

The Truth About

Right to Work for Less

Right to Work Hurts Everyone

Workers in states with right to work laws have a consistently lower quality of life than in other states—lower wages, higher poverty and infant mortality rates, less access to the health care they need and poorer education for their children.

Lower Wages

The average worker in a right to work state makes about \$5,333 a year less than workers in other states (\$35,500 compared with \$30,167).¹ Weekly wages are \$72 greater in free-bargaining states than in right to work states (\$621 versus \$549).²

Fewer People with Health Care

21 percent more people lack health insurance in right to work states compared to free-bargaining states.³

Higher Poverty and Infant Mortality Rates

Right to work states have a poverty rate of 12.5 percent, compared with 10.2 percent in other states.⁴ Moreover, the infant mortality rate is 16 percent higher in right to work states.⁵

Lower Workers' Compensation Benefits for Workers Injured on the Job

Maximum weekly worker compensation benefits are \$30 higher in free states (\$609 versus \$579 in right to work states).⁶

More Workplace Deaths and Injuries

According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 51 percent higher in states with right to work, where unions can't speak up on behalf of workers.⁷

1 Average Annual Pay, 2001 from Bureau of Labor Statistics, State average annual pay for 2000 and 2001 and percent change in pay for all covered workers. URL: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/annpay.t01.htm>.

2 Bureau of Labor Statistics.

3 Percent of population lacking health insurance from Current Population Survey, March 2002. Table HI06. Health Insurance coverage status by state for all people: 2001.

4 Poverty Rate in 2001 from U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March 2002. URL: http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032002/pov/new25_001.htm.

5 O'Leary Morgan, Kathleen, and Scott Morgan, State Rankings 2001. Morgan Quitno Press, 2001.

6 Workers' Compensation data from the AFL-CIO Department of Safety and Health.

7 Workplace Fatalities from *Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect*. AFL-CIO. April, 2002.