



Wisconsin State Legislative Board News

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen

Monday March 9th signed so-called right-to-work legislation banning requirements that private-sector workers pay union fees. In a matter of weeks, Republicans pushed through the measure making Wisconsin the 25th state with such a law, giving a victory to manufacturers in the state and a blow to organized labor and some construction firms, which had opposed the measure.

A new fight now looms — GOP leaders in the Legislature on Monday said they would pursue changes to the state's 84-year-old prevailing wage law, which requires set wages for workers on public works jobs.

The president and owner of Hoffman Construction Co. of Black River Falls told lawmakers last month that the change could harm his business, since a union for heavy equipment operators runs training programs that provide him with workers.



"Should any political party attempt to abolish Social Security, unemployment insurance, and eliminate labor laws and farm programs, you would not hear of that party again in our political history. There is a tiny splinter group, of course, that believes you can do these things, but their number is negligible and they are stupid."

- President Dwight Eisenhower

In a statement issued late Monday, Hoffman said he was considering adding workers in Minnesota now because of the right-to-work change, prevailing wage proposals and doubts about long-term funding for road building in Wisconsin.



President Barack Obama accused Walker of claiming "victory over working Americans," and says Walker should do more to help working-class Americans "by taking meaningful action to raise their wages and offer them ... paid leave. "Obama says the new law is part of "a sustained, coordinated assault on unions, led by powerful interests and their allies in government."

By Jason Stein and Meg Kissinge

WISLB Publications Committee: Chuck Schulz, Anthony Dimond, and Jessica Cole





Anthony Dimond- Chairman and Adam Makurat 2nd Vice Chairman of the WISLB Testify Against Wisconsin AB61 Assembly Committee on Labor March 2, 2015

Anthony Dimond - *“Wisconsin is an “at will state,” which means the employer can fire any worker at any time, for any reason. This creates a potentially hostile and vindictive work atmosphere in many businesses. Unions help to protect workers from this sort of treatment.”- “Let us not forget that without the workers, the work would not get done and the profits would not be made. Our workers should not be treated as liabilities by their employers, but as assets.”*



Adam Makurat – *“The support I have received from my fellow members and the support I have given them has been the foundation of our organization for 142 years, before I was ever a member. Our organization had its first meeting in a private residence in 1863 in Marshall, Michigan. The original document drafted that day spelled out the values that our members still promote this very day.” -*

“Let's all remember that this is a free country. You don't have to work at a Union Shop. You can work anywhere you like as long as you can find a job that will hire you. If you choose to work at a Union Shop you need to contribute to the negotiated contract that you will be compensated by.”

Assembly Debate for 19 hours Over Right-to-Work

The right-to-work law was passed Friday by an Assembly divided along partisan lines. All 62 Republicans on hand voted for the labor measure and all 35 Democrats voted against. The Senate passed the measure, 17-15, with one Republican voting against it and the rest for it.





Under federal law, unions are required to represent everyone in a work unit, even those who don't belong to the labor group. The only exception to that rule would be advisory "members only" unions, with which employers do not have a legal duty to bargain.

Statement from Senator Larson on Walker Signing RTW Legislation

Governor Walker flip-flops on RTW, signs the bill, and refuses to talk to reporters in process

MADISON – The following is a statement from Senator Chris Larson (D-Milwaukee) on Governor Walker signing the highly controversial and regressive “Right to Work” legislation this morning, essentially silencing the voices of thousands of Wisconsin workers and small business owners, who opposed this bill and pleaded with the governor to veto a bill that attacks all of Wisconsin’s working families.



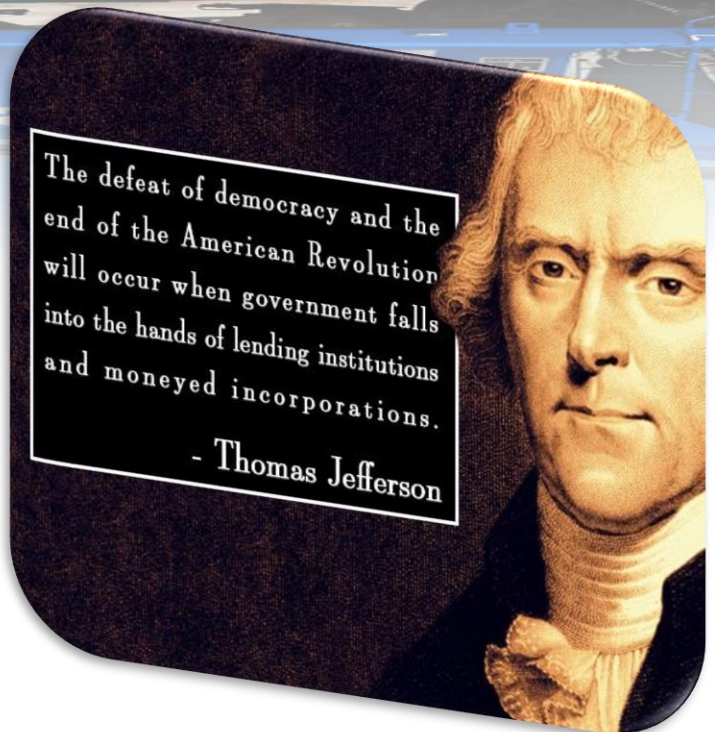
“I am extremely disappointed that Governor Walker signed this horribly regressive bill into law today, which will have a negative impact on Wisconsin’s working families. Less than one year ago, Governor Walker called RTW a distraction, not a priority, and said that he would do everything in his power to prevent the bill from getting to his desk. But now, shortly after being sworn into his second term, he flip flopped on the issue and betrayed the people that elected him. Worse, he refused to listen to thousands of citizens and hundreds of business leaders who oppose this law. To add injury to insult, after signing RTW into law, the governor refused to answer any questions from the media. Unfortunately, this refusal to take ownership for his backwards priorities is becoming an all too common frustration from the citizens of Wisconsin.

“Let me quickly remind everyone what we saw during the senate committee process. We know that most, if not all, of the speakers in favor of this dangerous bill had received money from the ultra-conservative Bradley Foundation. We also know there were no local chambers of commerce, individual businesses, or union workers who came out in favor of RTW. In fact, in the



Senate alone, there were 1,751 speakers and registrants in opposition to the bill and less than 3% in support.

“The facts are, states with RTW laws have lower worker wages, diminished worker health and safety, and, at the same time, increased poverty and workplace fatalities. In addition, eight of the 12 states with the highest unemployment rates are RTW states, What’s more, by WMC’s own admission, less than 7% of their members came out in favor of this regressive legislation. Wisconsin businesses recognize how damaging this bill is. We even heard from a coalition of more than 440 local businesses who oppose this law and know firsthand the value of working in collaboration with workers not against them.



“We also know that the governor and Republicans were unable and unwilling to answer important questions about provisions of the bill – such as how players on the Green Bay Packers and Milwaukee Brewers (who belong to unions) would be prevented from being charged with a class A misdemeanor, which could lead to up to nine months in jail and up to a \$10,000 fine. They refused to tell the public if this legislation would jeopardize federal transportation dollars. Under federal law, transit employees are required to maintain certain benefits, like collective bargaining. It is unclear if RTW will violate federal law as some transit systems are operated privately and employ private labor unions. They even refused to share who in our state had requested this legislation.



“So once again, Republicans have decided to fast-track legislation, and put the priorities of Koch brothers, regressive think tanks, and corporate special interests before the people of Wisconsin.

“This is a sad day for Wisconsin and puts us in the race to the bottom. The governor’s actions are simply wrong for Wisconsin.”



SENATOR LENA C. TAYLOR



On Wednesday, I, along, with my Democratic colleagues, stood united with Wisconsin workers, families, and businesses against legislation that further harmed our state's private unions. Members of the Senate spent nearly ten hours debating the passage of SB 44, a bill to prohibit as a condition of employment membership in a labor organization or payments to a labor organization and providing a penalty. Taking aim at union dues, the Republican controlled Senate ignored thousands of workers, employers and supporters who implored them to allow for the existence and

freedom to work in "union shops". Unwilling to compromise, or listen to calls for a grace period to give businesses time to come into compliance, all but one Republican, voted for passage and moved the bill to be taken up by the Assembly next week.

