



National Right to Work Committee

A COALITION OF EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

May 17, 2012

RE: **Bartlett Amendment No. 182 to H.R. 4310**

POSITION: **Support**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the thousands of members and supporters of the National Right to Work Committee, I urge you to support Amendment No. 182 to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2013 (H.R. 4310). The Bartlett Amendment would help protect American workers from discriminatory union-only "Project Labor Agreements" (PLAs) on federal construction contracts.

Amendment No. 182 would forbid any federal agency from requiring contractors to sign union-favoring PLAs as a condition of winning contracts for federal construction projects. Further, it would prevent crony preferential policies that favor contractors who've forced their workers under union control.

In 2009, President Obama blatantly demonstrated union favoritism when he signed Executive Order 13502, strongly encouraging federal agencies to consider mandating anti-worker PLAs on federal construction projects exceeding \$25 million in total cost.

The fact is, union-only PLAs between public entities and contractors discriminate against independent-minded workers and contractors.

Unfortunately, state Right to Work laws don't fully protect workers from forced-unionism abuse under PLAs. While Right to Work laws protect workers from forced dues and fees, under a PLA, workers are forced under terms and conditions exclusively negotiated by union bosses.

Worse, PLAs often force contractors and their employees to "contribute" to mismanaged union pension and benefit plans even if their workers already have their own plan. And, unless those employees are willing to give up their independence altogether by joining the union, they'll likely never see the supposed "benefits" they've been forced to pay for.

By requiring union-only PLAs on taxpayer-funded projects, the federal government is essentially telling open or merit shop contractors they either turn their employees over to union boss control or forget about applying for the work. In these tough economic times especially, that's the last thing Congress should allow!

Forbidding non-union contractors and workers from projects their tax dollars help fund amounts to state-sanctioned discrimination, plain and simple. Congress should never allow

federal agencies to actively shut out or discriminate against well-qualified workers and contractors solely on the basis of union affiliation.

The fact is, union-only "Project Labor Agreements" are nothing more than an attempt by union officials to take even more power at the expense of workers and taxpayers.

Adoption of the Bartlett Amendment is critical, not just for non-union workers but for taxpayers as well. Contracts for any publicly-funded project should be awarded on merit, not on the basis of union affiliation.

Contrary to false claims by the union bosses, these union-only "Project Labor Agreements" don't do anything to ensure public construction projects are finished more quickly or efficiently.

For example, Boston's Central/Artery Tunnel Project (the notorious "Big Dig"), carried out under a "cost-saving" PLA, ended up over budget by more than \$12 billion with the completion date a decade behind schedule! Of course, federal and state taxpayers are picking up the tab for that boondoggle.

And the "no-strike" clause in the union-only PLA for the San Francisco Airport renovation didn't deter union bosses from ordering carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and painters out on strike in 1999, significantly increasing the project's price tag. In fact, studies of other union-only PLAs confirm they increase taxpayer expenses by at least 20%.

It is simple. Under PLAs, higher costs are exacted from taxpayers while individual workers are forced under monopoly union control at best and forced to pay dues or lose their jobs at worst.

By adopting the Bartlett Amendment, you would not only be protecting the rights of American workers and contractors but also defending the pocketbooks of the American taxpayers. Only Big Labor gains from union-only PLAs -- not the majority of workers and taxpayers, not the majority of businesses, and not our nation's economy.

The overwhelming majority of American workers, those who are not union members, should certainly not be denied access to the projects paid for by their taxes simply because they choose not to surrender their bargaining rights to a union boss.

In the interests of freedom, sound public policy, and the citizens of this country, I urge you to support Amendment No. 182, the Bartlett Amendment, to H.R. 4310.

Sincerely,



Mark Mix
President