



Brothers and Sisters,

Over the last week and a half, you have heard a lot about legislation proposed in this state and other states, particularly Wisconsin. This legislation stands to dramatically affect the rules and rights of many unions. In many instances, these bills have stirred emotion on all sides of the issue as well as sparked demonstrations by those on both sides of multiple issues at hand. We have gotten many inquiries about what is going on at the Indiana General Assembly and how it affects us as firefighters.

What is happening this week with the “Right to Work” legislation:

- A legislator in the House introduced “Right to Work” legislation, which he introduces every year. However, this year with the Republicans in the majority they decided to hear it in Committee. It was voted out of committee 8-5, with one Democrat voting with the Republicans.
- With this threat, Labor came out in force and has been making their sentiments heard throughout the statehouse, exercising our rights as Americans.
- In an attempt to stop this legislation from being voted on, the House Democrats have not showed up. They cannot conduct business without a quorum of 67 of the 100 representatives.

What this means to us as firefighters in Indiana:

This legislation is not directed at us.

The main summary of the Indiana “Right to Work” bills affects for private sector and some public sector unions (NOT police and fire) are as follows:

- Remove mandatory union membership rules as a term of employment. *Fire: (We do not have such laws for police/fire)*
- Effectively removes the right to collectively bargain. *Fire: (We do not have such rules now, only Meet and Confer which may result in an agreed upon “contract” but does not require)*
- Eliminate payroll dues deduction. *Fire: (We currently have this benefit under the 2007 Meet and Confer)*
- Criminalizes strikes. *Fire: (Currently we are prohibited from striking and is reinforced under the 2007 Meet and Confer)*
- Prevailing wage requirements for projects over \$1million as opposed to \$150,000. Affects construction. *(No police/fire comparison)*

However, we have been here supporting our brothers and sisters in Labor and understand this was a hard fought benefit to non-governmental unions.

Coming up:

Currently there is a tentative plan for a rally on March 10th. The AFL-CIO is planning to have a rally starting at **9am**. As they develop a detailed schedule, we will keep you informed. This date is tentative, but we will let you know when it is confirmed.

In other statehouse news, we have some legislation still alive. Such as, HB1048 has passed the House and already has a committee hearing in the Senate, this clarifies the PLSD that passed last year and gives favorable tax status for line of duty disability that was not included before in the 77 fund. There were several bills introduced this year about our right to run for office in the cities and towns where we live and work. Because it seemed clear that something was going to pass, we negotiated with the bill authors in the House and the Senate. The language is now such that those individuals who are currently planning to run THIS year will be able to run and serve their full term. Because of this unique situation at the General Assembly many bills that we are tracking would have been dead at the turn, this hasn't happened yet and we are not sure what will happen. We will update you and this list as soon as we can.

As always, please don't hesitate to call us if you have any questions.

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