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Legislative Alert: Rokita Amendment

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Legislative Alert: Rokita Amendment

Abstract
[Excerpt] The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose the Rokita Amendment to the Homeland Security bill that would deny basic collective bargaining rights to Transportation Security Officers (TSOs). The Rokita Amendment would single out TSOs from among the hundreds of thousand of Homeland Security Employees who currently have full collective bargaining rights, including the at Border Patrol, Federal Protective Service, the Coast Guard and U.S. Marshalls Service.

Keywords
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Comments

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June 2, 2011

Dear Representative:

The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose the Rokita Amendment to the Homeland Security bill that would deny basic collective bargaining rights to Transportation Security Officers (TSOs). The Rokita Amendment would single out TSOs from among the hundreds of thousand of Homeland Security Employees who currently have full collective bargaining rights, including the at Border Patrol, Federal Protective Service, the Coast Guard and U.S. Marshalls Service.

Transportation Security Officers currently are allowed to join unions, but are prohibited from engaging in collective bargaining, based on a 2003 directive from the Under Secretary. The Bush Administration’s decision to deny TSA screeners their basic rights had nothing to do with national security, and everything to do with its hostility to the institution of collective bargaining. Suggesting that the collective bargaining process undermines national security ignores decades of research demonstrating that collective bargaining contributes to high quality workplaces, low turnover and high productivity. TSA’s own experience illustrates this exact point: it is hemorrhaging employees and has among the highest injury, illness and lost time rates in the federal government, and its attrition rate is ten times higher than other federal occupations. Denying TSA screeners collective bargaining rights has made the traveling public less safe, not more safe.

Passage of the Rokita Amendment will undermine the goal of insuring that the public is protected by a highly-trained, highly-motivated workforce, and we urge you to oppose it.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATION