protest, however, the groundwork had been laid for the bill's reinterment.

Four days before Sen. Williams made public his intent to rush the new labor law "reform" bill to the Senate for a vote, the National Right to Work Committee responded to early warning signals from Capitol Hill and alerted hundreds of its key leaders nationwide by personal phone calls and memoranda. The Committee's telephone bank was also primed and set to sound the alarm for activists in eight targeted states, should the bill have emerged from committee.

Two days after Williams went public with his plan, the Right to Work Committee issued a press release attacking the move as "a pure flim-flam." Just another effort, the Committee said, to push a bill advertised as

being merely procedural, but which in fact was "nothing more than an attempt by union officials to subject hundreds of thousands of unwilling workers to the dictates of unwanted labor unions."

The following day - Thursday, September 28th - the Committee sent letters accompanied by a detailed legal analysis on the latest version of the bill to thousands of editors and other journalists from coast to coast.

In the midst of the Right to Work Committee's activities, senators who had successfully led opposition to the earlier so-called labor law "reform" bill, quickly countered attempts to sneak a new version of the same bill through the Senate.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, (R-UT), leader of the filibuster that had buried the original bill in committee, vowed a renewed effort to kill the "revised" version of the widely protested bill. Meanwhile, Sen. Richard Lugar, (R-IN), a co-leader of the 19-day filibuster, issued a bulletin alerting Americans who had voiced protest to the union power-grab attempt earlier this year.

By Thursday, September 28th, the bill's chances of passage seemed doubtful.

Williams' projected schedule to "mark up" the revised bill in committee on Wednesday had already run aground.

That afternoon, while talking with a Senate colleague, Capitol Hill sources report that Williams tipped his hand by leaving his microphone open and inadvertently broadcasting the bill's true status across the speakers in every senator's office.

Two high-ranking organized labor officials had been scheduled to meet with him, Williams "confided" (he thought) to a colleague, and deliver the 60-plus names of senators that they claimed would vote to cut off debate if the revised bill were confronted with another filibuster. The two labor officials never showed, Williams whispered, and he was therefore forced to cancel action on the bill.

Another unimpeachable source from Capitol Hill revealed that Senate Majority Leader, Robert Byrd, (D-W.V.), had his own head count taken, not trusting the count of Senate Majority Whip Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) who figures on the legislation had been notoriously inflated throughout the June "cloture" attempts to kill

debate. This time Sen. Cranston laid claim to votes poll, however, put the count in the low 50's, meaning that more senators than ever are opposed to cutting off debate on the union-backed legislation.

Looking back on organized labor's attempts last week to resurrect the buried bill, Larson commented, "It's appalling that Big Labor would try to unearth a bill

that so many Americans so firmly opposed. Last week the bill was a zombie - dead, but still rising and threatening the rights of millions of American workers.

"We expect they'll try to resurrect the bill again next session," said Larson. "But if they haven't corrected its basic compulsory unionism flaws, we'll alert America all over again."

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