

Workers' Choice FAQ

Why do you call it Workers' Choice and not Right to Work?

MI workers already have a right to work. What they don't have is the ability to choose to contribute their hard-earned dollars to unions in the form of dues or not to contribute. Workers' Choice legislation would provide them with that choice.

Workers' Choice is Anti-Union

Giving workers a choice is not anti-union. Currently, 17% of MI workforce is in a union. After Workers' Choice passes, 17% will still be in a union – IF the rank and file believes that their union management represents them well. If the rank and file is happy with their representation, Workers' Choice would have no impact on their employment. By making union management responsive to their workers, unions will be strengthened not weakened. RTW states feature greater growth in union ranks than forced unionization states.

Right-to-Work equals Right-to-Work-for-Less

While it is true that many forced unionization states have higher wages, it is also true that in the majority of RTW states, workers have more purchasing power with the wages they earn. 68% of RTW states have higher "disposable income" (i.e. income after taxes and cost of living adjustments) than forced unionization states.

Right-to-Work Eliminates Collective Bargaining

Right-to-Work does not eliminate collective bargaining. There is no impact to the collective bargaining process at all if union bosses are providing enough value to their rank and file members that they choose to continue having dues deducted from their paycheck.

Right-to-Work Eliminates Unions

Union members transferred to right to work states report they have the choice of several unions or none at all. This competition makes the unions more responsive. They cannot let a grievance sit or refuse to send an agent, or they lose members. It makes unions better.

Free Riders

Federal Labor Law is quite clear in granting union officials the ability to represent only those who wish to have their representation -- they are not forced to carry anyone. The more sinister reality -- it would seem union officials are more interested in forcing workers to carry them and can only do so by forcing all workers under monopoly union representation.

Most union supporters are unaware unions officials could elect members only bargaining, and thus, negate the "free rider" problem they allege Right to Work laws present. Since the free rider argument is predicated on non-members supposedly benefitting from "representation" they have been forced to accept, one should simply ask union supporters if they'd voluntarily pay dues in exchange for the benefits they feel union officials secure.

After all, if a system is so great why must there be walls to keep people in?

Rank and File Rights:

1. No employee in the United States can legally be required to be a full-dues-paying, formal union member. But in many states, an employee can be forced to pay certain union dues or be fired from his or her job.
2. Union members have the right to resign from formal membership at any time. However, dues deduction authorizations may limit when they can be revoked.
3. Employees covered by state Right to Work laws can not lawfully be required to pay **any** union fees to keep their jobs. But state Right to Work laws do not protect railway and airline employees and employees of private-sector contractors on some federal properties.
4. Because they enjoy the special privilege of exclusive representation, unions have a legal duty to represent fairly all employees in their bargaining units. Unions are legally required to represent nonmember employees the same as members, but unfortunately this duty is often breached.
5. If a law or bargaining agreement permits it, employees can be forced to pay certain union fees. If you don't join the union, or resign from membership, and notify the union that you don't want to pay full dues, the required fee must be limited to the union's proven costs of collective bargaining activities. This fee may not *lawfully* include things like political expenses.
6. Nonmembers with religious objections to supporting a union have the right to ask the union to redirect the forced dues amount to charity. Religious objectors do not have to belong to a specific church to claim this right.
7. A union member who wants to work during a strike should resign from union membership BEFORE going to work. If the resignation is mailed, the employee should not work until the day after the resignation is postmarked. Otherwise, the employee could be fined by the union. If you are already a nonmember, you can work at will during a strike and not be lawfully fined.

Day After Passage

Rank and File Member

- No action required unless you are dissatisfied with your current union leadership
- Can cease to be a member of the union if you choose
- Can cease to pay union dues in support of the union if you choose
- You have the option of joining multiple unions or no union at all

Business Owner

- Collective bargaining agreements can no longer include agency shop payments as a condition of employment
- Collective bargaining agreements can no longer including agency shop payments as a condition of employment

Union Bosses

- Can no longer include agency shop payments as a condition of employment in union contracts
- Cannot include union membership as a condition of employment in union contracts
- Under no obligation to represent non-members

Key Pro-RTW Arguments:

- Current laws promote two classes of workers
 - 1st Class Citizen: If you join a union
 - 2nd Class Citizen: If you don't want to join a union
- Cost of living is 15% higher in forced unionization states
- Site Selection:
 - "More than ½ time clients will eliminate forced unionization locations"
 - "More than 30% of time (Forced unionization) is an eliminator. Site selection is a process of elimination."
 - "RTW is even more important to foreign entities". That is because of concerns about regulation and stability not wages.
 - "We can never know how many opportunities we lose"
 - Boeing Willow Run plant was one of 3 finalists. SC was selected for site of 787 plant. SC only trumped MI because of RTW.
 - 2.5M people from Forced unionization states to RTW states
- Unions did not negotiate until Big 3 were threatened with bankruptcy
- "Landrum-Griffin" Law compels unions to be more responsible
 - 1959, passed by the U.S. Congress, officially known as the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act. It resulted from hearings of the Senate committee on improper activities in the fields of labor and management, which uncovered evidence of collusion between dishonest employers and union officials, the use of violence by certain segments of labor leadership, and the diversion and misuse of labor union funds by high-ranking officials. The act provided for the regulation of internal union affairs, including the regulation and control of union funds. Former members of the Communist party and former convicts are prevented from holding a union office for a period of five years after resigning their Communist party membership or being released from prison. Union members are protected against abuses by a bill of rights that includes guarantees of freedom of speech and periodic secret elections. Secondary boycotting and organizational and recognition picketing (i.e., picketing of companies where a rival union is already recognized) are severely restricted by the act. In the field of arbitration, an amendment to the Taft-Hartley Labor Act (1947) written into this 1959 act authorized states to process cases that fall outside the province of the National Labor Relations Board. Organized labor has, in general, opposed the act for strengthening what they consider the antilabor provisions of the Taft-Hartley Labor Act.
 - (1959) Legislation in the U.S. designed to counter labour-union corruption. Officially called the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, it instituted federal penalties for labour officials who misused union funds or prevented union members from exercising their legal rights. The legislation was passed in response to Senate investigations that uncovered connections between labour and organized crime. Provisions included a strict ban on secondary boycotts (union efforts to stop one employer from dealing with another employer who is being struck or boycotted) and greater freedom for individual states to set the terms of labour relations within their borders.

Key Anti-RTW Arguments:

Argument	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “RTW does not create jobs” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic benefit arguments are “murky” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Features too many “averages” rather than absolute values ▪ 3 statisticians in the woods. 1 fires left 5 yards, the next fires right 5 yards, and the 3rd yells “we hit it” ○ Should not think of RTW as an economic tool ○ Oklahoma lost 1/3 of manufacturing jobs since going RTW 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTW “Destroys collective bargaining” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disables unions financially ○ “Forced unionization ” equals “Free Bargaining” state 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Do we want unions or don’t we in this state?” 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unions are “good for democracy” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rich people vote ○ Poor people don’t 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective goods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Excludable (e.g. Bowling Alley) ○ Non-Excludable (e.g. Public Services such as Roads) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have to tax ▪ Taxes are necessarily “coercive” ▪ “Dues equal a tax” 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally required to represent all workers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do unions do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Compress wages” or less disparity between worker wages ○ Union wages higher than non-union wages ○ Unions are more productive ○ The spread equity into surrounding community ○ Unions are very charitable 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union contract can be thought of as a “constitution” 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence that unions are more corrupt than other organizations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Minority cannot control rights of majority” 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Don’t have to work at a company with a union” 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unions are singled out for payment choice • Many organizations require “association fees” as a condition of employment <p>“Why do I have to pay increased insurance premiums, utility prices when they spend so much on lobbying and political contributions? Where is any citizens freedom to opt out of lowering their premiums because they disagree with their political views? No, only labor union members will be mandates to freedom? More BS!”</p>	<p>The simple answer is “you shouldn’t”. Our system of government works best when individuals are provided with free market options. The fact remains that unions represent monopolies with no choice at all for workers seeking employment with a given firm. Michigan consumers have comparatively more choice when it comes to insurance and utility providers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can’t treat all unions the same (e.g. MLB Players Association) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As economy evolves, so do unions and so do businesses” (REF: Recent concessions to big 3) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union political contributions represent “volunteerism” support not “democrat” support. • Corporate contributions should be disclosed 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Germany is model” of business-labor cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Corporate boards feature union representation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTW can be linked to obesity 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to “stop talking about RTW” 	(so much for freedom of speech)

Messaging

Most powerful worker's choice messages:

- We need to stop “shipping our kids out of our state”
- Physical presence of 2,777 page UAW contract
- We currently have 17% of MI workforce in unions. After workers choice passes, we will still have 17% of MI workforce in unions – IF the rank and file believe that union management is representing their best interests.

Proposed bumper sticker:

- “Fighting for hardworking taxpayers”

Key themes:

- Stay positive talking about job creation and investment
- Do not go negative unless they start lying about you “This is MI not Chicago”

Key issues:

- Pessimism/defeatism
- Nobody cares about our evidence
- People are most interested in “attributes” not “issues”
- Politicians are out of touch with real people
- Terminology: Workers Choice vs. Labor Freedom vs. Right to Work
- Corruption: Might be good red herring issue to take them off their game. Lotsa news footage in Detroit area about unions defending members that took prolonged lunches featuring marijuana and beer
- Democracy vs Republic: Might makes right vs. laws based on Constitution and Declaration principles
- Socialism vs. Democracy: Not much difference between their use of Democracy and what socialism is

5 attributes that matter most:

- “No hassles”
- “More choices”
- “More money” (Most important to men)
- “More time” (Most important to women)
- “No worries”

Other key attributes:

- Empathy
- Emotion

- Talk about people not evidence
- Teamwork between Gov, House and Senate
- Demonstrate that we are in touch with constituents. All photos should be action-oriented with constituents not me alone. No more smiling photo ops.
- Quality more important the quantity in press releases
- Job growth needs to feature stories not figures
- Govern like conservatives but talk like moderates

21 Words That Work:

- “Image”
- “Respect”
- “No surprises”
- “Accountability”
- “Results” or “Solutions”
- “Fighting for you”
- “No fine print”
- “Long-term approach”
- “Independent/unbiased”
- “You’re in control”
- “Consequences”
- “Quality of life”
- “Peace of mind”
- “Independently certified”
- “Mission/commitment”
- “People not numbers”
- “Common sense”
- “Can I ask you a question”
- “Real/genuine/authentic”
- “Hassle free/no worries”

Other key phrases:

- “My commitment to you”
- “You deserve”
- “Get to work – Now”
- “The simple truth”
- “If you remember only one thing”
- “Fact-based”
- “I say what mean and mean what I say”
- “I get it”

Positive Messages:

- Lead the nation in recovery
- It's time
- It's not about you...it's about Michigan
- Bi-partisanship
- Family members leaving
- "We're not going back"
- Accountability. Did what they'd said and said what they'd do.
- Personal responsibility
- "#1 we reformed ourselves" combo presentation of reforms that impact legislators (e.g. 10% pay cut, 20/80 healthcare, office cuts)
- "Paid down \$5.6B in debt so that the mistakes of our past don't weigh down our future"
- Vocational skills development have a working class appeal
- "fighting for hardworking taxpayers"
- Freedom to choose
- Ask questions
- Bringing jobs back from overseas
- Ending "wasteful government spending"
- "Accountability" not "Transparency"
- "Results you can measure"
- "If you work hard and play by the rules you can get ahead"
- "There is justice and equality for all"
- "The Constitution is respected"
- "Time for action" or "real plan of action"
- "Say what you mean and mean what you say"
- "Believes and practices accountability"
- Leadership and courage
- Record of accomplishment – gets results
- "Reality not ideology"
- "No excuses"
- "Tough choices that impact some very powerful groups"
- "You don't create jobs by punishing job creators"
- "Hardworking taxpayers deserve to be respected and protected"
- "I may disagree with my colleagues on this "How" but we are all parents, we are all taxpayers...we need real results"
- Efficient and effective government
- Specific solutions
- Fighting for hardworking Americans
- Level playing field
- Bi-partisanship
- Go big or go home
- Ask constituents for their opinions
- Provide facts not spin
- Benchmarking with respect to other states
- Making specific distinctions between your policies and policy of opposition
- Kids and dogs

- Saying what you'd do and doing what you said
- College is not for everyone
- Stop picking winners and losers
- Spending problem not a tax problem

Negative Messages:

- Partisanship
- Arrogance
- More government
- Wall street
- Repetitiveness
- "Corporations = People"
- Showing favoritism
- Lansing

Common Ground Opportunities:

- Transparency
- Quality of Life
- Job Growth
- Family Nurturing
- Skilled Trade Development
- Driving Efficiency
- No "Free Riders"
- Don't defend corrupt unions, put them behind bars.