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## The Laconia Daily Sun

### Right-to-work bill is just another part of attack on middle class

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To the editor,

The "right to work" (RTW) bill before our state legislature is a deliberately misnamed proposal. It's a deceptive piece of work that holds out a phony promise of economic development and more jobs while really being just another part of the broad attack on the middle class.

If this was a product sold in stores, it would be fined for violating truth in advertising laws. It has nothing to do with the right to work: no one in New Hampshire is ever required to join a union or to pay union dues in order to hold a job.

RTW is better described as "Right to Work for Less." Despite what its supporters claim, studies of RTW states show no gains in employment rates, investment or productivity and no significant higher growth rate. On the other hand, working in a RTW state results in a 6-8-percent reduction in pay for all workers — whether union or non union — and fewer companies offering health care or pension plans. During the recent economic downturn, the states with the highest unemployment were RTW states. And fewer jobs and lower wages mean less purchasing power in N.H., less of a ripple effect when it comes to helping support business and jobs in other stores and offices.

Between 1977 and 2008, N.H.'s per capita personal income grew by 79-percent: the 5th fastest rate of growth in the country and better than 21 of the 22 RTW states. N.H.'s median income is higher, and its poverty rate lower, than all the RTW states. During these same 30 plus years, the number of jobs in New Hampshire grew by 102-percent: faster than the average RTW state rate, and our unemployment rate is lower than all but three RTW states.

RTW is a race-to-the-bottom strategy which does not improve our economy. Businesses looking to locate in a state are far more concerned with things like health costs, infrastructure, the education system, and the quality of the workforce. In a survey done in 2009 by a business group, RTW ranked 14th in importance among all factors when deciding where to set up. NH's Director of Economic Development has testified that no business has brought up the lack of a RTW law as a negative factor in considering whether to move to — or invest in — the state.

RTW is wrong for New Hampshire. It has one basic purpose: to weaken working folks' rights, and to lower everyone's wages. The goal of the legislature should be to grow the economy, not to keep digging the hole and making things worse.

Ed Allard

Laconia

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