



FACT SHEET

National Institute for Labor Relations Research

5211 Port Royal Road, Suite 510 • Springfield, VA 22151 • Phone: (703) 321-9606 • Fax: (703) 321-7342 • research@nilrr.org • www.nilrr.org

February 2009

Forced-Dues States Suffering From Massive ‘Brain Drain’

Young Employees, Entrepreneurs Constitute Disproportionately High Share of Those Fleeing

Federally-sanctioned forced union dues have predictable economic consequences. Among them are Big Labor’s use of rigid work rules and cultivation of the “hate the boss” mentality to cement its power over employees.

Right to Work laws, now on the books in 22 states, protect the freedom of both private- and public-sector employees to keep and hold a job without forking over dues or fees to a union that is recognized as their “exclusive” (actually, monopoly) bargaining agent.

Unless they are protected by a state Right to Work law, independent-minded employees have no power to fight back against union bosses by withholding their financial support. And when employees have no personal freedom of choice, union bosses have little incentive to tone down their class warfare. Employees are consequently far less likely to reach their full productive potential and reap the accompanying benefits.

That’s a key reason why a wide array of demographic and economic indicators, including young-adult migration, show that forced union dues inhibit growth.

Vast Majority of Forced Dues-State Out-Migrants Since 1987 Were Still In Their Working Years as of 2007

In the two decades after 1987, an estimated net total of 5.2 million Americans who were in their prime working years (aged 25-64) as of 2007 relocated from a state in which employees may be fired for refusal to join or pay dues or fees to an unwanted union to a state with a Right to Work law that prohibits such unjust firings. Over the same period, a net total of roughly 1.5 million Americans who as of 2007 were 65-84 years old, and thus for the most part retired, also moved from forced-dues states to Right to Work states.

The National Institute for Labor Relations Research has used several types of Census Bureau data to make the above estimates. First, the Institute looked at the number of 5-24 year-olds, 25-44 year-

(continued on page 2)

(page 2)

olds, and 45-64 year-olds in each of the 50 states in 1987, recorded in Table 22 of the 1989 edition of the Census Bureau's *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Next, the Institute reviewed the number of 25-44 year-olds, 45-64 year-olds, and 65-84 year-olds in every state in 2007, recorded in Table 17 of the new 2009 *Statistical Abstract*.

Were it not for substantial net immigration from abroad, the total number of 25-44-year-olds nationwide in 2007 would be nearly the same as the total number of 5-24-year-olds in 1987, since, of course, people who were aged 5-24 in 1987 were aged 25-44 two decades later. Minus immigration from abroad, the 2007 number would be a bit lower due to the relatively small number of people in this age group who died before 2007. Similarly, people who were aged 25-44 in 1987 were aged 45-64 in 2007. Were it not for net immigration from abroad, the 2007 total for this group would be roughly 6% lower than the 1987 total as a result of mortality.

'Young People Want to Go Where the Jobs Are and Where the Action Is'

However, as a consequence of international immigration since 1988, the total number of 25-44 year-olds in 2007 was 83.8 million, 11.4 million more than the 72.4 million 5-24 year-olds in 1987. The 2007 numbers of 45-64 year-olds and 65-84 year olds were also raised by post-1987 immigration, albeit by significantly smaller amounts.

To control for immigration, the Institute used Table 44 in the 2001 *Statistical Abstract* and Table 41 in the 2009 *Statistical Abstract* to estimate that a net total of 16.0 million immigrants aged 25-84 as of 2007 arrived in the U.S. during the two decades after 1987. To estimate each state's share of these 16.0 million immigrants, the Institute used Table 22 in the 2000 *Statistical Abstract* and Table 15 in the 2009 edition. The Institute next subtracted these recent immigrants from the 2007 data on residents aged 25-44, 45-64, and 65-84 for each of the 50 states. (See the two tables attached to this document for details.)

With immigration factored out, the 28 non-Right to Work states lost a net total of 2.9 million, or 6.3%, of their young 1987 residents by the time they were aged 25-44 in 2007. After adjusting slightly for mortality, the loss still comes to 2.8 million.

Over the same period, the 22 Right to Work states enjoyed a net 10.0% increase in their 2007 young adult population due to domestic migration alone. Moreover, Census Bureau data indicate that young employees continue to migrate out of non-Right to Work states for decades after they acquire their first job. With both immigration and mortality factored out, by 2007 the 28 forced-unionism states had lost a net total of 2.4 million of their residents who had been 25-44 years old in 1987.

Of course, several factors influence the domestic migration patterns of young adults. Heavily rural states, whether Right to Work or non-Right to Work, have tended to suffer a net loss of young people. But youth out-migration appears to be more closely correlated with compulsory unionism than it is with any other single factor.

(continued on page 3)

(page 3)

Of the six states experiencing the biggest net absolute gains of young people between 1987 and 2007 due to domestic migration, every one is a Right to Work state. But five of the six states suffering the biggest net absolute losses are forced-unionism states.

Young people would not be far more apt to move into Right to Work states than they are to move out of them if these states weren't creating millions of good jobs with good benefits. And the fact that a disproportionately large share of the residents fleeing forced-unionism states are young adults and their children indicates that good job climates, not weather and lifestyle considerations, are Right to Work states' primary attraction for domestic migrants.

At the same time, when young people consistently leave the state where they grew up after they enter the workforce, that state ought to be concerned. As Michigan population researcher William Frey told the *Detroit News* a couple of years ago: "It's the future. You want to be able to capture those people and have them stay to make their future in Michigan. They're the people with the most talent, the most energy. . . . Young people want go where the jobs are and where the action is."¹

#

¹ Gordon Trowbridge and Amy Lee, "Brain Drain," *Detroit News*, August 4, 2006.

(continued on page 3)

TABLES

Population aged 5-64, 1987 and 25-84, 2007. Source: U.S. Census Bureau. For details, see the attached fact sheet. Total in thousands. Data were gathered from the *Statistical Abstract*, 1998 and 2009 editions. Oklahoma, whose Right to Work law took effect in September 2001, is simply counted as a Right to Work state for the entire period here. All estimated post-1987 immigrants from abroad are removed.

I.

RTW						
state	1987	2007	1987	2007	1987	2007
	5-24	25-44	25-44	45-64	45-64	65-84
AL	1288	1201	1247	1185	749	537
AZ	1005	1538	1060	1402	603	668
AR	739	734	686	709	443	336
FL	3094	3854	3450	4376	2528	2443
GA	1996	2592	2015	2243	1111	782
ID	328	380	316	360	156	146
IA	843	710	864	763	511	353
KS	725	670	775	684	448	289
LA	1456	1104	1403	1075	735	448
MS	893	754	753	714	449	312
NE	476	424	492	435	285	193
NV	282	709	354	584	188	245
NC	1943	2376	2051	2266	1226	931
ND	207	144	211	160	110	74
OK	994	902	1023	888	580	402
SC	1101	1141	1094	1143	607	492
SD	216	186	210	202	125	92
TN	1466	1660	1537	1590	923	679
TX	5364	5796	5500	5131	2796	1884
UT	639	680	505	495	215	192
VA	1752	1982	1992	1931	1116	754
WY	158	136	180	145	65	55
TOTAL	26965	29673	27718	28481	15969	12307

II.Non-RTW
state

	1987 5-24	2007 25-44	1987 25-44	2007 45-64	1987 45-64	2007 65-84
AK	175	187	193	178	79	41
CA	8006	7637	9444	7711	4968	3179
CO	971	1309	1207	1211	545	403
CT	898	804	1012	916	558	374
DE	191	220	205	221	127	101
HI	326	299	361	315	198	145
IL	3452	3022	3675	3005	2189	1216
IN	1708	1667	1732	1599	1031	670
KY	1171	1156	1163	1102	678	470
ME	355	327	370	388	220	165
MD	1324	1373	1506	1428	886	540
MA	1631	1476	1914	1617	1219	666
MI	2855	2496	2925	2618	1697	1066
MN	1255	1326	1381	1332	749	515
MO	1492	1511	1562	1504	977	659
MT	245	236	259	274	140	114
NH	312	340	357	376	191	139
NJ	2161	1855	2381	2126	1622	873
NM	483	462	473	477	259	207
NY	5096	3906	5522	4539	3651	1921
OH	3245	2938	3330	3006	2089	1304
OR	771	926	939	983	451	396
PA	3359	3005	3605	3313	2424	1558
RI	277	249	310	269	189	115
VT	166	146	184	184	93	71
WA	1311	1616	1591	1659	759	608
WV	581	474	578	511	356	244
WI	1455	1444	1500	1474	863	611
TOTAL	45272	42407	49679	44336	29208	18371