



Foundation Action

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Dartmouth, MIT, Vanderbilt Graduate Students Challenge Forced Unionism

Foundation-backed students defend rights as union bosses seek more power at universities

HANOVER, NH – Just weeks after National Right to Work Foundation staff attorneys triumphed in anti-discrimination cases for Jewish Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) graduate students who sought to stop forced dues payments to a radically anti-Israel union, union officials began creating other problems for university students.

In nearby New Hampshire, Dartmouth graduate student Benjamin Logsdon sought free Foundation legal aid against Graduate Organized Laborers of Dartmouth (GOLD-UE) union officials. The GOLD union -- which is an affiliate of the same United Electrical (UE) union involved in the Foundation's MIT cases -- is forcing Logsdon to accept the union's monopoly "representation" powers against his will, even after he voiced his religious objections to the union's radical stances on the conflict against Israel.



Ben Logsdon is a Ph.D. student in mathematics at Dartmouth University. But it doesn't take a genius to realize that union officials' refusals to accommodate his religious objections just don't add up.

officials are illegally demanding the university hand over the students' private information to aid in their unionization campaign. Foundation staff attorneys filed motions for intervention for these students in October 2024.

Foundation attorneys are arguing that union officials severely violate students' rights in both of these cases. However, the reason that union officials are in power on college campuses at all traces back to flawed rulings from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) under both the Obama Administration and Biden Administration. These rulings subject graduate students to pro-Big Labor provisions of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which create issues for students' freedom both inside and outside the classroom.

Logsdon, a Christian Ph.D. student

in mathematics at Dartmouth, slammed the GOLD union with federal anti-discrimination charges in September 2024 at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). According to those charges, shortly after the GOLD union finalized its first monopoly bargaining contract with the Dartmouth administration, he sent a letter to United Electrical General Secretary-Treasurer Andrew Dinkelaker explaining that he objected to being affiliated with GOLD on religious grounds and needed an accommodation.

"I sought to be removed from the UE and GOLD-UE bargaining unit as a reasonable accommodation," Logsdon's Foundation-backed charges say.

Dinkelaker refused to offer Logsdon an accommodation that "satisf[ied] [his] religious conscience or beliefs," according to the charges, which violated his rights under Title VII of the Civil

See *'Students Challenge'* page 6

Grad Students Exposed to Union Coercion & Privacy Violations

Meanwhile, several graduate students at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, are pushing back against an attempt by Vanderbilt Graduate Workers United (VGWU, an affiliate of United Auto Workers) union bosses to impose union control over them and their colleagues. Specifically, three students are seeking to intervene in a federal case in which VGWU union

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Chicago 911 Operators Notch Another *Janus* Victory Over IBEW

Foundation attorneys stopped deceptive cycle that kept illegal dues flowing for months

CHICAGO, IL – Another 911 operator employed by the City of Chicago has successfully defended her First Amendment rights under the National Right to Work Foundation-won *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court decision. Late last year, Operator Patricia Whittaker sought free Foundation legal aid after facing months of stonewalling from International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 21 union officials, who refused to stop taking dues from her paycheck against her will.

Whittaker fought these dues seizures by invoking her First Amendment rights under *Janus*. Foundation attorneys argued and won the *Janus* case before the Supreme Court in 2018. The Supreme Court agreed with Foundation attorneys and ruled that union officials could not force public sector employees to pay union dues or fees as a condition of employment, and that union officials must obtain affirmative employee consent before deducting union dues from any public worker's paycheck.

In October, following unfair labor practice filings by Foundation attorneys at the Illinois Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), IBEW union bosses abandoned their unconstitutional



Patricia Whittaker heard ridiculous excuses from IBEW union officials about how they couldn't honor her Janus rights. But after teaming up with Foundation attorneys, she's cut off dues to IBEW bosses.

dues demands -- and other outrageous behavior they had subjected Whittaker to.

IBEW Union Outrageously Claimed They Had No Power to Stop Dues Deductions

Whittaker faced much more than just illegal dues deductions during her ordeal. IBEW officials engaged in a deceptive cycle in which Whittaker was told to resolve the matter with her employer, while the employer directed her back to the

union, resulting in continued dues deductions for over 10 months. In doing so, the charges maintained, union officials misrepresented the law by making it appear as if they were the "good guys" by remitting dues deducted by the City of Chicago through checks back to her and claimed that only the employer -- not the union -- had the power to end dues deductions.

This isn't the first time IBEW 21 union officials have been caught imposing illegal dues practices on Chicago 911 employees. In June of 2024, Rhonda Younkings also triumphed in her months-long legal battle to exercise her First Amendment right to stop all union dues payments to IBEW Local 21. IBEW Local 21 union officials stopped their violation of Younkings' *Janus* rights only after Foundation attorneys filed charges at PERB on Younkings' behalf.

Independent-Minded Workers Continue to Defend Freedom with *Janus*

The *Janus* decision's impact continues to grow. Immediately following the ruling, nearly a half a million public employees stopped paying union dues, with many others following in subsequent years as litigation backed by Foundation attorneys continues to defend their rights.

"The behavior of IBEW Local 21 union officials highlight just how crucial it is for public employees to be aware of, and assert, their *Janus* rights," said National Right to Work Foundation President Mark Mix. "While we at the Foundation are proud to help more workers protect their hard-earned money from funding union bosses and union agendas they don't support, it is unacceptable that it takes aggressive legal action just to force union officials to respect workers' constitutional freedoms." ✝

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Philly-Area Manufacturing Employees Triumph Over UAW Intimidation Campaign

UAW bosses now required to attend federal training after trying to fire non-striking workers

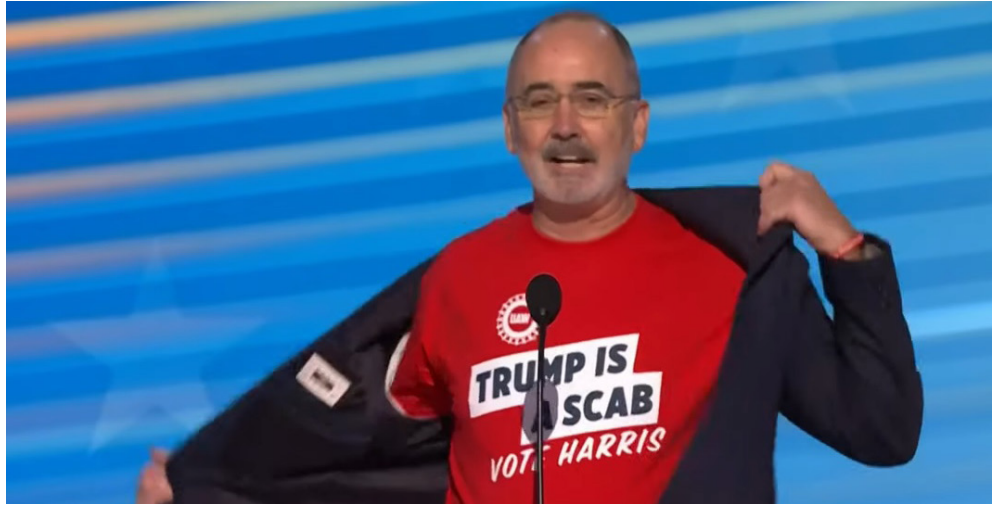
PHILADELPHIA, PA – It's not particularly difficult to see why United Auto Workers (UAW) union officials are having trouble convincing workers that the union has their best interests in mind. The union's upper echelon is still reeling from a federal probe that hit about a dozen top union bosses with prison sentences for embezzling workers' dues, and to this day it appears that UAW President Shawn Fain -- a so-called "reformer" -- is being scrutinized by federal monitors for manipulating his position to secure personal benefits.

But the corruption within the UAW goes far beyond the union's top executives. Throughout 2024, National Right to Work Foundation-backed workers for auto accessory manufacturer Dometic fought illegal UAW demands that they strike or be fired.

Union Used Mass Texts, Social Media to Bully Workers

In March 2024, seven Philadelphia-area Dometic employees filed unfair labor practice charges against the UAW Local 644 union, detailing that UAW bosses had ordered a strike and threatened to get fired anyone who decided to keep working. Despite the employees' resignation of their union memberships, UAW officials began internal proceedings against each of them soon after the strike began. Federal labor law forbids unions from imposing internal discipline on those who abstain from union membership.

The Dometic workers didn't back down. With free Foundation legal aid, all the workers won settlements in October 2024 that fully vindicated their rights. UAW officials must now make postings correctly informing workers of their right to abstain from union activities, and the settlement even requires union chiefs to undergo



Despite an active federal corruption investigation, UAW President Shawn Fain and his underlings continue to push a radical political agenda using workers' dues money while ignoring the rights of the rank-and-file employees union bosses claim to "represent."

mandatory training on the limits of "a union's right to impose internal discipline," among other topics.

As the workers' legal battle dragged on, the Dometic workers continued to expose ugly details of the UAW's intimidation campaign surrounding the strike. In April 2024, Dometic employee Mario Coccie filed a second round of charges against UAW Local 644 for a mass text message that threatened *all* Dometic employees -- not just those who had filed charges against the union -- with termination if they didn't strike.

"The information in this text reveals union officials' real intentions, which is to hurt anyone willing to stand up for themselves," said Coccie at the time. "What is happening in this case is completely unjust."

UAW officials also refused to respect Coccie and his coworkers' rights under the Foundation-won *CWA v. Beck* Supreme Court decision, which prohibits union officials from requiring workers to pay for the union's political expenditures just to keep their jobs. Because Pennsylvania lacks Right to Work protections for its private sector workers, UAW bosses can

force workers to pay union fees as a condition of employment, but must abide by *Beck*.

Legal Privileges Enable UAW Corruption

In addition to the notice postings and required training, the Foundation-won settlement orders union officials to delete social media posts threatening workers who refused to strike.

"We're proud to have helped Mario Coccie and his coworkers vindicate their rights," commented National Right to Work Foundation Vice President Patrick Semmens. "But it has become all too clear that union corruption -- which can take the form of anything from stealing millions in worker dues to intimidating workers to join a picket line -- is only made easier when union bosses are granted more legal privileges.

"Policymakers need to protect workers' freedom to cut off funding for union bosses who don't serve their interests, and to fully abstain from union activities that individual employees do not see as in their own best interest," Semmens added. †

New York Farmworkers Seek to Challenge 'Card Check' & Uproot UFW Union Bosses

Employees fight union argument that NY labor law lets union bosses trap workers forever

MARLBORO, NY – In 2020, the New York State Assembly passed a Big Labor-backed law that granted union officials sweeping new powers to impose their monopoly bargaining control over the state's farmworkers. Since New York is one of 24 states that lacks a Right to Work law, the law authorizes union bosses to force farmworkers to pay union dues or else be fired.

But that's not all: New York labor law went even further by mandating "card check" organizing, in which union officials deny workers a secret ballot union vote and instead claim majority support by submitting cards ostensibly showing worker support. These cards are often collected through pressure tactics, intimidation, or even threats.

But even that dramatic increase in power over the agricultural sector and agricultural workers is not enough for United Farm Workers (UFW) union officials.

UFW tyrants are advancing the cynical argument that, under New York law, workers can be forced into union ranks but *can never escape forced unionism*. They argue this to counter a recent National Right to Work Foundation-backed union decertification case for employees of Porpiglia Farms, an apple farm in the Hudson Valley of New York.

NY Fruit Farm Workers Seek Union Ouster After 'Card Check'

Porpiglia employee Ricardo Bell submitted a petition last year in which he and his coworkers asked the New York Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) to hold a vote at the orchard on whether to remove the UFW. (Despite its name, PERB is responsible for enforcing labor law in both New York's public and agricultural sectors).

In late 2024, Foundation attorneys filed a brief for Bell countering union officials' absurd argument



Porpiglia Farms workers, who were targeted by an aggressive UFW 'card check' campaign, are banding together to vote the union out and ensure that union officials reap what they have sown.

that one card check drive should lock employees in a union forever. Additionally, more Foundation-backed decertification cases are sprouting up in both New York and other Big Labor-dominated states for farmworkers who are rejecting UFW officials' card check schemes.

Brief Challenges Theory That Workers Have No Right to Remove Incumbent Union

Bell filed his decertification petition with Foundation legal aid after UFW union officials seized power at his workplace through a hasty card check unionization drive. His newest filing attacks union bosses' contention that once a union is certified as the monopoly union "representative" of a work unit, there can be no option to remove it.

"[New York labor law] does not indicate that employees have a single chance at self-organization," the brief says. "If that were the case, the very action of choosing a representative under [New York labor law] would deprive employees of the ability to exercise [their rights] in perpetuity..."

Foundation-Backed Workers Battle UFW 'Card Checks' Across Country

Since Bell's filing, Foundation attorneys have also assisted in a union decertification effort for

workers at Cherry Lawn Fruit Farms near Rochester, NY, who were targeted by a similar UFW card check campaign. These two groups of New York farmworkers join Foundation-backed employees of Wonderful Nurseries in California in challenging the UFW's tactics.

Wonderful Nurseries workers still have multiple unfair labor practice charges pending against UFW bosses for deceptive behavior during an early 2024 card check drive. The charges detail UFW agents lying about the true purpose of cards that they collected from workers, and harassing workers who now back an effort to vote the union out.

"The aggressive and often demeaning tactics that UFW union officials use to seize control over agricultural workers show clearly why 'card check' is a bad idea in the agricultural sector, the public sector, and in any sector," commented National Right to Work Foundation Vice President and Legal Director William Messenger. "UFW officials are arguing that workers should have little or no chance at all to challenge a union's ascent to power by this process.

"The idea that workers have no ability to eject a union once it is installed in power further demonstrates that this is not about workers' choices at all, only about union bosses' power over workers, even when workers overwhelmingly want nothing to do with union bosses' so-called 'representation,'" added Messenger. †

Michigan Security Guards Overwhelmingly Vote to End Union Bosses' Forced-Dues Power

After Big Labor-backed Right to Work repeal, Michigan workers continue fighting forced dues

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – Ever since Michigan legislators repealed the state's popular Right to Work law, Michigan employees have been turning to the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation to help them fight to protect themselves from union bosses' forced-dues demands. In a long-running case, security guard James Reamsma and his colleagues at Triple Canopy Inc. not only ended union officials' power to require union dues payments as a condition of employment, but also freed themselves of unwanted union 'representation.'

With Foundation legal aid, the security guards organized a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) "deauthorization election" to strip United Government Security Officers of America (UGSOA) Local 288 union officials of their power to compel union financial support.

Overwhelming Vote Against Forced Dues Triggers End of Unwanted 'Representation'

Despite an overwhelming vote by participating workers against forced union dues, union lawyers' delay tactics stalled final certification of the results until October. At that point, the dissenting security guards were officially free to cut off all union dues payments, as had been the case when Michigan's Right to Work law was in place and all union financial support was strictly voluntary.

At that point, faced with the prospect that the vast majority of the guards would likely stop dues payments, UGSOA bosses announced they were ending their so-called "representation" at Triple Canopy. This means the security guards are now not only free of forced dues, but also of monopoly union representation they oppose.

"UGSOA union officials have threatened to have everyone who



James Reamsma and his fellow security guards finally secured their right to stop their hard-earned money from going to UGSOA union bosses after a months-long legal battle. Such anti-forced-dues cases continue to increase in Michigan.

does not join the union fired," Reamsma said soon after his case was filed. "Many of us are retired police officers, or military, working part time, supplementing our income by providing security for government buildings across Michigan. When Right to Work was in place, guards were never forced to join the union."

In addition to the deauthorization petition, Reamsma filed unfair labor practice charges against UGSOA, citing illegal union dues demands. The charges note that union officials were violating his rights under the Foundation-won *CWA v. Beck* Supreme Court decision by denying Reamsma a required breakdown of how the forced-dues amount was calculated, and also by attempting to require that he let the union automatically deduct dues out of his paycheck. Those charges remain pending with the NLRB.

Despite a vast majority of Michiganders -- including those in union households -- expressing support for Right to Work, union boss partisans re-granted forced-dues powers to Michigan union officials in 2023.

Foundation attorneys filed more

than twice the number of cases for Michigan workers in 2024 (the year the repeal went into effect) than through all of 2023. That increase includes a number of deauthorization cases. In states that lack Right to Work protections, like Michigan does currently, the only way that workers can end union bosses' pay-up-or-be-fired dues demands is by voting as a majority against forced dues in a "deauthorization election" or by voting to remove the union completely.

Often workers may prefer to end union "representation" entirely, but union-backed NLRB rules severely limit when decertification votes can be held, including for up to three years when a forced-dues union contract is in place. As a result, workers often turn to deauthorization to cut off union dues payments in order to incentivize union bosses to leave completely, as happened with James Reamsma and his coworkers.

Fight Against Forced Dues in Michigan Continues

"Mr. Reamsma's situation shows the kind of greedy gamesmanship union officials can engage in without Right to Work," commented National Right to Work Foundation President Mark Mix. "As soon as Reamsma and his coworkers had gone through the complex process of voting to strip them of their forced-dues power, union officials immediately fled the workplace -- almost as if they were only there to collect dues from workers who had no choice but to pay up to avoid termination.

"While we are proud to assist Michigan workers in navigating these challenges, cases like these show why it was such a mistake to repeal Michigan's popular Right to Work law to begin with," added Mix. ✨

Austin Worker Files 5th Foundation-Backed Lawsuit Arguing NLRB Violates US Constitution

Case joins others for employees nationwide arguing Labor Board's structure is illegal

AUSTIN, TX – In November, Dallas Mudd, an employee for online social service coordination platform Findhelp, filed a federal lawsuit against the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on the grounds that the agency's structure is unconstitutional. Mudd's case, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, is the latest in a series of legal actions by National Right to Work Foundation staff attorneys for employees challenging the NLRB's authority.

Mudd's case comes after he filed a decertification petition with the NLRB, seeking a vote to remove the Office & Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) from his workplace. However, NLRB officials blocked the vote, disenfranchising Mudd and his colleagues on the basis of unproven charges union bosses made against Findhelp. Mudd appealed the decision to the full NLRB in Washington, D.C., while also filing a federal lawsuit to challenge NLRB members' removal protections.

Shortly after the lawsuit was filed, Mudd's Foundation attorney also asked the Northern District Court of Texas to issue a preliminary injunction stopping the NLRB from adjudicating his appeal until the



Dallas Mudd helps connect people with the social services they need, and his and many other workers' ability to do their important work shouldn't be stymied because unaccountable NLRB bureaucrats are forcing union "representation" on them.

issue of the NLRB's constitutionality is resolved. Mudd argues that he is suffering ongoing and irreparable harm by being forced to navigate a statutory process before an agency that he claims is unconstitutionally structured.

Constitutional Challenge: A Broader Legal Campaign

Meanwhile, in its own case against the NLRB, Findhelp has successfully secured an injunction against the NLRB in a federal district court making arguments similar to those

raised by Mudd.

Mudd's lawsuit follows four other constitutional challenges backed by the National Right to Work Foundation, targeting the NLRB's structure. This includes a case for New York Starbucks employees Ariana Cortes and Logan Karam, who filed the first constitutional challenge to NLRB Board Member protections.

Their case is currently being briefed at the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, but since their groundbreaking lawsuit, numerous major employers have utilized the arguments first made in federal court by Foundation staff attorneys to challenge the radically pro-union boss Biden-Harris NLRB.

"Independent-minded workers should not be forced to depend on biased agencies staffed by bureaucrats who exercise power in violation of the Constitution," said National Right to Work Foundation Vice President Patrick Semmens. "The Constitution does not permit a powerful federal agency to operate as the judge, jury, and executioner without proper oversight.

"Contrary to the wishes of Big Labor bosses, federal labor law is not exempt from the requirements of the U.S. Constitution," added Semmens. †

Students Challenge Union Infringements on Freedom

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Rights Act of 1964.

Courts have recognized a variety of Title VII religious accommodations over the years for men and women who have religious objections to union affiliation, including paying an amount equivalent to union dues to a charity instead of union bosses. However, Logsdon seeks a different accommodation: to remove himself from union bosses' control entirely.

At Vanderbilt, three students who identify themselves in legal documents as "John Doe 1," "John Doe 2," and "Jane Doe 1" are

contending in their Foundation-backed motions for intervention that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) forbids the Vanderbilt administration from disclosing their personal information to any third parties without their permission, including the VGWU union.

At the union's behest, NLRB Region 10 has already hit the Vanderbilt administration with a pair of subpoenas demanding personal student info, while ignoring objections from several

students expressing concern at the disclosure.

So far Vanderbilt has resisted the NLRB's subpoenas, and fortunately a federal court has temporarily allowed the university to refuse to comply with them.

The Foundation-backed students' motions to intervene argue that the subpoenas "are an attempt to violate FERPA's protections, privileging union interests over the graduate students['] privacy rights." It also points out that FERPA allows

See 'Foundation Fights' page 8

INVEST IN THE LONG-TERM FIGHT FOR WORKER FREEDOM

Your National Right to Work Foundation is working tirelessly to combat Big Labor coercion by supporting litigation in state and federal courts and at agencies like the National Labor Relations Board, as well as coercion in the media. Fighting on all of these fronts requires long-term investment from supporters like you, since legal cases can last for many years. Your support and commitment today will help provide free legal aid to thousands of workers who have nowhere else to turn.

By leaving a legacy gift to the Foundation, you and your loved ones will ensure that the Foundation has the necessary funds to mount legal challenges to stop Big Labor coercion across the country for years to come. Surveys show most Americans have not put together a Will or a long-term plan, even though not having one can create anxiety and uncertainty with family members.

So please review your estate plans and consider leaving a legacy of worker freedom by naming the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation as a beneficiary in your Will or Trust.

Doing so may be simpler than you think! Here is some sample language for your legacy gift:

I give, devise, and bequeath to the National Right to Work Legal Defense and Education Foundation, Inc., 8001 Braddock Road, Springfield, VA 22160, for its general purposes:

- a. The sum of \$_____;
- b. Name a particular investment or piece of property with legal description, custodian, etc., as applicable;
- c. ____ percent of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, including property over which I have power of appointment; or
- d. All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, including property over which I have a power of appointment.

As with all estate gifts, bequests, or planned giving matters, we encourage you to consult with your tax advisor or estate attorney. Please remember: All gifts (whether cash, long-term appreciated stock, IRA qualified charitable distribution, etc.) are eligible for a tax deduction since the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is a recognized 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

If you would like additional information or have any questions, please contact Ginny Smith at 1-800-336-3600, or email gms@nrtw.org. Thank you for your consideration and investment in the mission of the National Right to Work Foundation.

Foundation Fights Union Boss Violations of Student Rights

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students to seek “protective action” if a university receives a subpoena seeking their personal information, as in this case.

The Vanderbilt students and their Foundation attorneys are demanding an opportunity to properly defend their privacy interests under FERPA. Foundation attorneys have already filed Requests for Review asking the NLRB in Washington, DC, to weigh in on the matter.

Union Monopoly Power Has No Place at Universities

“Graduate students around the country are discovering that union bosses don’t respect their individual rights and would rather use students as pawns to force their demands on a university administration, or advance an extreme political agenda,” commented National Right to Work Foundation Vice President and Legal Director William Messenger.

“Union monopoly bargaining is a system particularly ill-suited to an academic environment. Indeed, it is wrong for anyone to have a union monopoly imposed on them against their will and then be forced to pay union dues under threat of termination.”

Watch MIT Foundation-Backed Graduate Student Will Sussman Expose Union Radicalism on College Campuses Before U.S. House



Scan the QR code or visit www.nrtw.org/sussman.



Message from Mark Mix

President
National Right to Work
Legal Defense Foundation

Dear Foundation Supporter,

Looking at today’s Big Labor bosses and the radical agenda they back, it may be hard to believe, but there was a time when some union officials supported voluntary unionism in contrast to government-imposed compulsory unionism.

Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor (the precursor to the modern AFL-CIO), once told fellow union officials in a 1924 speech that “I want to urge devotion to the fundamentals of human liberty -- the principles of voluntarism. No lasting gain has ever come from compulsion.”

Since then, union officials clearly haven’t heeded Gompers’ words. On Capitol Hill and in statehouses and courthouses across the country, union bosses make it clear that if they had their way, no American could work without paying union dues, no matter how much compulsion was required.

Fortunately, huge majorities of Americans and even union members themselves oppose this coercive vision, but that doesn’t mean that union bosses aren’t trying to make it a reality. Just look at what union officials are trying to do in states where their puppet politicians dominate the legislature.

On page 4 you can read about how a group of farm employees are fighting unionization imposed through an extreme union-backed labor law covering New York State agricultural workers.

That law mandates automatic unionization via suspect union “card checks.” Union lawyers are even arguing in the case that, once a union’s in, the workers are trapped forever because workers can never vote out a union they oppose.

Fortunately those workers and other victims of the radical forced-unionism schemes don’t have to fight alone. When Big Labor attempts to rig the rules against independent-minded workers, your Foundation is there to help them fight back.

Without the work your support makes possible, America would be much closer to union bosses’ dystopian vision of mandatory unionization and dues payment for all.

So while we have much work still to do, it is important to remember that Foundation-won precedents have expanded the freedoms of millions of American employees and blocked billions in forced union dues.

Thank you for making this critical work possible. America is a freer country because of your generous support.

Sincerely,