

# If you think "right to work" is bad, consider the prospect of Scott Walker's Wisconsin Act 10 going national.

Editor's note: The source of this article is the January 2017 issue of Newsletter of the AFL-CIO Central New York Labor Council.

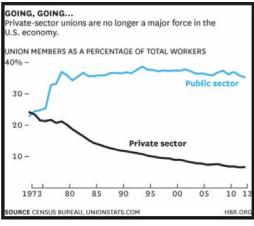
to organize. Nothing less than the survival of the labor movement is at reading and thinking about.

Right to work laws: First you must be clear as to what "right to work" is (and is not). It's marketing. It is a clever and misleading phrase that has AB-**SOLUTELY NOTHING** whatsoever to do with the right of a person to find or hold a job. It is most definitely not a general guarantee of employment to people seeking work. "Right to work" has nothing to do with hiring and the lack of such a law does not deprive anyone of the right to find and hold a job. "Right to work" is a strategy by big business and its allies to weaken or eliminate labor unions. Under "right to work," labor unions cannot require an employee to join the union or to pay dues as a condition of employment. So in effect "right to work" laws simply give an employee the right to be a "free rider" or a free loader — to enjoy the benefits and protections of union membership without paying for them. A free loader just lets co-workers pay the tab. It's a union busting technique plain and simple, and sadly it works. As of this time, there are already 26 "right to work" states (see map on page 2). Amazingly, Wisconsin and Michigan are among them.

The mindset behind "right to work" legislation makes sense when you consider the fact that a union, as the sole bargaining agent for employees, has a legal responsibility (called the duty of

the Republican Congress "on testos- sons in the bargaining unit. And that to deal with a state budget crisis, but it terone" might try to pass federal responsibility holds regardless of was union busting plain and simple. "right to work" legislation. No ques- whether the employee is a dues payer The bill made major changes to limit tion, that is a real possibility, and we or not. That's why "agency fees" came collective bargaining for most public in the labor movement and Democrats into being for public employees. Agen- employees to wages only, and the total at all levels must be ready to fight "to cy fees require employees to pay for the wage increase cannot exceed a cap the death" to safeguard workers' right representation they receive from the based on the consumer price index union but exempt them from paying the (CPI) unless specifically approved by portion of dues that funds political ac- referendum. Contracts are limited to stake. Here is some information worth tivity. But agency fees are under attack. one year and wages are frozen until They only survived the recent challenge the new contract is settled. Collective in the Fredrickson case because the Su- bargaining units must take annual preme Court had a vacancy due to An- votes to maintain certification as a untonin Scalia's death and the court dead- ion. Employers are prohibited from locked. New challenges are anxiously collecting union dues (so no payroll waiting in line for Scalia's replace- deduction) and members of collective ment, Judge Neil Gorsuch, to be ap- bargaining units are not to be required pointed. Since Judge Neil Gorsuch ap- to pay dues. It's "right to work" laws pointment is all but certain, it's safe to on steroids. In a clever divide and consay that agency fee's days are num- quer approach, local law enforcement, bered, and the equivalent of "right to fire employees, state troopers and inwork" is likely to soon come to public spectors, are exempt from these employee unions. That will change the changes. The effect of Act 10 on union employment universe for teachers and membership in Wisconsin is shown civil service employees, among others. below. The plot of union membership since the 50s (shown below) clearly shows why public employee unions are the next target. Stay tuned.

> Wisconsin's Act 10: This is the bill Governor Scott Walker and the Republican state legislature **pushed** through early in Walker's first term as



Many union members worry that fair representation) to represent all per- governor. Its purpose was supposedly



Sadly, there's more to Act 10. The bill prohibits limited term employees from being eligible for health insurance or participation in the Wisconsin Retirement System. If the Governor has declared a state of emergency, the bill authorizes appointing authorities to terminate any employees that are absent for three days without approval of the employer (Continued on page 2.)

## "right to work" is bad From page 1

or any employees that participate in any organized action to stop or slow work. The bill takes away the right to collectively bargain from a number of different public employee groups, home health care workers, family child care workers, employees of the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics, and University of Wisconsin faculty and academic staff. Act 10 does other things, but this describes its central union impact. A federal appeals court twice upheld the law as constitutional. Justice Michael Gable-



Right to works states.

or 'burdens' a legislative enactment an effort like you've never done beplaces on the collective-bargaining fore to pay attention to the politics of process, collective bargaining remains working people. It could really change a creation of legislative grace and not your life. Undoubtedly, it will.

a constitutional obligation." In fact, the right to organize into unions is considered a human right according to the Universal Declaration of Human **Rights**. Now imagine the impact on union members in New York if changes such as described above for "right to work" or a national Act 10 became federal law. That possibility is more than enough reason to up your man wrote, "No matter the limitations involvement in NYSUT and to make

#### **Retiree Council Newsletters to Publish Only 5 Times a Year**

Editor's note: This article is a summary of a notice sent by Floyd Cameron, Manager of Retiree Services, to retiree council presidents.

The Retiree Services program has worked hard to improve cost efficiencies in the overall production and delivery of retiree services, such as council newsletters. However, as result of the outcome of 2016 national and statewide elections, NYSUT must reevaluate and modify the delivery of services in all areas of the organization, including its retiree program.

Make no mistake about the new political climate facing NYSUT and its budget as a result of the election outcome, it's real and serious. Just since the January 20 inauguration, the launch of renewed threats from anti-union forces to destroy the voice of workers abound; they include the recent introduction of a

"Wisconsin-styled" national "rightto-work" bill in the U.S. Senate, the likelihood that the newly confirmed Secretary of Education and the President will make good on a promise to transfer \$20 billion in federal Title I funding directed to K -12 education programs to charter and parochial schools, and that by early 2018 the Federal Courts will take up three cases similar to Friedrich v. California challenging the rights of unions to charge dues to members for representation. NY-SUT anticipates the loss of perhaps 10% of its dues paying membership during the next three to five years if any of these policies are adopted by the Congress, signed into law by the President, and/or ruled in favor of by federal courts.

After careful consideration, the **Retiree Services program will have** to make some reductions in services. One such reduction involves newsletter publications. Effective April 1, 2017, the number of annual retiree council newsletters publications are reduced by one, from six to five per year, per council. Again, the new publication policy of five (5) newsletters maximum, per council, per year, is effective as of April 1, 2017.

By making these necessary changes, the Retiree Services program will be better able to focus on the quality and content of retiree council newsletters as well as other retiree services.

# **Urgent: RC39 Director-at-large Vacancy**

The death of George Wybenga creat- done by email. Board members may ed a vacancy on the RC39 Board of attend NYSUT meetings in Albany. Directors. RC39 needs members to step forward to fill the member-at- on the RC39 officer email list. Every- 631 744-5534, or 98 Rocky Point large position George held. As a one on the list will be able to partici- Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778. member of the RC39 Board of Direc- pate in all email discussions. Only tors, the member-at-large participates elected officers will be able to vote. needed member participation, it is in board discussions and votes when- This is a great way to learn what is now. ever decisions are required. All this is involved in being a RC39 officer.

Members can request to be placed Herron at rc39pete@optonline.net,

If you are interested in serving or need more information, contact Pete If there ever was a time RC39

#### **RC39** Website

Check out RC39 website http://rc39.ny.aft.org/ where you can read recent NYSUT RC39 newsletters, AFT and NYSUT news releases, and much more.

#### VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY By Frances S. Hilliard, RN, MS

Since 1921, when it was first iden- amin D levels, these tests actually in- Vitamin D from the gastrointestinal D has been known for its important sent in the bloodstream. role in the body's calcium balance and maintenance of bone health. Vita- from a number of different factors: min D is essential for strong bones, • Inadequate dietary intake of Vita- and pains. A number of individuals mainly because it is necessary for the min D. This often occurs in people experience no symptoms at all. As the body's ability to absorb calcium and who adhere to a vegan diet, because deficiency becomes phosphorus; two elements that help such diets do not include common nounced, definitive symptoms often develop the structure and strength of animal-based sources of the vitamin appear, including bone pain, weakbones. It is now known that Vitamin (fish, eggs, fortified milk, and beef ness, and frequent infections. The on-D is also important for many other liver).

including reasons, immunity, muscle strength, cardiovascular function, healthy lungs, anti-cancer effects, and brain development in children. Low levels of Vitamin D are associated with increased mortality from cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment in older adults, cancer, and increased severity of asthma in children. Research is

play a significant role in the preven- has become more prevalent because and How to Treat." Mayo Clinic Protion and management of several medi- of the attention being brought to sun ceedings, August, 2010. cal conditions, such as hypertension, exposure as a cause of skin cancers. www.mayoclinicproceedings.com diabetes, and multiple sclerosis.

min D when the skin is exposed to blocks Vitamin D production. Other ment on Vitamin D Deficiency sunlight. Following sun exposure, a factors involved are the geographic Screening, 2014." number of chemical processes within area in which you live (especially dis- www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.o the body then change this vitamin into tance from the equator and altitude) rg/Page/Document/ a form that can be utilized by the and the color of your skin (darker pig- RecommendationStatementFinal/ cells. The liver is very important to mentation means more melanin in the vitamin-d-deficiency-screening these processes. Both the Vitamin D skin, which allows less absorption of produced from skin exposure to sun- UVB light and therefore less Vitamin the Latest Vitamin D News and Relight, as well as any Vitamin D ingest- D production). ed in foods or dietary supplements, • are converted by the liver to a subhave blood tests to measure your Vit-

tified by research scientists, Vitamin dicate the amount of 25 (OH) D pre- tract.



More individuals are avoiding the sun Your body can manufacture Vita- and/or applying sunscreen, which Force. "Final Recommendation State-

Pregnancy

Being very overweight or obese, stance called 25 (OH) D. When you conditions which impair absorption of

The symptoms of Vitamin D defi-Vitamin D deficiency can result ciency are often quite vague, and may include fatigue and generalized aches more proly sure way to tell if you are deficient

in Vitamin D is to have a blood test which will measure the level of 25 (OH) D. If this level is below normal, you will need Vitamin D supplements, with the exact dosage dependent upon the degree of deficiency detected. Resources

Kurt A. Kennel, MD. et al. "Vitamin D

also showing that this vitamin may • Limited exposure to sunlight. This Deficiency in Adults: When to Test

U. S. Preventive Services Task

Vitamin D Council. "Information on search." www.vitamindcouncil.org

Web MD. "Vitamin D Deficiency." www.webmd.com/diet/guide/vitamind-deficiency

## **Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors**

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Send your comments, suggestions, and inquiries to NYSUT RC39 Officers, 98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778 or rc39pete@optonline.net.

RC39 Newsletter is looking for comments, suggestions and articles from its members.



Send your comments, suggestions, or article to Peter Herron at rc39pete@optonline.net or mail to 98 Rocky Point Landing Road, Rocky Point, NY 11778. Your article will be published when space is available. RC39, NYSUT, and AFT news will be given priority.



To not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are three ways to update your address. Contact NY-SUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224. Send written changes to: NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110, or e-mail changes to memberec@nysutmail.org. If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

## Have you paid your voluntary RC39 contribution for 2017?

If you have not sent in your voluntary NYSUT RC39 annual contribution, now is as good a time as ever. Just send your check along with the form below to the RC39 treasurer. It is your contributions that enable RC39 officers and <u>delegates</u> to represent you at NYSUT conferences and meetings.

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. Joan Prymas, RC39	Treasurer, 141 Montgomery Street, I	lion, NY 13357	7