



BULLETIN

"Right to work" laws allows freeloading off your dues

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Major corporations and their political allies in Canada are pushing for the type of "Right to Work" laws found in most of the poorest states in the US.

Such laws make it harder for workers to form a union. They also allow workers in a unionized workplace to opt out of paying dues, while still being entitled to representation by the union and the benefits of contracts negotiated by the union using dues paid by their co-workers.

Dues evasion laws erode the resources and solidarity unions need to maintain fair wages and safe working conditions. They may temporarily boost corporate profits, but do nothing to increase employment or strengthen the economy.

Laws that allow employees to evade responsibility by skipping dues payment essentially encourage people to take something without paying for it. They're unethical.

A union is like roadside assistance for your job. The law makes a union provide that assistance to all the workers covered by the union contract. Employees who opt out of dues don't opt out of the wages, benefits and other advantages the union wins for them. Dues dodgers would have somebody else pick up the cheque.

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) is planning a campaign to keep dues evasion laws out of Canada. Watch for it this fall.

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