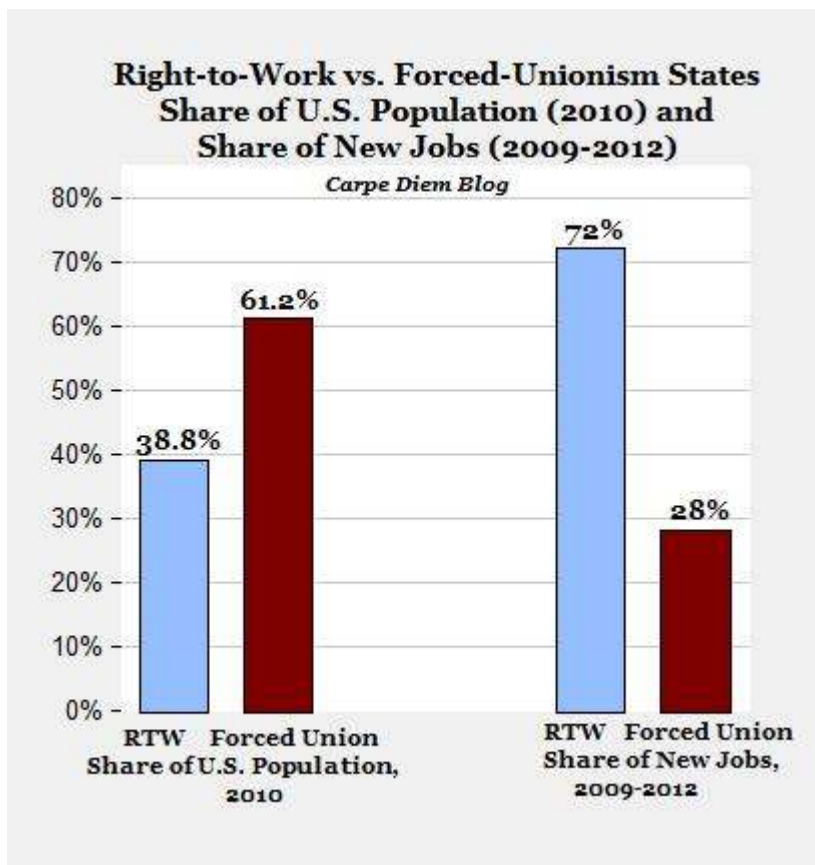


Since 2009, right to work states created 4x as many jobs as forced union states and may have helped Obama's re-election

Mark J. Perry | November 9, 2012, 8:11 pm



President Obama, speaking at an AFL-CIO conference in April this year, "I believe when folks try to take collective bargaining rights away by passing so-called right-to-work laws, which might also be called 'right-to-work for less' laws, that's not about economics, that's about politics." Well, President Obama, you might want to consider that it was the disproportionate job creation in those "right to work for less" states that may have helped you get re-elected, here's why:

From Stan Greer writing on the National Institute for Labor Relations Research blog:

Exit polling conducted by the Associated Press indicates one important reason the President was able to win at all was that four in 10 voters believed the national economy was improving, while only three in 10 believed it was getting worse.

To convince voters things were getting better, the Obama campaign pointed to the millions of jobs that have been created since the recession officially ended in June 2009. Household employment data for the 50 states and Washington, D.C., do show an overall net gain of 2.59 million jobs through this September.

Ironically, the bulk of the increase occurred in the 22 states that have had Right to Work laws on the books since June 2009. Their aggregate household employment grew by 1.86 million, or 3.4%. (Since Indiana did not adopt its Right to Work law until this February, the 19,000 jobs it added are not

included.) Because Right to Work laws protect employees from being fired for refusal to pay union dues or fees, Big Labor bosses hate them. And the union hierarchy's massive, forced dues-fueled campaign support is the single most important reason the President was reelected.

At the same time, Right to Work states (again excluding Indiana) were responsible for 72% of all net household job growth across the U.S. from June 2009 through September 2012 (see chart above). If these states' job increase had been no better than the 0.85% experienced by forced-unionism states as a group, the nationwide job increase would have been less than half as great. And the President wouldn't have been able even to pretend the economy was in recovery.

During his first term, Barack Obama repeatedly expressed virulent opposition to Right to Work laws and enthusiastically supported "card-check" forced-unionism measures and other legislative and bureaucratic proposals designed to shove millions of additional workers under union control. Fortunately, Right to Work proponents generally thwarted him.

Now a genuine national recovery depends on the President calling off his administration's guerrilla attacks on Right to Work states for the next four years. Will Obama, his congressional allies, and his political appointees at last step aside and allow the 23 Right to Work states to serve as the bulwark of U.S. economic recovery? Or will they continue trying to deter employers and employees from setting up shop and expanding in Right to Work states?

MP: The chart above shows just how important the 21 Right to Work (RTW) states have been to job creation during the economic recovery. Since the recession ended in June 2009, almost three out of every four jobs added to U.S. payrolls have been in Right to Work states (1.86 million out of 2.59 million), even though those 22 states represent only 38.8% of the U.S. population (120 million). In contrast, only about one of every four new jobs were created in forced-unionism states (730,000), even though more than 61% of Americans live in those 28 states (189 million). Relative to their population, the Right to Work states have been job-creating powerhouses during the recovery, and forced union states haven't even come close to "carrying their weight" in terms of their share of the population. Adjusting for differences in population, Right to Work states created four new jobs for every one job added in forced union states, because those 21 RTW states created 2.54 times more jobs even though forced union states have 1.6 times as many people.

Ironically, it may have been the strength of job growth in the "right to work for less" states that helped President Obama get re-elected, despite his animosity to the labor laws in those states and his favoritism towards forced unionism. As we struggle to create jobs through another "jobless recovery," maybe the president could be a little more open-minded in his second term towards the job-creating labor policies in the RTW states that have been creating jobs at four times the population-adjusted rate as the forced states. Wishful thinking...

Tags: Forced unionism, labor markes, Right to work