

### *Support H.B. 6534 - An Act Concerning* **Labor Union Authorization Card Checks**

#### **Summary of proposed bill:**

Creates a union card signing authorization process (also known as "majority sign up") under the State Board of Labor Relations. When a majority of workers sign union authorization cards, the Board will certify the results.

#### **Why this bill is important:**

A majority of workers believe unions can make a difference in their lives and would join one today if they could.<sup>1</sup> But, most do not get a chance. Corporations spend billions a year to fight union organizing efforts and routinely deny workers the right to decide whether to join a union or not.<sup>2</sup> In Connecticut, in the most recent organizing of state employee workers, the Department of Public Safety used tax payer dollars to fight the Lieutenants in the State Police Department who were interested in organizing a union.

Workers who form a union by majority sign up report far less coercion from management according to studies of private sector organizing campaigns. Majority sign up is a key provision of the proposed Employee Free Choice Act pending before the U.S. Congress. As the Employee Free Choice Act covers private sector workers, HB 6534 will fix state law to allow for majority sign up for public employees.

#### **What you need to know about this bill:**

- Majority sign up is an option—it doesn't take away the option of a secret ballot.
- Majority sign up is not a new approach. For years, some private sector employers have taken the position of allowing employees to chose by majority sign up whether to have a union.
- In response to concerns that majority sign up will open up the possibility of undue pressure, note that it is illegal for anyone to coerce employees to sign a union authorization card.

For more information contact the Connecticut AFL-CIO  
860-571-6191  
John Olsen President  
Lori Pelletier, Secretary Treasurer  
Tom Carusello, Political Director



Source 1: Peter D. Hart Research Associates survey, December 2006

Source 2: Kate Bronfenbrenner, "Uneasy Terrain: The Impact of Capital Mobility on Workers, Wages and Union Organizing"

*Support S.B. 365 - An Act Concerning*

## **Captive Audience Meetings**

### **Summary of proposed bill:**

Prohibits employers from coercing employees into attending or participating in meetings for the purpose of communicating the employers' position regarding politics, religion, or labor organizing activities.

### **Why this bill is important:**

Currently, employers can, almost without limits, force workers to attend "captive-audience" meetings on work time. Most often, these meetings include exhortations by top managers that are carefully scripted to fall within the wide latitude afforded employers under U.S. law—allowing "predictions" but not "threats" of workplace closings, for example, to deter workers from choosing union representation.

Employers can fire workers for not attending "captive audience" meetings. They can impose a "no questions or comments" rule at a captive audience meeting and discipline any worker who speaks up.

Most employers, when faced with a union organizing drive, force employees to attend mandatory closed-door meetings against the union.<sup>1</sup>

### **What you need to know about this bill:**

This bill does not restrict the employers' free speech on any subject. Rather this bill allows an employee the right - when the subject of the meeting is about the employers' position on politics, religion or labor organizing - to stop listening, to walk away or not participate without facing discipline or discharge.

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### Health Care We Can Count On

The Connecticut AFL-CIO supports principles for health care reform that: control cost; gives everyone gets high quality health care; covers preventive care; allows choice of doctor; makes government the watchdog on costs, quality and fairness; requires employers, government and individuals to all share responsibility; and builds on what is best about American health care. The following bills adhere to the principles:

*Support H.B. 6600 - An Act Concerning the*

#### **Establishment of the Sustinet Plan**

**Summary of the proposed bill:** The bill would create a large self insured health plan starting by uniting dollars already spent on state employees, HUSKY and SAGA and phase in more residents over time; establishes an oversight board of directors that ensures access, improves quality and controls costs; offers a comprehensive and affordable benefit package; invests in improving the health of residents with such features as giving everyone a "medical home," public health interventions, implementation of electronic medical records; saves money for individuals and businesses and shares responsibility for costs. It is voluntary.

**Why this bill is important:** In the last six years, the cost of health insurance has gone up almost 90%, and this is not sustainable for workers or for employers. The bill is a blue print towards achieving universal health care.

*Support H.B. 6582 - An Act Establishing the*

#### **Connecticut Healthcare Partnership**

**Summary of the proposed bill:** Opens up the state employee health insurance pool to municipalities to enroll voluntarily and take advantage of the increased bargaining power and reduced administrative costs associated with a large pool.

**Why this bill is important:** This bill would provide necessary relief to our municipalities by providing them with an opportunity to save money without jeopardizing quality. Putting municipal employees in the state employee insurance pool could potentially save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

For more information, contact the Connecticut AFL-CIO 860-571-6191

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# CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

## Fact Sheet

### *Support H.B. 6545-An Act Concerning* **The Right to Organize for Certain Employees**

#### **Summary of proposed bill:**

Provides the right to organize to certain employees who are currently exempted under state law.

#### **Why this bill is important:**

This bill would eliminate the historic and senseless discrimination against certain employees who are denied the right to organize simply because of where they are employed.

#### **What you need to know about this bill:**

- The bill does not mandate that workers join a union but allows them to do so if they choose.
- New Jersey's state constitution grants organizing rights to all workers.
- Unions help to create an economy that works for all. Workers who bargain collectively earn 30 percent more than nonunion workers. In Connecticut, that translates into about \$11,613.00 dollars more in the pocket a year.<sup>1</sup> Workers in unions are 59 percent more likely to have employer-provided health coverage and four times more likely to have pensions.
- More money in workers' pockets means more economic stability for communities, especially small businesses that depend on strong consumers. Higher wages also results in higher tax revenues.

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