

Wednesday, March 7th, 2007

**New Worst Bill:** This Congress is rapidly stacking up contenders for the "Worst Passed Bill of the Year Award." Up until now, it was probably H.R. 4, a bill that would eliminate the one market-based part of Medicare that is actually working to reduce costs and replace it with a bureaucrat-managed non-market system. But, that terrible policy was eclipsed last week by the passage of what many of us call the "Worker Intimidation Act of 2007." This bill (H.R. 800) would replace secret ballots in union elections with a system where no election is actually held. Instead, union organizers could coerce workers to sign "cards" using public pressure and intimidation tactics. These cards are not secret and could certify a union at a workplace without any election at all. It's outrageous!

Why would the union bosses push so hard to eliminate free and fair secret ballot elections? Union membership outside of government has been declining for decades. They have been losing elections in many industries all over the country. I would argue that unions have not updated their purpose or mission in sixty years and therefore they are failing to provide value to the average worker. Rather than reforming and changing to the realities of a more competitive world, they have instead decided that they will use legislative power to strip American workers of the secret ballot and rely on intimidation and threats to expand their membership.

The bill passed by a vote of 241-185. Ninety-seven percent of all Democrats in the House cosponsored the bill and all but two of them voted for it. If there was ever a question that union bosses can get their party to do anything they want no matter how outrageous, this should put that to rest. This is about as special interest driven and anti-worker as legislation can get

The good news is that the bill will probably not even be taken up in the Senate. Even if it was, the president has already announced that he would veto it and there were enough "no" votes in the House to sustain that veto. By the way, none of the major legislation passed by the new House majority has yet passed the Senate, not to mention been signed by the president.

We can take some comfort in the fact that H.R. 800 will probably never become law. But, we must remain vigilant. It is clear that the union bosses want to further deprive America's workers of choices and freedoms. They, and their allies on the other side of the aisle in Congress will not stop at this bill.

**War Funding:** I have previously written that we are likely to be voting on the \$100 billion supplemental funding request from the president for the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. In order to make the bill more palatable to the anti-war contingent in their caucus, Democratic leaders are considering adding the so called "slow bleed" withdraw provisions, which I would not support, to the bill. Further, to get the support of others in their caucus their leadership will likely add tens of billions of in unrelated spending and pork to the war funding. The war funding is for one year. But the additional spending being discussed will go on permanently in some cases. This may create a strange circumstance in which fiscal conservatives like me will vote against the spending bill in spite of my support for the war effort and many who oppose the war effort will vote to fund it because of all the unrelated spending "goodies" that are attached.

**Ben Bernanke:** I sit on both the Financial Services Committee and the Budget Committee. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Dr. Ben Bernanke, testifies at least once a year in both committees. So, I get 5 minutes to ask him questions. Below is a clip of my exchange with him last week in which I was able to discern his views on our long term federal budget challenges.

Click here:

[http://www.campbell.house.gov/files/jbtc\\_bernanke1.wmv](http://www.campbell.house.gov/files/jbtc_bernanke1.wmv)

Until next week, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell