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EVIDENCE (PRO)

Impact on Union Effectiveness (PRO):

PRO: Right-to-Work Laws Weaken Union Effectiveness

According to... *the Economic Policy Institute, April 22, 2015*

[Ross Eisenbrey, Senior Fellow, "New Study Confirms that Right-To-Work Laws Are Associated with Significantly Lower Wages, Economic Policy Institute," April 22, 2015, <https://www.epi.org/blog/new-study-confirms-that-right-to-work-laws-are-associated-with-significantly-lower-wages/>]

Right to Work (RTW) laws weaken unions by depriving them of the funding they need to be effective, and workers, both union and non-union alike, in RTW states have lower wages. No one really disputes the first fact—workers in non-RTW states are more than twice as likely (2.4 times) to be in a union or protected by a union contract. And wages in RTW states are far lower—almost 16 percent on average. This isn't surprising, since RTW's proponents are anti-union hate groups and business organizations that oppose every effort to help workers organize or raise wages. In fact, their key pitch to legislators (outside of campaign contributions) is that RTW will lower labor costs, improve the "business climate," and encourage out-of-state businesses to relocate.

PRO: RTW = Undermines existing labor laws leading to "free riders"

According to... *Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Washington Post, April 24, 2018*

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/04/24/the-right-to-work-really-means-the-right-to-work-for-less/>

[Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Loyola University Chicago, "The right to work really means the right to work for less," Washington Post, April 24, 2018]

Right-to-work laws undermined unions by outlawing seemingly obscure, often confusing contract clauses governing union negotiations. U.S. labor law dictates that nonunion members are covered by the contract that members negotiated and are also represented by the union during managerial disputes. But union negotiations require time and resources, which necessitate dues. "Union-shop" rules ensure everyone who benefits from the union helps pay for it (rather than free-ride on the contributions from others as happens without such membership provisos). Right-to-work laws effectively ban these rules, regardless of what management agrees to and what the majority of a union wants.

PRO: RTW = Unnecessary Because Protections Already Exist

According to... *Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012*

<https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/right-to-work-101/>

[Karla Walter, Senior Director, American Worker Project, "Right-to-Work 101: Why These Laws Hurt Our Economy, Our Society, and Our Democracy," Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012]

Federal law already guarantees that no one can be forced to be a member of a union, or to pay any amount of dues or fees to a political or social cause they don't support. What right-to-work laws do is allow some workers to receive a free ride, getting the advantages of a union contract—such as higher wages and benefits and protection against arbitrary discipline—without paying any fee associated with negotiating on these matters.

PRO: Empowering Employers by Undermining Workers' Rights

According to... *Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Washington Post, April 24, 2018*

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/04/24/the-right-to-work-really-means-the-right-to-work-for-less/>

[Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Loyola University Chicago, "The right to work really means the right to work for less," Washington Post, April 24, 2018]

So-called right-to-work laws have always been sold as all-American protections of individual freedoms. But they are in fact dangerous, confusing restrictions on Americans' basic rights on the job. These statutes empower employers by undermining workers' right to organize and rolling back the gains — better wages, working conditions and hours — that unions fought to secure.

Impact on Union Effectiveness (PRO): Continued...***PRO: RTW = Significant Negative Impact on Density***

Marie Siliciano, Princeton University, Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, 2017

<http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/dsp01zs25xc091>

[Marie Siliciano, Princeton University, "Right to Work Laws and Union Membership," Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, 2017]

This thesis investigates the impact of recent Right-to-Work (RTW) laws on private sector union membership. To better understand the mechanism through which RTW affects unions, this thesis evaluates the effect of recent RTW laws in Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin on four outcomes: private sector union density, the percentage the labor force covered by union contracts without being a union member, the demographic makeup of labor unions, and union density within demographic groups. Using data from the Current Population Survey, this thesis uses four difference-in-differences models to answer these questions. This thesis found that RTW laws had a significant negative effect on union density, and did not find any effect of RTW on the percentage the labor force covered by union contracts without being a union member. This thesis did not find any effect of RTW on the demographic makeup of labor unions. However, this thesis did find that the magnitude of RTW's impact on union density was largest among groups that were overrepresented in unions before RTW, especially black workers. The results of this thesis suggest that RTW laws impose a collective action problem that decreases the extent of unionization and has negative implications for unions' ability to play an equalizing role in the labor market.

PRO: 71% Reduction in Union Fees/Dues (ex. Freeriding Harms Collective Bargaining)

Columbia University Law Review, August 17, 2021

<https://www.culawreview.org/journal/the-paradox-of-right-to-work-laws-and-international-human-rights-law>

[Amadea Datel, Columbia University, "The Paradox Of Right to Work Laws and International Human Rights Law," Columbia University Law Review, August 17, 2021]

Nevertheless, the United States fails to recognize such international obligations through its right-to-work laws, which obstruct collective bargaining. These laws prohibit "union-shop" rules that mandate union membership as a condition of employment, including the payment of union dues for collective bargaining. Ensuring that everyone who gains from unionization contributes to its costs, "union-shop" rules prevent free-riding, a situation in which individuals refuse to pay their union dues because they can continue benefiting from the fact that others do. Right-to-work laws first appeared in the 1940s, shortly after President Roosevelt acknowledged the right of employees to organize in the Wagner Act, yet their adoption did not accelerate until the 2010s, when midwestern states joined the "right-to-work belt" of southern and western states—a group of states in which legal restrictions make unionization especially difficult. [9] Conservative legislatures frame right-to-work laws as a component of American exceptionalism, claiming it is "sinful and tyrannical" for the government to "compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors." [10] Following this argument, conservative legislatures have exempted themselves from international law. Yet right-to-work laws have hindered workers' rights, with studies predicting that new prohibitions on unions mandating workers to pay their dues will reduce union fee-paying rates by up to 71 percent, thus complicating the ability of unions to exert their collective power.

Impact on Union Effectiveness (PRO): *Continued...****PRO: RTW Undermines Unions and Violates International Human Rights Law***

Columbia University Law Review, August 17, 2021

<https://www.culawreview.org/journal/the-paradox-of-right-to-work-laws-and-international-human-rights-law>

[Amadea Dattel, Columbia University, "The Paradox Of Right to Work Laws and International Human Rights Law," Columbia University Law Review, August 17, 2021]

Right-to-work laws and the accompanying decline in unionization in the United States surfaced in *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Council 31* (2018), where the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public-sector union dues conflict with the First Amendment because such dues require workers to donate their money to public sector unions for political purposes. [1] In a 5-4 decision, the majority applied heightened scrutiny to the fair-share fee requirement, presuming the policy was illegitimate unless the government could demonstrate a compelling interest that justified infringement on free speech. Remaining silent on the question of workers' rights, jurists determined that the state did not possess an interest in labor peace (neutrality agreements between employers and unions) that could not be achieved through less restrictive means. [2] This ruling attests to America's hypocrisy on workers' rights on the international stage. As part of the United Nations' International Labour Organization (ILO), the United States routinely includes provisions on workers' rights in international trade agreements, but it has only ratified fourteen out of the 189 conventions. [3] Although international human rights law establishes the right of workers to collectively bargain, the United States has undermined collective bargaining through a series of Supreme Court decisions, including *Janus*, that have legitimized right-to-work laws by reinterpreting the First Amendment and have thus impeded the efficacy of unions.

PRO: RTW = Decline in Labor Power

Yale University, October 18, 2022

<https://law.yale.edu/yls-today/yale-law-school-events/future-worker-power-labor-organizing-and-labor-law-crossroads>

["The Future of Worker Power: Labor Organizing and Labor Law at a Crossroads," Yale University, October 18, 2022]

What is the future of worker power in the US? On the one hand, the last several decades have been characterized by declining labor power and legal retrenchment. Private sector union membership is at an all-time low, and the Supreme Court recently dealt a major blow to public sector unions. "Right to work" laws, and a raft of other rules make the legal environment inhospitable to organizing and help explain some of labor's decline. Yet in the last few years there has also been a startling upsurge in interest in unions and labor militancy, both in the US and beyond its borders. Nearly seventy percent of people in the U.S. express approval of unions—the highest level on record since 1965. And in "Striketober" alone, more than 100,000 U.S. workers either participated in or prepared for strikes against multinational corporations, followed by a wave of unionizing among Amazon and Starbucks workers.

Impact on Workers (PRO):

PRO: Risk of Lower Wages/Benefits

According to... National Bureau of Economic Research, August 2022

[Lucy E. Page, staff, "Impacts of Right-to-Work Laws on Unionization and Wages," National Bureau of Economic Research, August 2022, <https://www.nber.org/digest/202208/impacts-right-work-laws-unionization-and-wages>]

The researchers complement these results with a second approach based on the differential effects of right-to-work laws on the highly unionized industries. This strategy rests on the assumption that without right-to-work laws all states would have the same relative distribution of unionization rates and wage levels across industries. They estimate the impacts of these laws by testing whether right-to-work states have especially low unionization rates and wages in highly unionized industries. They find a difference of nearly 20 percent in the unionization rate between states with and without right-to-work laws. Right-to-work laws are also associated with 7.5 percent lower wages. Finally, the researchers use both of these empirical strategies to examine a key labor-market question: how does unionization affect workers' wages? If right-to-work laws only affect wages by lowering unionization rates, the causal effects of unions on wages can be estimated by dividing the effects of right-to-work laws on wages by their effects on unionization. Under this assumption, unionization appears to raise wages by approximately 40 percent.

In other words... Studies prove right-to-work laws reduce union rates by 20% and lower wages by 7.5%.

This means... the quality of life for millions of union and non-union workers will suffer as lower wages and benefits threaten their ability to avoid poverty and provide for their families.

PRO: Weakening Unions Increases Occupational Fatalities

According to... Dr. Michael Zoorob, Harvard University, *BMJ Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine*, June 13, 2018

[Dr. Michael Zoorob, Dept of Government, Harvard University, "Does 'right to work' imperil the right to health? The effect of labor unions on workplace fatalities," *BMJ Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine*, June 13, 2018, <https://oem.bmj.com/content/75/10/736>]

Abstract: Objective Economic policies can have unintended consequences on population health. In recent years, many states in the USA have passed 'right to work' (RTW) laws which weaken labour unions. The effect of these laws on occupational health remains unexplored. This study fills this gap by analysing the effect of RTW on occupational fatalities through its effect on unionisation. Methods Two-way fixed effects regression models are used to estimate the effect of unionisation on occupational mortality per 100 000 workers, controlling for state policy liberalism and workforce composition over the period 1992–2016. In the final specification, RTW laws are used as an instrument for unionisation to recover causal effects. Results The Local Average Treatment Effect of a 1% decline in unionisation attributable to RTW is about a 5% increase in the rate of occupational fatalities. In total, RTW laws have led to a 14.2% increase in occupational mortality through decreased unionisation. Conclusion These findings illustrate and quantify the protective effect of unions on workers' safety. Policymakers should consider the potentially deleterious effects of anti-union legislation on occupational health.

In other words... When removing the other variables, workplace safety is significantly lower in right-to-work states and as a direct result of these policies, worker fatalities are much higher.

This means... the quality of life of millions of workers and their families can be destroyed when a loved one is seriously injured or dies from preventable workplace safety issues.

Impact on Workers (PRO): Continued...

PRO: RTW = Millions Denied Health Benefits

According to... Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012

<https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/right-to-work-101/>

[Karla Walter, Senior Director, American Worker Project, "Right-to-Work 101: Why These Laws Hurt Our Economy, Our Society, and Our Democracy," Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012]

Unions have a significant and positive effect on the wages and benefits of union and nonunion workers alike. Unionized workers are able to bargain for better wages, benefits, and work conditions than they would otherwise receive if negotiating individually. The effect on the average worker—unionized or not—of working in a right-to-work state is to earn approximately \$1,500 less per year than a similar worker in a state without such a law. Workers in right-to-work states are also significantly less likely to receive employer-provided health insurance or pensions. If benefits coverage in non-right-to-work states were lowered to the levels of states with these laws, 2 million fewer workers would receive health insurance and 3.8 million fewer workers would receive pensions nationwide.

In other words... unions play significant role in negotiating better wages and benefits. Without such protections, millions of workers would lose health and/or pension benefits.

This means... when we weaken unions' ability to negotiate, we are seeing millions of workers being denied coverage for their health needs and we also increase the stress on already weakened social safety nets.

PRO: 'Infamously' Low Wages (restrictions weaken union memberships)

According to... Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Washington Post, April 24, 2018

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/04/24/the-right-to-work-really-means-the-right-to-work-for-less/>

[Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Loyola University Chicago, "The right to work really means the right to work for less," Washington Post, April 24, 2018]

Unsurprisingly, that right-to-work belt was also infamous for its low wages. Right-to-work membership restrictions made it difficult to form unions, bargain with managers or even keep enough members to retain the federal recognition that had enabled so many blue-collar Americans to exercise their power to collectively bargain for white-collar living standards and to actively participate in politics.

PRO: Impedes Union Power

Economic Policy Institute, July 10, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-is-wrong-for-missouri-a-breadth-of-national-evidence-shows-why-missouri-voters-should-reject-rtw-law/>

Despite the name, right-to-work laws do not confer any sort of right to a job. Rather, they dilute union bargaining strength by making it harder for unions to sustain themselves financially. Some supporters of RTW laws falsely claim that these laws ensure that no one is forced to be a member of a union or pay to advocate political causes they do not support. But those things are already illegal under federal law. What RTW laws do is make it illegal for a group of unionized workers to negotiate a contract that requires each employee who enjoys the benefit of the contract to pay his or her share of the costs of negotiating and overseeing it. In other words, RTW laws prevent unions from requiring that workers who benefit from union representation pay their fair share of that representation. By making it harder for unions to collect these "fair share fees," RTW laws aim to restrict union resources and to thereby impede unions' ability to negotiate better wages, benefits, and working conditions for workers.

PRO: Decreased Workplace Safety

United Steel Workers, Accessed January 28, 2023

<https://www.usw.org/act/campaigns/rtw/resources/facts-about-so-called-right-to-work>

The rate of workplace deaths is 37% higher in states with RTW laws, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Impact on Workers (PRO): Continued...

PRO: Decreased Wages and Benefits

Economic Policy Institute, July 10, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-is-wrong-for-missouri-a-breadth-of-national-evidence-shows-why-missouri-voters-should-reject-rtw-law/>

Unionization raises wages for both union members and nonunion workers in unionized sectors.¹⁸ Given the union wage boost, it is not surprising that research shows that both union and nonunion workers in RTW states have lower wages and fewer benefits, on average, than comparable workers in other states. Previous research by EPI shows that wages in RTW states are 3.1 percent lower than wages in non-RTW states, after controlling for a full complement of individual demographic and socioeconomic factors as well as state macroeconomic indicators.¹⁹ Similarly, the rate of employer-sponsored health insurance and pensions is lower in RTW states.²⁰

PRO: Higher Wages

Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, January 19, 2023.

<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/union2.pdf>

Nonunion workers had median weekly earnings that were 85 percent of earnings for workers who were union members (\$1,029 versus \$1,216). (The comparisons of earnings in this news release are on a broad level and do not control for many factors that can be important in explaining earnings differences.)

PRO: Better Retirement Plans

U.S Department of Labor, Accessed January 27, 2023.

<https://www.dol.gov/general/workcenter/union-advantage>

Union representation offers greater access to, and participation in, employer-sponsored retirement plans. In fact, 93 percent of unionized workers in private industry have access to employer-sponsored retirement plans, compared to only 66 percent of non-union workers. Union workers participate in retirement plans at higher rates than non-union workers: 84 percent of unionized workers in private industry with access to retirement plans participate in those plans while only 49 percent of non-union workers who have access.

PRO: Promotes Better Health Care Benefits

Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-and-well-being/>

The first marker of personal well-being we examine is access to health insurance. Almost all union workers (94%) have access to health insurance, compared with just 67% of nonunion workers (Gould 2020b). Economic research has documented that unionized workers also face lower direct costs for health care coverage than their nonunionized peers (Buchmueller and DiNardo 2001). Unions are an important channel workers use to secure high-quality health insurance, and when union members gain these benefits, nonunion employers are more likely to offer better compensation, including health care benefits, in order to remain competitive (Mishel 2021).

PRO: Better Terms and Conditions

War on Want, February 16, 2022.

<https://waronwant.org/news-analysis/ten-reasons-why-unions-are-important>

Workers who join a trade union are more likely to have better terms and conditions than those who do not, because trade unions negotiate for their members through collective bargaining agreements and protect them from bad management practices.

PRO: Better Workplace Health & Safety

War on Want, February 16, 2022.

<https://waronwant.org/news-analysis/ten-reasons-why-unions-are-important>

There are 50% fewer accidents in unionised workplaces. Local safety representatives, appointed by trade union shops, deal with issues ranging from stress and mental health issues to hazardous substances, and represent their colleagues' health and safety interests to management.

Impact on Workers (PRO): Continued...

PRO: Increased Range of Benefits

Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-and-well-being/>

Employer-sponsored benefits including health insurance, retirement, and paid leave. Union workers are far more likely than nonunion workers to be covered by employer-provided health insurance. More than nine in 10 unionized workers have access to employer-sponsored health benefits, compared with just 68% of nonunion workers, and union employers contribute more to their employees' health care benefits (EPI 2021d). Furthermore, union employers are more likely to offer retirement plans and to contribute more toward those plans than comparable nonunion employers. Union workers are also more likely to have paid sick days, vacation and holidays, more input into the number of hours they work, and more predictable schedules (EPI 2021d).

PRO: Potentially Lethal Hazards are Unreported (*RTW weakens ability to report dangers*)

According to... Industrial Safety & Hygiene News, October 9, 2018

<https://www.ishn.com/articles/109511-study-right-to-work-laws-harm-workplace-safety>

[ISHN Staff, "Study: Right-to-Work laws harm workplace safety," *Industrial Safety & Hygiene News*, October 9, 2018]

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the rate of workplace fatalities is 54 percent higher in right-to-work states. The study's authors concluded that the findings "illustrate and quantify the protective effect of unions on workers' safety. Policymakers should consider the potentially deleterious effects of anti-union legislation on occupational health." "Unions give workers the freedom to speak up about hazards on the job without fear of retaliation," said International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "Right-to-work laws weaken our voice on the job, and that leads to unreported safety hazards and higher accident and death rates."

PRO: Inability to Voice Safety Concerns (ex. *Workers fired for discussing unsafe conditions*)

According to... the Economic Policy Institute, August 25, 2020

<https://www.epi.org/publication/why-unions-are-good-for-workers-especially-in-a-crisis-like-covid-19-12-policies-that-would-boost-worker-rights-safety-and-wages/>

[Celine McNicholas, Director of Policy and Government Affairs, "Why unions are good for workers—especially in a crisis like COVID-19," *Economic Policy Institute*, August 25, 2020]

Why it matters: A badly broken system governing collective bargaining has eroded unions and worker power more broadly, contributing to both the suffering during the pandemic and the extreme economic inequality exacerbated by the pandemic. In spite of efforts to push policy reforms, the U.S. entered the COVID-19 pandemic with a weak system of labor protections. As a result, working people, particularly low-wage workers—who are disproportionately women and workers of color—have largely borne the costs of the pandemic. While providing the "essential" services we rely on, many of these workers have been forced to work without protective gear; many have no access to paid sick leave; and when workers have spoken up about health and safety concerns, they have been fired.

Impact on Communities (PRO):***PRO: Income Inequality a Main Cause of Poverty (RTW Laws = Increases Income Inequality)****According to... Dr. Elise Gould, Economist, Economic Policy Institute, January 8, 2014*

[Elise Gould, Economist, "Inequality Is the Main Cause of Persistent Poverty," Economic Policy Institute, January 8, 2014, <https://www.epi.org/blog/inequality-main-persistent-poverty/>]

I couldn't agree more with Paul Krugman's blog post this morning when he says, "the main cause of persistent poverty now is high inequality of market income." We looked at precisely this question in the latest edition of State of Working America. (And the White House Council of Economic Advisors cited our work on this in their War on Poverty 50 Years Later Report, released today.) In the roughly three decades leading up to the most recent recession, looking at the officially measured poverty rate, educational upgrading and overall income growth were the two biggest poverty-reducing factors, while income inequality was the largest poverty-increasing factor. Relative to these factors, the racial composition of the U.S. population over this period (the growth of nonwhite populations with higher likelihoods of poverty) and changes in family structure (the growth of single mother households) have contributed much less to poverty, particularly in recent years.

In other words... The main cause of persistent poverty is income inequality and the fact that wages and education are necessary to reduce poverty rates.

This means... policies that reduce equality also run the risk of subjecting people to poverty.

PRO: RTW Laws Result in Higher Inequality*According to... Dr. Tom VanHeuvelen, Work in Progress, October 13, 2020*

[Prof. Tom VanHeuvelen, PhD Sociology, "How do right to work laws affect economic inequality?," Work in Progress, October 13, 2020, <http://www.wipsociology.org/2020/10/13/how-do-right-to-work-laws-affect-economic-inequality/>]

Why is this the case? In additional analyses, I found that union membership declined at higher rates following Right to Work passage in more highly unionized contexts, and that antiunion firm activities occurred more frequently in more highly unionized Right to Work contexts compared to highly unionized states without Right to Work laws. These results suggest that Right to Work may provide the opportunity for employers to more aggressively pursue their interests against those of workers, resulting in ordinary workers having less successful bargaining leverage to raise wages, thus resulting in higher inequality.

In other words... by weakening unions, right to work laws increase income inequality due to a reduction in bargaining power.

This means... millions of families residing in right to work areas are at much greater risk of inequality/poverty and their communities lose precious resources that are drained as a result.

PRO: Disadvantaging Marginalized Groups*According to... Work in Progress, January 28, 2021*

[David Pettinicchio and Michelle Maroto, [authors], "Uneven access to union jobs increases inequality within marginalized groups," Work in Progress, January 28, 2021, <http://www.wipsociology.org/2021/01/28/uneven-access-to-union-jobs-increases-inequality-within-marginalized-groups/>]

Unions do a great deal to challenge economic inequality. Unions do this by increasing baseline wages among workers, stabilizing promotion decisions reducing their arbitrariness, and providing other resources like job training and skill development. Although unionization benefits all workers, its effects are particularly apparent among already marginalized groups. Unions have helped close wage gaps, reducing between-group inequality. Indeed, as women, African Americans, and people with disabilities gained access to union jobs, it brought their wages closer to those of men, whites, and workers without disabilities. In other words, wage disparities between minority and majority group members are smaller for those who are in unionized jobs. The ability to benefit from unions, however, requires access to unions — something that has been greatly declining. Additionally, people underrepresented in unionized jobs tend to be the most disadvantaged and least likely to benefit from the "moral economies" unions generate.

Impact on Communities (PRO): Continued...

PRO: Devastating Harm to Local Businesses in the Community

According to... Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012

<https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/right-to-work-101/>

[Karla Walter, Senior Director, American Worker Project, "Right-to-Work 101: Why These Laws Hurt Our Economy, Our Society, and Our Democracy," Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012]

Since few small businesses are ever unionized, changing union regulations won't affect them. Yet unlike big manufacturers who can choose which state to expand into, most small businesses are rooted in a local community and dependent on local consumers. When right-to-work laws lower the wages and benefits of area workers, they also threaten to reduce the number of jobs in the economy by reducing consumer demand. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that for every \$1 million in wage cuts, six jobs are lost in the service, retail, construction, real estate, and other local industries. For big manufacturers that sell their products all over the globe, this may be less important. For small businesses that depend on local sales, reducing the amount of disposable income in local employees' pockets can be devastating.

PRO: Decreased Tax Revenue Income

Economic Policy Institute, July 10, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-is-wrong-for-missouri-a-breadth-of-national-evidence-shows-why-missouri-voters-should-reject-rtw-law/>

Unsurprisingly, states with RTW laws have lower unionization rates, exactly what the corporate lobbies who advocate for RTW intend. Just 5.2 percent of private-sector workers in RTW states are union members or are covered by a union contract, compared with 10.2 percent in non-RTW states—a 5.0-percentage-point difference. It is of course possible that those differences could be being caused in part by other observable differences between RTW and non-RTW states that are related to unionization, such as differences in the industries that make up the states' economies. But, after controlling for a full complement of observable factors related to unionization—industry, occupation, education, age, gender, race, ethnicity, and foreign-born status—we find that private-sector workers in RTW states are 5.6 percentage points less likely to be union members or to be covered by a union contract.⁶

PRO: Decreased Tax Revenue Income

Economic Policy Institute, July 10, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-is-wrong-for-missouri-a-breadth-of-national-evidence-shows-why-missouri-voters-should-reject-rtw-law/>

By restricting the capacity of unions to bargain for workers and thus lowering wages and benefits, RTW laws lower tax revenues and reduce aggregate demand.

PRO: Decreased Investment in Public Services

Economic Policy Institute, July 10, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-is-wrong-for-missouri-a-breadth-of-national-evidence-shows-why-missouri-voters-should-reject-rtw-law/>

Economists have long recognized that state and local spending on public services, particularly education and infrastructure, are important components of an economic development strategy.²⁵ These services, however, are put at risk when states adopt a development strategy based on attracting low-wage nonunion employers, which lowers revenues. Union membership has been shown to yield a positive fiscal impact by raising workers' incomes, reducing the use of public benefits, and increasing the amount of taxes paid. At every level of government—federal, state, and local—union members pay more in taxes than similar nonunion members because they earn more.²⁶ To the extent that right-to-work laws succeed in weakening unions and thus lowering wages and benefits, they also lower tax revenues for local and state government, forcing concomitant cuts in public services.

Impact on Communities (PRO): Continued...**PRO: Increased Income Inequality (ex. affects middle class)**

Economic Policy Institute, July 10, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-is-wrong-for-missouri-a-breadth-of-national-evidence-shows-why-missouri-voters-should-reject-rtw-law/>

Unions are a critical part of a system of strong labor standards that makes it possible for regular working people to earn a decent living. Figure C shows that when unions are strong, the middle class is strong, but when union coverage shrinks—as it has in part because of RTW laws and other antiunion policies—a much smaller share of national income goes to the middle class. When the middle class gets a smaller share of income, the households at the top of the income distribution get more, and inequality rises.

PRO: Increased Racial Wage Disparity

Economic Policy Institute, May 15, 2018

<https://www.epi.org/publication/black-workers-in-right-to-work-rtw-states-tend-to-have-lower-wages-than-in-missouri-and-other-non-rtw-states/>

As shown in Figure A, black workers in non-RTW Missouri have generally fared better than their counterparts in neighboring RTW states. The figure compares the median inflation-adjusted hourly wage of workers in Missouri from 2010 to 2017 with median hourly wages of workers in neighboring RTW states in the same period, by race and ethnicity. Black workers in Missouri typically make \$14.28 an hour, while the typical black worker in Missouri's neighboring RTW states (Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Tennessee) make an hourly wage of \$13.65, 4.4 percent less than the typical black Missourian. This wage disadvantage in neighboring RTW states relative to Missouri is true for all racial and ethnic groups studied. Compared with Missourians of the same race or ethnicity, median white workers in neighboring RTW states earn 3.7 percent less and median Hispanic workers earn 7.4 percent less. Every state bordering Missouri, except Illinois, has enacted a right-to-work law.

PRO: Reduced Chances of Poverty

The Conversation, July 6, 2021

<https://theconversation.com/research-shows-labor-unions-help-lower-the-risk-of-poverty-161050>

We found that households in which there was at least one union member had an average poverty rate of 5.9%, compared with 18.9% for nonunion households, based on a relative measure of poverty rather than an absolute measure, by which what it means to be poor is fixed over time.

PRO: Reduced Wage Gap

Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-and-well-being/>

Reduced wage gaps. Unions also help to reduce gender and racial/ethnic wage gaps. Hourly wages for women represented by a union are 4.7% higher on average than for nonunionized women with comparable characteristics (EPI 2021d), and research looking at specific cases suggests that unions reduce gender wage gaps for similar jobs within a given workplace (Gould and McNicholas 2017). For example, Biasi and Sarsons (2020) show that the expiration of teacher collective bargaining agreements led to an increase in the wage gap between men and women with similar credentials, implying that the terms of the collective bargaining agreement had previously helped to minimize such wage gaps. Unions have also historically helped and continue to help close wage gaps for Black and Hispanic workers (Farber et al. 2021). Black workers represented by a union are paid 13.1% more than their nonunionized Black peers, and Hispanic workers represented by a union are paid 18.8% more than their nonunionized Hispanic peers (EPI 2021d).

PRO: Increased Government Revenue

Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-and-well-being/>

Increased government revenue and decreased government spending. Unionization has a range of positive economic impacts in addition to decreasing wage inequality and closing gender and race wage gaps. Sojourner and Pacas (2018) find that union membership yields a positive “net fiscal impact”—or, to put it simply, unionized workers have more income and therefore pay more taxes. Unions pave the way for more income and wealth-building for workers and therefore more revenue for the government.

Impact on Communities (PRO): Continued...

PRO: Decreased Income Inequality

Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-and-well-being/>

Higher wages and decreased income inequality. On average, a worker covered by a union contract earns 10.2% more in wages than a peer with similar education, occupation, and experience in a nonunionized workplace in the same industry (EPI 2021e). This wage advantage is known as the “union wage premium.” But unions don’t just help union workers—they help all workers (Bivens et al. 2017). When union density is high, nonunion workers benefit, too, because unions effectively set broader standards—including higher wages—which nonunion employers must meet to attract and retain the workers they need (Rosenfeld, Denice, and Laird 2016; Mishel 2021). The combination of the direct wage effect for union members and this “spillover” effect for nonunion workers means unions are crucial to raising wages for working people and reducing income inequality (Card 1996, 2001; Card, Lemieux, and Riddell 2018).

PRO: Increased Civic Engagement

Economic Policy Institute, December 15, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-and-well-being/>

Increased civic engagement and broader community benefits. Beyond wages, benefits, and safety, recent scholarship shows the indirect effect unions have on people’s political and personal attitudes and on the broader community and economy as a whole. Frymer and Grumbach (2021) find that union membership reduces white racial resentment. Feigenbaum, Hertel-Fernandez, and Williamson (2019) analyze the relationship between unions and political advocacy, specifically on policies related to worker empowerment and economic justice. They find that weakening unions (through the enactment of “right-to-work” laws) has significant long-term political and economic effects, such as lower voter turnout, lowered organized labor contributions, less voter mobilization, fewer working-class candidates serving in state legislatures and Congress, and more conservative state policy. These political consequences undoubtedly affect not only the communities in which they take place, but also the broader economy, as the chosen candidates enact economic policies.

PRO: Increased Civic Participation (e.g., better policies for all workers)

U.S. Department of Labor, Accessed January 27, 2023

<https://www.dol.gov/general/workcenter/unions-and-democracy#:~:text=Unions%20foster%20civic%20participation%20in,and%20support%20for%20public%20education.>

Unions foster civic participation in our democracy and help build worker solidarity across racial lines. Strong unions help policymakers focus on the most important issues for working families, like fair pay, paid leave and support for public education. States with higher union density are far more likely to adopt pro-worker policies and, conversely, states with lower union density adopt more restrictive laws like voter suppression laws and invest less in healthcare and education. Today’s unions are becoming more involved in promoting Green Jobs and other green energy initiatives to help address climate change. Learn about the importance of strong unions to our communities and our democracy.

PRO: Decreased Disparities and Stronger Democracy

Economic Policy Institute, April 23, 2021

<https://www.epi.org/publication/unions-help-reduce-disparities-and-strengthen-our-democracy/>

Unions also reduce racial disparities in wages and raise women’s wages, helping to counteract disparate labor market outcomes by race and gender that result from occupational segregation, discrimination, and other labor market inequities related to structural racism and sexism.

Answers to Misc. CON Arguments (PRO):

AT (Worker Freedom): Dangerous and Confusing Restrictions

According to... Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, *Washington Post*, April 24, 2018

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2018/04/24/the-right-to-work-really-means-the-right-to-work-for-less/>

[Prof. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer, Loyola University Chicago, "The right to work really means the right to work for less," *Washington Post*, April 24, 2018]

So-called right-to-work laws have always been sold as all-American protections of individual freedoms. But they are in fact dangerous, confusing restrictions on Americans' basic rights on the job. These statutes empower employers by undermining workers' right to organize and rolling back the gains — better wages, working conditions and hours — that unions fought to secure.

AT (Worker Freedom): RTW = Threatens Workers Freedom

Andrew W. Neidhardt, *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change*, 2015

<https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/jlasc/vol18/iss3/2>

[Andrew W. Neidhardt, "The Federalist View of Right-to-Work Laws," *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change*, 2015]

I use labor unions as an example of a collective group of citizens, and show that they have the ability to create this kind of large-scale organization and representation. Labor unions can be the voices of millions of Americans who otherwise have little say in government. By pooling their resources, American workers who are represented by unions are able to delegate to representatives who can go and be their voice—and a voice of reason. Rather than relying on emotional appeals to American workers, labor union leaders can become policy experts on the complicated issues that our government faces. This falls directly in line with the Federalist vision of government by reason. But these groups are under attack by "right-to-work" laws, which make it difficult for labor unions to organize. In right-to-work states, unionization is markedly lower, meaning that the working class has one fewer method of organizing to gain political representation. Comparing this with the relative ease with which business interests can organize, we must worry about whether we are achieving the Federalist goal of diverse representation in our government.

AT (Economic Growth): Research = Higher Profits with No Increase in Economic Growth

According to... Dr. Elise Gould, Senior Economist, *Economic Policy Institute*, April 22, 2015

<https://www.epi.org/publication/right-to-work-states-have-lower-wages/>

[Dr. Elise Gould, Senior Economist, "'Right-to-Work' States Still Have Lower Wages," *Economic Policy Institute*, April 22, 2015]

A 2009 study conducted by Hofstra University economics professor Lonnie Stevans controlled for a broad array of economic and business climate variables, and concluded that RTW is associated with lower wages and higher proprietors' income but has "no influence on employment" and "no effect on economic growth."

AT (Creating Jobs): Research on RTW Job Creation is Outdated/Misleading

According to... Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012

<https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/right-to-work-101/>

[Karla Walter, Senior Director, American Worker Project, "Right-to-Work 101: Why These Laws Hurt Our Economy, Our Society, and Our Democracy," *Center for American Progress*, February 2, 2012]

Indeed, most right-to-work advocates' purported evidence of job growth is based on outdated research and misleading assertions. An Indiana Chamber of Commerce-commissioned study found right-to-work states had higher employment growth between 1977 and 2008 compared to states without a right-to-work law, but much of that growth could be attributed to other factors. Those factors included the states' infrastructure quality, and even its weather—which the study ignored. Recent research from the Economic Policy Institute that controlled for these factors finds that right-to-work laws have not increased employment growth in the 22 states that have adopted them.

Answers to Misc. CON Arguments (PRO): *Continued...*

AT (Creating Jobs): RTW = Doesn't Create Jobs

According to... Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012

<https://www.americanprogressaction.org/article/right-to-work-101/>

[Karla Walter, Senior Director, American Worker Project, "Right-to-Work 101: Why These Laws Hurt Our Economy, Our Society, and Our Democracy," Center for American Progress, February 2, 2012]

Researchers who study the impact of right-to-work laws find that these laws do not create jobs—despite supporters' claims to the contrary. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce, for example, claims that "unionization increases labor costs," and therefore makes a given location less attractive to capital. The purpose, then, of right-to-work laws is to undermine unions and therefore lower wages in a given state, thus attracting more companies into the state. But in practice this low-road strategy for job creation just doesn't pan out. Despite boosters' promises of job creation, researchers find that right-to-work had "no significant positive impact whatsoever on employment" in Oklahoma, the only state to have adopted a right-to-work law over the past 25 years—until Indiana did so days ago—and consequently the best example of how a new adopter of right-to-work laws might fare in today's economy. In fact, both the number of companies relocating to Oklahoma and the total number of manufacturing jobs in the state fell by about a third since it adopted such a law in 2001.

EVIDENCE (CON)**Impact on Unions (CON):****CON: Right-to-Work Laws Increase Union Quality and Effectiveness**

According to... *The Journal of Law and Economics*, June 22, 2019

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID3408543_code2056105.pdf

[Christos Makridis, MIT Sloan School of Management, "Do Right-to-Work Laws Work? Evidence on Individual Well-being and Economic Sentiment," *Journal of Law and Economics*, June 22, 2019]

While not conclusive, the results are consistent with the view that RTW laws raise competition and, in turn, encourage unions to provide higher quality services. Moreover, these results are consistent with recent empirical contributions that have found a causal effect of competition on productivity in healthcare (Gaynor et al., 2013; Bloom et al., 2015a), manufacturing (Syverson, 2004; Schmitz, 2005; Bloom et al., 2019), and retail (De Loecker, 2011; Matsa, 2011). My results also contribute to a larger literature on the effects of state labor market regulations, such as the minimum wage, occupational licensing, non-compete enforcement agreements, and wrongful discharge laws on economic outcomes, which use similar methodological approaches.⁴

CON: Tremendous Financial Capacity (ex. \$1.6B from Union Political Contributions)

According to... *LaborPains.org*, September 05, 2019

<https://laborpains.org/2019/09/05/big-labor-sent-over-1-6-billion-to-left-wing-special-interests/>

[Labor Pains, Team, "Big Labor Spent Over \$1.6 Billion to Left-Wing Special Interests," *LaborPains.org*, September 05, 2019]

In continuation of its campaign to educate the public on the benefits of the Employee Rights Act, the Center for Union Facts has released updated data that tracks how much money labor unions have sent to the Left since 2010. This new spending information includes the latest union financial records from 2018. Details regarding the over \$1.6 billion unions sent to left-leaning causes, including which groups received the most money and how much was spent on certain categories, can be seen at this chart. Major recipients included the Democratic Governors Association, the Center for America Progress, and Planned Parenthood. Thanks to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Janus v. AFSCME*, public-sector union members are no longer obligated to contribute to their union's political activity as a condition of employment. But for private-sector employees in unionized workplaces, their dues are still being sent to primarily left-leaning causes without their consent. In fact, 99 percent of political contributions from labor unions since 2010 have gone to Democratic causes, even though almost half of union households voted Republican in 2016.

CON: Political Contributions Mainly from Dues (not "Opt-In" Funds)

According to... *Michael Watson, Research Director, Capital Research Center*, July 12, 2021

<https://capitalresearch.org/article/why-you-should-still-care-about-big-labors-disproportionate-clout/>

[Michael Watson, Research Director, and Managing Editor, Influence Watch, "Why You Should Still Care About Big Labor's Disproportionate Clout," *Capital Research Center*, July 12, 2021]

It turns out that more than 99% of those expenditures, which amounted to \$1.6 billion from 2010 through 2018, go to support left-wing "infrastructure" (i.e., think tanks, advocacy and organizing groups, vendors, etc.). Making matters worse, those contributions come principally from members' dues funds, rather than special opt-in political funds.

Impact on Unions (CON): Continued...**CON: Large financial capacity for union operations**

According to... *Marketplace.org*, February 24, 2017

<https://www.marketplace.org/2017/02/24/push-nationwide-right-work-law-could-weaken-unions/>

[Jana Kasperkevic, Digital Reporter, "Why unions are so worried about right-to-work laws," *Marketplace*, February 24, 2017]

Another — and arguably the most controversial — budget item for labor unions is political campaign donations. This brings us to the second reason why right to work is an important issue: power and influence. Historically, unions have been powerful actors in U.S. politics, both locally and nationwide. According to the Wall Street Journal, labor unions spent \$108.2 million by end of August on 2016 political campaigns. That's up 38 percent from 2012. A majority of those donations have been made to Democratic candidates. Since not all union members lean Democrat, some may oppose union leaders using their dues to support specific candidates or issues. In an attempt to find middle ground, unions have set up what they call non-members dues, which they say cover costs associated with collective bargaining, negotiating and enforcing a union contract. These dues are also sometimes referred to as "fair share" fees and can be just a fraction of what regular union dues are.

In other words... political donations from unions are both controversial and can exceed over one hundred million dollars, which recently has grown by 38% compared to the previous election. We can also infer that "fair share" fees are "just a fraction" of what it costs for collective bargaining.

This means... since collective bargaining and enforcement are just a small fraction of what has been collected by unions and spent on politics from union membership dues, the union will presumably still have plenty of capacity to pay their operating costs and fulfill their core functions. The only real impact would be to reduce the amount of money available for donating to political campaigns.

CON: Retirement Impacts Union Density More than RTW

TIME Magazine, October 25, 2021

<https://time.com/6110014/worker-anger-unions/>

'That silver tsunami is about to hit us' That unions' membership rolls are anemic is hardly news. Union membership has been on the skids for decades, largely as a result of increasing globalization and the rise of right-to-work laws that make forming unions more difficult. In 1983, unions represented roughly one out of five workers; now they represent just one in ten. But it's about to get a lot worse: current union members tend to skew older. Membership rates are highest among workers ages 45 to 64, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and lowest among the younger crowd. Roughly 13% of workers in the 45-54 and 55-64 age cohorts were members of unions in 2020, versus just 4.4% of workers ages 16-24. "This is the challenge of our time. Something like 10,000 people a day are retiring," Shuler says, "and that silver tsunami is about to hit us."

This means... it is unfair to blame right-to-work laws for union density problems because globalization and retirement are also causing a decline, yet right-to-work areas are incentivizing unions to work harder.

CON: Higher Worker Satisfaction (ex. Unions = Better Service)

According to... *Dr. Adam A. Millsap, Ph.D. Economics, Forbes*, October 23, 2019

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adammillsap/2019/10/23/right-to-work-laws-are-good-for-workers/?sh=4bd3a4c43119>

[Dr. Adam A. Millsap, Ph.D. Economics, Senior Fellow, Stand Together and Stand Together Trust, "Right-To-Work Laws Are Good For Workers," *Forbes*, October 23, 2019]

The channels that seem to best explain the increase in worker satisfaction are that right-to-work laws improve employer-employee relationships and encourage unions to better serve their members. The study finds that the adoption of a right-to-work law is associated with an increase in the probability that a worker reports that their boss treats them like a partner and creates an open and trusting work environment. Together, more attention from union leadership and workplace improvements can help explain why workers report greater satisfaction as a result of right-to-work laws.

Impact on Unions (CON): Continued...**CON: Push for Protecting Unions Driven by Self-Interest (ex. Politicians)**

According to... Dr. Adam A. Millsap, Ph.D. Economics, Forbes, October 23, 2019

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adammillsap/2019/10/23/right-to-work-laws-are-good-for-workers/?sh=4bd3a4c43119>

[Dr. Adam A. Millsap, Ph.D. Economics, Senior Fellow, Stand Together and Stand Together Trust, "Right-To-Work Laws Are Good For Workers," Forbes, October 23, 2019]

So, if right-to-work laws make workers better off, why do so many Democratic politicians oppose them? Perhaps because right-to-work laws harm their political prospects. A study by James Feigenbaum, Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, and Vanessa Williamson finds that right-to-work laws reduce Democratic presidential vote shares and political contributions from organized labor, while also moving state policy in a more conservative direction. Thus, politicians' self-interest rather than a benevolent concern for workers is likely a reason behind the support of the PRO Act that would ban state right-to-work laws.

CON: Unions Prioritizing Political 'Rigging' Over Bargaining

According to... Capital Research Center, January 25, 2022

<https://capitalresearch.org/article/unionization-falls-as-left-wing-pushes-more-coercion/>

[Michael Watson, Research Director, Capital Research Center, "Unionization Falls as Left Wing Pushes More Coercion," Capital Research Center, January 25, 2022]

Rather than reform themselves, labor unions would rather get the government to rig the system to make it easier for them to promise the world to workers while delivering little more than campaign contributions to the politicians who vote for bills like the PRO Act. It is also a warning to the "labor conservatives" who hope to reach out to working Americans through unions as institutions. The working class they are looking for—typically the manufacturing or private-construction line worker—mostly left Big Labor long ago because Big Labor left him behind.

CON: \$1.6 Billion in Membership Dues Spent on Political Contributions

According to... Daily Signal, July 06, 2021

<https://www.dailysignal.com/2021/07/06/why-you-should-still-care-about-big-labors-disproportionate-clout/>

[Michael Watson, Research Director, Capital Research Center, "Why You Should Still Care About Big Labor's Disproportionate Clout," Daily Signal, July 06, 2021]

Labor unions, especially government employee unions, are well-known as a core constituency of the Democratic Party, giving nearly 90% of their institutional political contributions to Democratic candidates—despite the fact that 40% of union families support Republicans. But those contributions are only the very tip of the iceberg of Big Labor's political involvement. The Center for Union Facts has investigated the spending on consulting and advocacy organizations made by the primarily private sector labor unions that report their expenditures to the Department of Labor. It turns out that more than 99% of those expenditures, which amounted to \$1.6 billion from 2010 through 2018, go to support left-wing "infrastructure" (i.e., think tanks, advocacy and organizing groups, vendors, etc.). Making matters worse, those contributions come principally from members' dues funds, rather than special opt-in political funds.

Impact on Unions (CON): Continued...**CON: Union Leadership Responsible for its Decline (ex. "Largely [their] own fault")**

According to... Capital Research Center, January 25, 2022

<https://capitalresearch.org/article/unionization-falls-as-left-wing-pushes-more-coercion/>

[Michael Watson, Research Director, Capital Research Center, "Unionization Falls as Left Wing Pushes More Coercion," Capital Research Center, January 25, 2022]

The Private Sector Changed: In reality, the decline of organized labor is largely organized labor's own fault. The first cause is the rules and costs that union contracts impose on employers, which render employers less competitive and less able to keep union members employed. When unionization was at its height immediately following the Second World War, the world was a much different place. Western Europe and Japan had been destroyed by the conflict, China was falling to the Communists who would destroy its economy and generate man-caused famine, Eastern Europe was falling under the Soviet yoke, India was creating its "License Raj" of sclerotic socialist industrial policies, and Latin America was largely ruled by authoritarians following import-substitution industrialization policies that froze their economies. In that world, America was an industrial titan with no real economic competitors, so dividing the spoils of perpetual profit between capital and labor was possible. Today, all those facts have changed, but Big Labor's demands have not. As a result, some unionized firms have gone bankrupt, while others have offshored production. Other companies have moved production domestically to states with lower unionization and less union power, so they don't go bankrupt and can keep their employees working. It's Also the Socialism: The second cause of Big Labor's decline is the increasingly fanatical political agenda driven by the faction that isn't falling in relative proportion to the relevant workforce: government workers. In 1983, when the BLS started estimating union density, about 37 percent of government workers were union members. While private-sector union density has since fallen by two-thirds, government-worker union density fell by only 3 percentage points. These relative changes mean that the balance of power within organized labor is much different than when AFL-CIO heads George Meany and Lane Kirkland refused to support the presidential candidacy of Sen. George McGovern (D-SD) in 1972 over the senator's excessive leftism. In 1995, the government worker unions showed their ascendancy when then-SEIU head and reported Democratic Socialists of America member John Sweeney took control of the AFL-CIO by squeezing out Lane Kirkland's successor in the union's presidential election. Almost 30 years later, the results are clear. In addition to providing near-monolithic support to Democratic political candidates and committees, the AFL-CIO celebrates "International Pronouns Day" while its president Liz Shuler demands Netflix cancel Dave Chappelle and has circulated Marxist propaganda calling on people to "seize the means of production."

CON: Illegal Political Contributions (Using 'Agency Fees' for Political Contributions is Illegal)

Projections - IRI Consultants, Last Accessed: February 2023

<https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/where-do-my-union-dues-go/>

[Walter Orechwa, Director of Digital Solutions, and Founder of UnionProof & A Better Leader, "Where Do My Union Dues Go?," Projections Inc., LA: FEB 2023]

Union fees aren't the same as union membership dues, by definition. The agency fees are supposed to equal only the amount unions spend on collective bargaining, grievances, and contract administration. That's it. The agency fees are to cover the union organization's overhead only, and unions are prohibited from spending these funds on political activities. The reality is that union spending is not compliant and is usually illegally spent on political activities, and all types of union money are frequently used to support causes and organizations their members don't support. The unions use a labyrinth of money transfers that include union dues and agency fees to various left-leaning organizations to hide the fact they're paying for political campaigns, political party support, and lobbying. These expenditures aren't only illegal when they include agency fees; they are frequently spent with disregard for the opinions and preferences of the employees footing the bills.

Impact on Unions (CON): Continued...

CON: \$250 Million in Political Campaigns in 2022 Elections

According to... *Wall Street Journal*, February 1, 2023

[Editorial Staff, "Big Labor Can't Quit Shrinking," *Wall Street Journal*, February 1, 2023,

Shared:https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K7EwTPD5VZ34sP1EdbW75RZfcxZQZ0B8/view?usp=share_link

Proquest:<https://www.proquest.com/wallstreetjournal/docview/2771237391/7933E4C66D3948E2PQ/39?accountid=39837>

What do the 89.9% of nonunion workers make of this political favoritism to the 10.1%? Good question. Unions spent more than \$250 million in the 2022 elections, mostly on behalf of Democrats, per Open Secrets, and their organizing muscle is still considerable.

AT (Free Riders): Free Rider Claims are Dubious (or doubtful)

According to... *Dr. Adam A. Millsap, Ph.D. Economics, Forbes*, October 23, 2019

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adammillsap/2019/10/23/right-to-work-laws-are-good-for-workers/?sh=4bd3a4c43119>

[Dr. Adam A. Millsap, Ph.D. Economics, Senior Fellow, Stand Together and Stand Together Trust, "Right-To-Work Laws Are Good For Workers," *Forbes*, October 23, 2019]

Additionally, the idea of widespread free-riding is dubious since labor unions don't benefit all union members equally. Younger, healthier, and less experienced workers are often harmed by union agreements that use experience as a basis for promotion or emphasize health and retirement benefits at the cost of higher wages. The recent United Auto Workers agreement with General Motors (GM), for example, kept employees' share of health care costs at 3% as opposed to the 15% GM suggested. While this may be a win for older workers or those with children who consume a lot of health care, younger, childless workers may have preferred higher wages in exchange for high-deductible insurance plans with higher co-pays.

Impact on Worker Freedoms & Prosperity (CON):

CON: Right to Work laws protect workers' rights and freedoms

According to... *Morgan Shields, Legal Counsel, Mackinac.org, April 3, 2019*

<https://www.mackinac.org/right-to-work-means-right-to-freedom>

[Morgan Bowles, Morgan Shields is the Legal Compliance Counsel, "Right-to-Work Means Right-to-Freedom," Mackinac.org (pronounce muh-kuh-nuh), April 3, 2019]

Both the question and the answer are based on a false understanding of what right-to-work laws do. The First Amendment protects not just our right to speak, associate and assemble, but also the right not to do those things. And states with right-to-work laws do a better job protecting First Amendment rights than states that compel individuals to associate with and pay unions. Right-to-work does not mean that people cannot join a union. Take, as an example, Michigan's right-to-work statute: An individual shall not be required as a condition of obtaining or continuing employment to do any of the following: (a) Refrain or resign from membership in, voluntary affiliation with, or voluntary financial support of a labor organization. (b) Become or remain a member of a labor organization. (c) Pay any dues, fees, assessments, or other charges or expenses of any kind or amount or provide anything of value to a labor organization. (d) Pay to any charitable organization or third party an amount that is in lieu of, equivalent to, or any portion of dues, fees, assessments, or other charges or expenses required of members of or employees represented by a labor organization. In other words, employees cannot be forced to join a union, pay a union or pay some third party, just to keep a job. Likewise, individuals cannot be forced to quit their union, and they cannot be required to stop paying their union. In short, everyone wins: People who want to join a union can join a union, and people who don't want to join a union don't have to. Both groups get to work without fear of reprisal.

In other words... it is a violation of our constitutional freedom, specifically the first amendment "right to assembly" to require someone to join or give money to an organization they don't support.

This means... millions of people are able to choose and not be forced into a financial relationship they don't want. The quality of life for millions suffers when such freedoms are denied!

CON (INTRO): "Sinful and Tyrannical" to Compel Financial Contributions --Thomas Jefferson

According to... *The Regulatory Review, April 5, 2019*

<https://www.theregreview.org/2019/04/05/lajeunesse-right-to-work-movement/>

[Raymond J. LaJeunesse, Jr., VP & Legal Director, National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. "The Future Looks Bright for the Right-to-Work Movement," The Regulatory Review, April 5, 2019]

Thomas Jefferson famously said that it is "sinful and tyrannical" for government "to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors." That principle is consistent with the guarantees of freedom of speech and association enshrined in the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment. Yet, some federal and state labor laws in this country have long authorized requirements that workers pay union dues as a condition of employment, requirements known as the "union shop" or "agency shop." Increasingly, however, legislatures and courts are recognizing that workers have a constitutional right to work without being forced to subsidize a union.

CON: Unions NOT Compelled to Provide Services w/o Compensation

According to... *The Regulatory Review, April 5, 2019*

<https://www.theregreview.org/2019/04/05/lajeunesse-right-to-work-movement/>

[Raymond J. LaJeunesse, Jr., VP & Legal Director, National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. "The Future Looks Bright for the Right-to-Work Movement," The Regulatory Review, April 5, 2019]

In Janus, the Court overruled Abood and held that "states and public-sector unions may no longer extract agency fees from non-consenting employees." Janus recognized the First Amendment as a right-to-work provision built into the Constitution for all public employees. Janus also supports the constitutionality of state right-to-work laws. Kentucky's highest court upheld that state's right-to-work law after Janus was decided. Significantly, the Kentucky court reasoned that Janus "conclusively refutes" unions' Takings Clause "claim that they will be compelled to provide services without compensation."

Impact on Worker Freedoms & Prosperity (CON): *Continued...***CON: Increased Worker Freedom**

Adam Millsap, *Forbes Magazine*, October 23, 2019

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adammillsap/2019/10/23/right-to-work-laws-are-good-for-workers/?sh=7c356c233119>

The study explores several possible explanations for why right-to-work laws increase workers' life satisfaction. One is the potential income effect of "free-riding". When workers don't have to pay dues to be union members in right-to-work states, they can use the extra money to buy other things without impacting their union status. However, this doesn't seem to be the mechanism as there's no evidence that workers increase consumption enough to drive the increase in reported life satisfaction.

CON: Increased Job Satisfaction

Adam Millsap, *Forbes Magazine*, October 23, 2019

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adammillsap/2019/10/23/right-to-work-laws-are-good-for-workers/?sh=7c356c233119>

The study finds the enactment of a right-to-work law increased self-reported current life satisfaction, expected future life satisfaction, and sentiments about current and future economic activity among workers. Moreover, the effects were especially large among union workers. For example, the increase in economic sentiment caused by a right-to-work law was nearly half the size of the increase in economic sentiment due to having a college degree. According to the author, this suggests "...that the passage of right-to-work laws fundamentally raises the optimism that union workers have about their economic prospects."

CON: RTW = Increased Job Growth

According to... *Heritage Foundation*, November 9, 2011

<https://www.heritage.org/jobs-and-labor/report/right-work-increases-jobs-and-choices>

[James Sherk, Research Fellow, "Right to Work Increases Jobs and Choices," Heritage Foundation, November 9, 2011]

States that attract more investment should create more jobs. In fact, right-to-work states have lower unemployment rates (9.2 percent) than states without right-to-work laws (9.9 percent).[9] However, right-to-work states exist predominantly in the South and West. Their lower unemployment rates could simply reflect regional differences. To get around this problem, researchers have studied neighboring counties on state borders with and without right-to-work laws. Such counties share the same geography and economic environment, but their main difference is the presence of a right-to-work law on one side of the border. The share of manufacturing jobs in counties in right-to-work states is one-third higher than in adjacent counties in non-right-to-work states.[10] Right-to-work laws attract jobs.

In other words... in areas that have right to work policies, they do much better in terms of job creation and reduced unemployment compared to the neighboring areas without right to work.

This means... millions of people are more likely to be employed and have lower risks of becoming unemployed in right to work areas.

CON: 95% of Union Political Contributions to Democrats

According to... *Wall Street Journal*, January 14, 2023

[Staff, "Big Labor Strikes Back in Michigan," *Wall Street Journal*, January 14, 2023, ProQuest, <https://ezproxy.ivc.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/big-labor-strikes-back-michigan/docview/2765268979/se-2>]

The repeal repays Big Labor, as five of the biggest private unions sent more than 95% of their campaign contributions to Democrats, according to Bridge Michigan. Repealing right to work is a union priority because thousands of workers have left their ranks when given the choice. In the decade since Republicans banned compulsory dues, the share of Michiganders in private unions has dropped by a fifth. That's more than 60,000 workers.

Impact on Worker Freedoms & Prosperity (CON): *Continued...*

CON: Workers are Coerced to Join Unions by Corrupt Politicians

According to... *Wall Street Journal*, January 14, 2023

[Staff, "Big Labor Strikes Back in Michigan," *Wall Street Journal*, January 14, 2023, ProQuest, <https://ezproxy.ivc.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/big-labor-strikes-back-michigan/docview/2765268979/se-2>]

Progressives will consider this gift to unions to be worth the political risk. Mandatory dues from workers forced to join a union will add to union coffers that finance Democrats -- whether or not the workers support those candidates. A movement that has to coerce workers to join has no right to claim to speak for workers.

CON: Forcing People to Pay "Fees" Violates First Amendment

According to... *The Regulatory Review*, April 5, 2019

<https://www.theregreview.org/2019/04/05/lajeunesse-right-to-work-movement/>

[Raymond J. LaJeunesse, Jr., VP & Legal Director, National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. "The Future Looks Bright for the Right-to-Work Movement," *The Regulatory Review*, April 5, 2019]

But when the issue of forced fees again reached the Supreme Court in 2014, this time in a case concerning home-care providers, the Court criticized the Abood Court's analysis as "questionable on several grounds" and refused to apply Abood to home-care providers who are not public employees. Instead, the Court applied "the bedrock principle" that "no person in this country may be compelled to subsidize speech by a third party that he or she does not wish to support." Applying this right-to-work principle, the Court found that forcing home-care providers to pay union fees violated the First Amendment. The issue reached the Supreme Court again in *Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees*, decided in 2018. This time the plaintiffs were public employees forced to pay union fees as a condition of employment. The decision recognized that when a union deals with a government employer their actions are inherently political, because they affect the use of public resources and may demand public policy decisions. For this reason, the Court held "that public-sector agency-shop arrangements violate the First Amendment, and Abood erred in concluding otherwise."

CON: 99% of Union Political Contributions to Democrats

According to... *Daily Signal*, July 06, 2021

<https://www.dailysignal.com/2021/07/06/why-you-should-still-care-about-big-labors-disproportionate-clout/>

[Michael Watson, Research Director, Capital Research Center, "Why You Should Still Care About Big Labor's Disproportionate Clout," *Daily Signal*, July 06, 2021]

But because so few workers are members of unions today—with only 10.8% of the total workforce and 6.3% of the private sector workforce being union members—it's easy to overlook the role that labor unions still play in the economy—and especially the role they play in politics. To the extent that most people who don't pay close attention to such things are aware of "social justice" unionism, they see it in political campaign contributions. Labor unions, especially government employee unions, are well-known as a core constituency of the Democratic Party, giving nearly 90% of their institutional political contributions to Democratic candidates—despite the fact that 40% of union families support Republicans. But those contributions are only the very tip of the iceberg of Big Labor's political involvement. The Center for Union Facts has investigated the spending on consulting and advocacy organizations made by the primarily private sector labor unions that report their expenditures to the Department of Labor. It turns out that more than 99% of those expenditures, which amounted to \$1.6 billion from 2010 through 2018, go to support left-wing "infrastructure" (i.e., think tanks, advocacy and organizing groups, vendors, etc.). Making matters worse, those contributions come principally from members' dues funds, rather than special opt-in political funds.

Impact on Worker Freedoms & Prosperity (CON): *Continued...***CON: RTW Increases Worker Compensation**

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

[Matthew Lilley and Benjamin Austin, Matthew Lilley, Ph.D. Candidate in Business Economics, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021] Note: A Job Market Paper uses three chapters of the Ph.D. candidate's doctoral dissertation to demonstrate their expertise as an economist.

This paper has examined the impact of RTW laws on a range of outcomes including industry location, local labor market conditions, and intergenerational mobility. We document several economically meaningful differences in economic outcomes between neighbouring RTW and non-RTW locations. These differences do not appear to have existed prior to the passage of RTW laws, are not explained by a extensive battery of other state economic policies, and are not purely local in nature. Specifically, using a county border-pair discontinuity, we find that RTW laws are associated with a 3.2 percentage point increase in the share of manufacturing employment. The impact of RTW laws extend beyond industry mix, and we find that RTW counts have 1.6 percentage points higher employment-to-population, 0.39 percentage points lower unemployment, and 0.34 percentage point lower level of disability receipt. We also find some evidence for higher average wages in RTW locations, although some of this may be driven by higher average hours worked.

In other words... research from Harvard University proves that right-to-work laws are uniquely responsible for significant economic benefits such as increased employment, reduced unemployment, and higher average wages.

This means... millions of people working in these areas enjoy a better quality of life from right-to-work laws.

CON: Unions Reduce Employment/Wages for non-Union Workers

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

[Matthew Lilley and Benjamin Austin, Matthew Lilley, Ph.D. Candidate in Business Economics, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021] Note: A Job Market Paper uses three chapters of the Ph.D. candidate's doctoral dissertation to demonstrate their expertise as an economist.

Supposing RTW laws reduce unionization, the relevant question becomes how this differential union density produces broader impacts on labor market outcomes. To this end, we propose a simple spatial model where free-riding leads to reduced union coverage in RTW relative to non-RTW areas. Under US law, a union elected by a majority workplace vote has the right to become the exclusive representative of all eligible workers (including workers not in the union) in collective bargaining with the firm, which is compelled to bargain in good faith over wages and other conditions. This gives unions the ability to raise wages above the competitive equilibrium market-clearing wage. To capture this, we embed the canonical monopoly union model of wage setting, under which unions choose the wage level that maximises the extraction of rents from the firm, into a spatial framework, . In our model's equilibrium, wages in unionized sectors are set with a markup over the free-market wage (i.e. pertaining to non-unionized industries) in the same location. The wage markup from unionization is increasing in the capital share of income, such that industries where capital is more important in production are more likely to unionize.³ Facing higher wages, unionized firms respond by hiring less labor. Market clearing then leads to lower wages in non-unionized industries to absorb the surplus job applicants. Individuals, who have idiosyncratic preferences over where to live and work observe wages (and the feasibility of obtaining a job) in each industry-location pair and thus choose their preferred workplace-residence pair. The model predicts that in equilibrium, by exogenously reducing union coverage, RTW areas will have greater employment than, and experience net inward migration from, non-RTW areas.

In other words... Harvard research proves that unions' attempts to maximize wage and benefit gains reduce employment for other workers and drive down overall wages.

This means... right-to-work laws increase the quality of millions of all workers by increasing overall employment and making the cost of labor more competitive.

Impact on Worker Freedoms & Prosperity (CON): *Continued...*

CON: RTW = Increased Wage and Income Growth

John Locke Foundation, April 18, 2022

<https://www.johnlocke.org/right-to-work-laws-a-boon-to-manufacturing/>

Right-to-Work laws, which simply state that employees cannot be compelled to belong to or pay dues to a union as a condition of employment, are decidedly pro-worker and pro-growth. As a study recently released by the Locke Foundation reported, “States with right-to-work laws enjoy lower unemployment rates, higher job growth, and higher wage and income growth compared with forced union states.”

CON: Unions = Higher Unemployment Rates

Morgan Reynolds, The Library of Economics and Liberty, Accessed January 27, 2023

<https://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/LaborUnions.html>

Many unions have won higher wages and better working conditions for their members. In doing so, however, they have reduced the number of jobs available in unionized companies. That second effect occurs because of the basic law of demand: if unions successfully raise the price of labor, employers will purchase less of it. Thus, unions are a major anticompetitive force in labor markets. Their gains come at the expense of consumers, nonunion workers, the jobless, taxpayers, and owners of corporations.

Impact on the Economy (CON):

CON: Significant Reduction in Poverty (with Increased Upward Mobility!)

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

[Matthew Lilley and Benjamin Austin, Matthew Lilley, Ph.D. Candidate in Business Economics, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021] Note: A Job Market Paper uses three chapters of the Ph.D. candidate's doctoral dissertation to demonstrate their expertise as an economist.

Finally, we examine the impact of RTW laws on poverty and intergenerational mobility. We find that RTW laws are also associated with lower poverty and greater upward mobility, with a 1.7 percentage point increase in the probability of ending up in the top quintile as adults for children who grow up at the 25th percentile of the income distribution. This is a significant difference, and is also reflected in causal exposure estimates, where RTW counties have a 0.10 percentile point higher annual impact than neighboring non-RTW counties per year of additional childhood exposure.

In other words... Harvard research proves that right-to-work laws result in significantly lower poverty rates and contribute to greater upward mobility.

This means... The quality of life for millions of people in these communities is much better, along with a reduced demand for government services freeing up valuable resources.

CON: RTW = Attracting More Employers

According to... Wall Street Journal, January 14, 2023

[Staff, "Big Labor Strikes Back in Michigan," Wall Street Journal, January 14, 2023, ProQuest, <https://ezproxy.ivc.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/big-labor-strikes-back-michigan/docview/2765268979/se-2>]

The cost of repeal will be paid by the whole state because right to work attracts employers. A 2022 study by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy compared county-level job markets in Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin and Ohio. The first three are right-to-work states while Ohio isn't. The study found that right to work caused a 26% boost in the manufacturing share of employment in Michigan, plus a 30% boost in construction and a 42.5% increase in transportation and warehousing. Employers in these fields set up shops in the places with the fewest restrictions on labor.

CON: Increased Economic Growth, Innovation, and Productivity

According to... Dr. Jeffrey A. Eisenach, NERA Economic Consulting, Updated: May 2018

https://www.nera.com/content/dam/nera/publications/2018/PUB_Right_to_Work_Laws_0518_web.pdf

[Jeffrey A. Eisenach, Ph.D., Managing Director and Co-Chair of NERA's Communications, Media, and Internet Practice, "Right-to-Work Laws: The Economic Evidence," NERA Economic Consulting, Updated: May 2018]

There is a large body of rigorous economic research on the effects of RTW laws on economic performance. Overall, that research suggests that RTW laws have a positive impact on economic growth, employment, investment and innovation, both directly and indirectly. Specifically: • RTW laws directly affect economic performance through their impact on business location decisions, especially in heavily unionized industries such as manufacturing. Other things equal, businesses are more likely to locate in states with RTW laws. There is also evidence that RTW laws have a direct, positive effect on employment, output and personal income. • RTW laws do not lead to lower average wages in either unionized or non-unionized industries. There is some evidence that the long-run effect of RTW laws is to raise wage rates as a result of increased productivity. • RTW laws also affect economic performance indirectly through lower rates of union density. The weight of the evidence indicates that lower union density is associated with higher levels of employment, increased investment and R&D spending and increased innovation.

In other words... there is direct evidence proving that right to work laws increase the economy by increasing economic growth, innovation, and over the long term increased productivity.

This means... right-to-work laws benefit the quality of life of millions of people by importing more jobs through business creation and relocation as well as increasing the support of businesses.

THE ECONOMY (CON): *Continued...***CON: *Unreliability of Recent RTW Trends (Longitudinal studies are preferred)***

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

[Matthew Lilley and Benjamin Austin, Matthew Lilley, Ph.D. Candidate in Business Economics, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021] Note: A Job Market Paper uses three chapters of the Ph.D. candidate's doctoral dissertation to demonstrate their expertise as an economist.

Since most RTW laws, and thus extant RTW borders, have been in place for multiple decades, our identification strategy allows us to use modern econometric methods to study the long-run economic impact of RTW laws. Why focus on long-run border differences? Theoretically, the most plausible effects of RTW laws operate through capital investment and firm location choice, and it may take many years for convergence to long-run equilibrium capital stock differences to occur. Thus, analysing long-run outcomes is contextually advisable, and is a task for which our border-pairs differences approach is well suited. By comparison, since most states that adopted RTW laws did so in the 1940s and 1950s, for most of the outcomes of interest we do not have granular data at sufficient frequency to undertake alternative empirical approaches such as difference-in-differences analysis. To be clear, the relative dearth of historical data is a limitation upon our analysis. If consistent historical data series were available, a difference-in-border-differences strategy would likely be preferable. In this spirit, where possible, we use historical data to show that there were no meaningful differences in outcomes between RTW and non-RTW border areas prior to the adoption of RTW laws. While there are a small number of states that have adopted RTW policies recently enough that a difference-in-differences or synthetic control approach is feasible, it would be less compelling than our long-run border discontinuity approach for three reasons. First, consistent with the argument above, studying effects from short-duration policy experiments may substantially underestimate the long-run causal impact of RTW passage. Second, many of these states (Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana) adopted RTW laws in the aftermath of the 2008 Financial Crisis, and during a period in which their large automobile industries received a substantial bailout making a ceteris paribus comparison difficult. Finally, given that these RTW laws were an endogenous policy response from legislatures, we would be very concerned about violations of the parallel trends assumption prior to enactment of the laws.

In other words... Harvard research proves comparing trends from the recent adoption of right-to-work laws has too many variables making such comparisons difficult or unreliable.

This means... Politicized or incomplete analyses about right-to-work laws make such evidence unreliable when compared to scholarly evidence from our economic experts.

CON: *Economically Important Impacts (ex. RTW = 3.5% higher employment)*

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

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Our headline border-pairs discontinuity estimates suggest that RTW laws have economically important impacts on labor market and socioeconomic outcomes. First, we estimate that the manufacturing share of employment is 3.23 percentage points (or approximately 28%) higher on the RTW side of the policy border. This is consistent with the theoretical prediction that RTW laws reduce production costs for firms in union-exposed industries, and confirms the result of Holmes (1998). Additionally, we find little evidence that this border effect has changed meaningfully over recent decades. We then turn to the question of whether this increase in manufacturing employment merely crowds out employment in other industries. We find that it does not. Specifically, in our sample, RTW counties have employment-to-population ratios (measured by location of workplace) 3.51 percentage points higher than their non-RTW neighbours on average. Some of this greater availability of nearby jobs accrues to residents of the RTW counties, who we estimate enjoy 1.58 percentage point higher employment-to-population ratios than their non-RTW neighbours. The remainder appears to be well explained by induced net interstate commuting into the RTW location, which we estimate amounts to 2.42 percent of the adult population

THE ECONOMY (CON): Continued...**CON: RTW = Reduced Labor Costs**

Cambridge University Press, June 7, 2021

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/business-and-politics/article/foreign-investment-and-righttowork-laws/4EF33E2C4137D8F411942347A41DF60C>

RTW laws might have an impact through at least two channels. First, they may decrease overall costs of labor by decreasing union strength and thereby muting wage demands. Second, they may operate as costly signals to foreign firms that they are now welcome or that states are focused on improving the overall operating environment for business.

CON: Increased Productivity (ex. non-union employees unlikely to strike)

Doucouliagos and Laroche, Regents of the University of California, October 2003

<https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/17556769.pdf>

Unions can have a direct negative impact on productivity by restricting managerial discretion. For example, unions may force firms to adopt inefficient personnel hiring and firing practices. Legal restrictions against layoffs and closed-shop arrangements have an impact on efficient factor usage and hence productivity. Unions also may favor restrictive work practices, curbing the pace of work, hours of work, and skill formation. They also may obstruct the introduction of new technology (see McKersie and Klein 1983). Productivity is affected also through strike activity. This arises through working days lost, as well as noncooperative behavior that precedes or follows strikes (see Flaherty 1987).

CON: Increased Economic Growth

Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Projections, Accessed January 28, 2023

<https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#:~:text=Right%2Dto%2DWork%20States%20Encourage%20Economic%20Growth,-Right%2Dto%2Dwork&text=Both%20companies%20and%20workers%20benefit,employment%20by%20approximately%2030%20percent>.

Right-to-work proponents believe that these laws improve economic growth and allow workplaces to remain competitive in a global economy. Both companies and workers benefit from a better economy, as wages and corporate earnings increase. Studies have found that right-to-work laws increased manufacturing employment by approximately 30 percent. Many state legislatures have passed right-to-work laws in the hope of attracting new business to their state.

CON: RTW = Attracting Manufacturing Jobs

John Locke Foundation, April 18, 2022

<https://www.johnlocke.org/right-to-work-laws-a-boon-to-manufacturing/>

Even more recently, a study highlighted by the Wall Street Journal found that right-to-work is a magnet for manufacturing and construction jobs as well: "We found that states with right-to-work protections have a higher employment share in certain industries, such as manufacturing and construction, as a percentage of total private employment. Notably, states that have enacted these laws since 2000 have a 20.7% higher manufacturing share than they otherwise would without a right-to-work law."

CON: Unions = Increased Labor Costs

Small Business Chron, January 28, 2019

<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/disadvantages-union-membership-employers-perspective-33242.html>

One of the main disadvantages of having your employees unionize is that your labor costs will likely rise. Union workers make approximately 22 percent more than their non-union counterparts, according to data provided at the website of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. With collective bargaining, employees are free to talk with each other before sending a representative on their behalf to negotiate wages, benefits and working conditions, all of which can lead to higher production costs.

THE ECONOMY (CON): *Continued...*

CON: Unions = Harder to Remove Ineffective Workers

Small Business Chron, January 28, 2019

<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/disadvantages-union-membership-employers-perspective-33242.html>

If you promote workers based on parameters such as merit, productivity or other objective means, you may lose this opportunity with a union workforce. Many unions negotiate workplace rules that promote and protect workers based on seniority, rather than merit. This means that if you need to terminate a number of workers, you must terminate those workers you've hired most recently, not those workers who are the least productive. Your ability to discipline workers will also decrease, as union rules and reactions to instances of employee discipline limit your options to deal with workers you deem poor performers.

CON: Unions = Increased Legal Actions/Costs

Small Business Chron, January 28, 2019

<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/disadvantages-union-membership-employers-perspective-33242.html>

With an organized labor force, you are likely to face more challenges to actions you take regarding an employee's status. While individual employees might not have the financial resources or will to contest such things as a termination, a demotion, a lack of promotion, or alleged harassment or discrimination, a union worker may be encouraged to file a suit or appeal your actions, and may be offered union support to do so.

CON: Unions = Reduced Productivity

Doucouliaagos and Laroche, Regents of the University of California, October 2003

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CON: Increased Employment Without Lowering Wages

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/matthew-lilley/files/long-run-effects-right-to-work.pdf>

[Matthew Lilley, PhD Candidate, Harvard University, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Working Paper, November 16, 2021]

In recent decades, states with Right-To-Work (RTW) laws have experienced higher employment and population growth than states without such laws. We investigate the extent to which these patterns, and other related labor market phenomena, are causally explained by these laws and closely related policies. Using border-pair differences, we find RTW laws are associated with a 3.2 percentage point increase in the manufacturing share of employment. This increase in manufacturing does not merely crowd out other economic activity; we find that people who live in RTW regions have 1.6 percentage points higher employment, 1.4 percentage points higher labor force participation, and 0.34 percentage points lower disability receipt than residents of similar non-RTW areas. However, wages and labor compensation do not appear to be lower on average. In turn, these differences appear to influence both individual residence and workplace location choice. Since their passage, locations with RTW laws have seen higher population growth, and on net attract commuters from non-RTW locations. These labor market effects also spill over into socioeconomic outcomes; RTW laws are also associated with lower childhood poverty rates and greater upward mobility. In particular, children at the 25th percentile of the parental income distribution during childhood have a 1.7 percentage point higher probability of reaching the top income quintile during adulthood if they grew up in a RTW location. These differences in outcomes were not present prior to the passage of RTW laws, persist after controlling for other major policy differences between states, and do not appear primarily attributable to local substitution. Together, this provides evidence that these patterns are substantially caused by RTW laws.

THE ECONOMY (CON): *Continued...*

CON: Increased Employment Without Lowering Wages

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/matthew-lilley/files/long-run-effects-right-to-work.pdf>

[Matthew Lilley, PhD Candidate, Harvard University, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Working Paper, November 16, 2021]

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THE COMMUNITY (CON):

CON: Significant Impact on Local Economy

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

[Matthew Lilley and Benjamin Austin, Matthew Lilley, Ph.D. Candidate in Business Economics, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021] Note: A Job Market Paper uses three chapters of the Ph.D. candidate's doctoral dissertation to demonstrate their expertise as an economist.

While this paper is unable to determine the general equilibrium effects of RTW policy, our estimated border effects show that RTW laws have a significant impact on local economic outcomes. Future research could focus on the degree to which these local impacts, particularly on intergenerational mobility, extend beyond border regions.

In other words... Harvard research shows that local businesses within these communities prosper as right-to-work laws stimulate local economies.

This means... millions of people living in these communities enjoy a better quality of life as the local economy becomes stronger.

CON: Violence from U.S. Strikes Must End

According to... Richard A. Epstein, writes that there is "A Needed Check On Union Violence" for the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, January 18, 2023

<https://www.hoover.org/research/needed-check-union-violence>

[Richard A. Epstein, Senior Fellow, "A Needed Check On Union Violence," Hoover Institution, January 18, 2023]

Recently, American unions have pushed hard to increase their power in the employment market. Unions may strike and thereby shut down a reluctant firm to extract a favorable deal and will often do so even though that strike action imposes economic losses on union members. But just how hard will unions press to get a strongly pro-union labor contract? Last week in *Glacier Northwest v. International Brotherhood of Teamsters*, the US Supreme Court heard an oral argument on a case that will help answer that question.

He concludes his article with...

I have strongly opposed modern labor law in part because the employees' collective refusal to deal violates the antitrust laws per se. Section 6 of the 1914 Clayton Act first excused this, and then the NLRA affirmatively promoted such actions. To take the exceptional protections for union activities one step further, by allowing Garmon pre-emption to cover willful property destruction, would be the height of folly. From the oral argument, it looks as if the three liberal justices will lose out to their conservative colleagues. A ruling in favor of the employer would correct the deeply flawed decision of the Washington Supreme Court.

In other words... Epstein worries that willful union violence and property damage should not be tolerated by the courts.

This means... The quality of life of those in the community suffers greatly when violence destroys property or possibly even worse.

CON: Union Members Can Legally Strike

Small Business Chron, January 28, 2019

<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/disadvantages-union-membership-employers-perspective-33242.html>

If you do not agree to the wage, benefits or workplace rules requested by union members, they are legally allowed to strike. Federal laws limit your ability to fire striking workers. A strike not only costs you money directly from lost production, but causes other problems, as well. Publicity from a strike can cause a decrease in sales if sympathetic customers boycott your products or services. Your vendors and commercial customers may stop working with you, anticipating that you may not be able to pay your bills or deliver what they buy.

Answers to Misc. PRO Arguments (CON):

CON (vs. PRO Evidence): Politicized Evidence and Faulty Comparisons Should Be Rejected!

According to... Matthew Lilley, Harvard University, Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew-lilley/publications/long-run-effects-right-to-work>

[Matthew Lilley and Benjamin Austin, Matthew Lilley, Ph.D. Candidate in Business Economics, "The Long-Run Effects of Right to Work Laws," Job Market Paper, November 16, 2021] Note: A Job Market Paper uses three chapters of the Ph.D. candidate's doctoral dissertation to demonstrate their expertise as an economist.

The fundamental difficulty in identifying the effect of RTW laws is that such laws are not randomly assigned and the states with and without RTW laws differ in numerous ways. When studying how outcomes differ by RTW status across large geographies (such as states or the entire US), unless the effect of every such difference can be accounted for, properly isolating the residual difference in outcomes attributable to differences in policy is extremely difficult. To resolve this, we focus our attention on a narrow geographical band around RTW policy borders where the RTW status discontinuously changes. That is, we focus on the set of adjacent pairs of sub-state geographic units (primarily counties) where one unit has RTW laws and the other does not. Except for differences in policy, which change discontinuously at state borders, a priori, we can expect these RTW and non-RTW locations to be similar by virtue of their proximity and because other factors affecting economic outcomes such as demographics, climate, cost of living and exposure to technological change tend to vary smoothly across space. Accordingly, for each border pair, the non-RTW unit acts as a natural control group for the RTW unit. Indeed, as we will show, these border-adjacent non-RTW units are highly similar to their RTW neighbours across a wide range of observable demographic dimensions, which in turn suggests that they are likely to have highly similar unobservable characteristics as well. Additionally, the two sets of locations had very similar economic outcomes prior to the passage of RTW laws. The set of RTW-border pairs thus provides a set of policy experiments for identifying the causal effect of RTW laws. Our identifying assumption is that except for the policy discontinuity at the state border, we would expect these units to have equal economic outcomes. Any difference in observed economic outcomes can thus be attributed to the difference in policy.

In other words... Harvard research proves that comparing state by state will NOT result in accurate comparisons because there are far too many variables to account for.

This means... the statistics/conclusions used by our opponents are almost entirely invalid.

CON (vs. Safety): Worker Rights and Protections Already Exist

According to... the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Last Accessed: January 2023

<https://www.osha.gov/workers>

Know Your Rights: Federal law entitles you to a safe workplace. Your employer must keep your workplace free of known health and safety hazards. You have the right to speak up about hazards without fear of retaliation. You also have the right to: Receive workplace safety and health training in a language you understand. Work on machines that are safe Receive required safety equipment, such as gloves or a harness and lifeline for falls. Be protected from toxic chemicals. Request an OSHA inspection, and speak to the inspector. Report an injury or illness, and get copies of your medical records. Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses. See results of tests taken to find workplace hazards.

CON (vs Democracy): Political Opposition to RTW is Driven by Self-Interest

According to... Adam A. Millsap, Senior Fellow, Stand Together Trust, Forbes, October 23, 2019

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adammillsap/2019/10/23/right-to-work-laws-are-good-for-workers>

[Adam A. Millsap, Senior Fellow, Stand Together Trust, "Right-To-Work Laws Are Good For Workers," Forbes, October 23, 2019]

So, if right-to-work laws make workers better off, why do so many Democratic politicians oppose them? Perhaps because right-to-work laws harm their political prospects. A study by James Feigenbaum, Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, and Vanessa Williamson finds that right-to-work laws reduce Democratic presidential vote shares and political contributions from organized labor, while also moving state policy in a more conservative direction. Thus, politicians' self-interest rather than a benevolent concern for workers is likely a reason behind the support of the PRO Act that would ban state right-to-work laws.

Answers to Misc. PRO Arguments (CON): *Continued...*

CON (vs. Safety): Unions Use 'Safety' as Leverage (ex. Disingenuous intimidation tactic)

According to... Conn, Maciel, Carey's National OSHA Practice Group, June 13, 2017

<https://oshadefensereport.com/2017/06/13/unions-leverage-osa-and-other-dept-of-labor-enforcement-as-an-organizing-tactic/>

[Kara Maciel, Chair, Labor • Employment Practice Group, "Unions Leverage OSHA and other Dept. of Labor Enforcement as an Organizing Tactic," Conn, Maciel, Carey's National OSHA Practice Group, June 13, 2017]

However, unions are more and more often engaging with or depending on the regulations of other federal agencies as a tactic to gain leverage during organizing campaigns. There are numerous ways a union may influence the outcome of an organizing campaign by using federal agencies, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA") or the Wage and Hour Division ("WHD") of the Department of Labor ("DOL"), to persuade employees to embrace the union, or to put pressure on employers to concede to union representation.

Excellent 'Extra' Evidence (CON):

CON: Right-to-Work States Encourage Economic Growth

According to... Projections Inc., February 14, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Expert 25 years, "How Living In Right-To-Work States Benefits Both Workers And Their Companies," Projections Inc., February 14, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#t-1666530364079>]

Right-to-Work States Encourage Economic Growth: Right-to-work proponents believe that these laws improve economic growth and allow workplaces to remain competitive in a global economy. Both companies and workers benefit from a better economy, as wages and corporate earnings increase. Studies have found that right-to-work laws increased manufacturing employment by approximately 30 percent. Many state legislatures have passed right-to-work laws in the hope of attracting new business to their state. Critics have stated that determining how right-to-work policies truly affect a state's economy is difficult. They point to differences in state infrastructure and policies independent of right-to-work laws that may affect employment numbers. However, many of the states with the strongest economies are also right-to-work states.

CON: RTW Laws Exempt Workers From Forced Union Membership

According to... Projections Inc., February 14, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Expert 25 years, "How Living In Right-To-Work States Benefits Both Workers And Their Companies," Projections Inc., February 14, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#t-1666530364079>]

Laws Exempt Workers From Forced Union Membership: Many unions collect \$500 to \$1,000 in dues per year from each worker. Without right-to-work laws, a worker may have to join the union at their workplace or find a different job. In non-right-to-work states, once 51 percent of the voting workforce votes to unionize, ALL workers must join the union and pay dues as a condition of continued employment. Right-to-work laws allow workers to choose whether or not union membership makes financial sense for their individual goals. Some unions are also tied to political causes that an individual worker may feel uncomfortable supporting. Without compulsory union membership, companies can hire workers who aren't interested in union membership.

CON: Unions Can Flourish in Right-to-Work States

According to... Projections Inc., February 14, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Expert 25 years, "How Living In Right-To-Work States Benefits Both Workers And Their Companies," Projections Inc., February 14, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#t-1666530364079>]

Unions Can Flourish in Right-to-Work States: Some right-to-work supporters argue that these laws can actually lead to stronger unions over time. By forcing the union to show constant value for their union fees, unions become proactive in addressing worker concerns. These laws also allow workers to leave the union if they feel that the organization is no longer meeting their needs. Unions can flourish in right-to-work states. In Las Vegas, the Culinary 226 union represents nearly 100 percent of the workforce, composed of hotel housekeepers, all paying union dues. However, there is also evidence that right-to-work laws weaken unions, as some workers decide not to pay dues.

CON: RTW Laws = Attract Economic Investment and Growth

According to... Projections Inc., February 14, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Expert 25 years, "How Living In Right-To-Work States Benefits Both Workers And Their Companies," Projections Inc., February 14, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#t-1666530364079>]

Proponents of right-to-work laws say that companies often consider these rules when deciding where to locate their facilities. Unions are more common in states without right-to-work laws because union organizing is more profitable. Therefore, for companies that prefer to avoid unions, locating in a right-to-work state reduces the chance that a union will organize. If more companies become established in right-to-work states, workers have more choices when looking for work and more companies competing for their skills.

Excellent 'Extra' Evidence (CON): Continued...

CON: Right-to-Work Laws Boost Local Economies

According to... *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Expert 25 years, "How Living In Right-To-Work States Benefits Both Workers And Their Companies," *Projections Inc.*, February 14, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#t-1666530364079>]

Research shows that companies prefer to operate in locations that have right-to-work laws -- something which boosts the local economy in these states. This means more job opportunities and a wider range of industries in some towns and cities. These states also have lower unemployment rates than unionized states, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The job market also grew twice as much in these states from 1990 through 2014. It's no surprise, then, that 480,000 people moved to states with right-to-work laws between July 2015-July 2015 alone.

CON: RTW Laws = Unions Focus on Helping Disgruntled Workers

According to... *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, IRI's Director of Business Development, Expert 25 years, "How Living In Right-To-Work States Benefits Both Workers And Their Companies," *Projections Inc.*, February 14, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-laws-benefit-both-workers-and-their-companies/#t-1666530364079>]

"Most companies want to avoid getting unionized," says the public policy think tank The Heritage Foundation. "Workers in right-to-work states can still unionize. However, right-to-work reduces the financial incentives for unions to organize aggressively: they have less money on the line when workers can opt-out. Consequently, right-to-work causes them to focus their energies on companies with dissatisfied workers. Workers in these workplaces are both easier to organize and more likely to pay dues if the union wins."

CON (vs Fair share): Unions' Salaries = Increasing, Driving Up the Fees!

According to... *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, Director of Business Development, Expert, 25yrs! "3 Ways Right-To-Work Laws Benefit Your Company," *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-benefits-your-company/>]

In unionized states, workers have to pay mandatory dues -- regular payments to fund union activities. Employees have no say in this matter, and these fees often take a chunk out of their monthly paycheck. Average union dues total \$400, and unionized organizations cost between 25-35 percent more than non-unionized ones. Expect these fees to rise further as union organizers pay their officers higher salaries in the future.

CON: RTW Laws = Increase Living Standards & Opportunities (Choice!)

According to... *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, Director of Business Development, Expert, 25yrs! "3 Ways Right-To-Work Laws Benefit Your Company," *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-benefits-your-company/>]

In right-to-work states, on the other hand, workers have a choice. Employees don't have to pay union dues to keep their jobs, and unions can't use these payments as bargaining chips on behalf of their members. The government of Obion County -- located in Tennessee, lists the benefits of right-to-work on their website. They say employees are "free to decide how to spend their own money" and "free to decide their own representation." As a result, workers experience an overall higher standard of living and better employment opportunities.

CON (vs Lower Wages): RTW Laws = Same or Better Wages (ex. Cost of Living)

According to... *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017

[Jennifer Orechwa, Director of Business Development, Expert, 25yrs! "3 Ways Right-To-Work Laws Benefit Your Company," *Projections Inc.*, October 31, 2017, <https://projectionsinc.com/unionproof/how-right-to-work-benefits-your-company/>]

Unionists say that right-to-work legislation lowers wages, but research suggests otherwise. Once Heritage Research Fellow James Sherk adjusted cost-of-living differences, he found private-sector wages in right-to-work states and non-right-to-work states are practically the same. One study goes even further and suggests that right-to-work laws have provided workers with higher wages. Real personal income in these states increased twice as much as non-right-to-work states from 1970 through 2013, according to economics emeritus professor at Ohio University Richard Vedder.