



November 5, 2001

Senator Reid, We Couldn't Agree More...

The Daschle Amendment is Anti-Worker

"Frankly, it is inappropriate to use the events of September 11 as an excuse to pass anti-worker legislation."

Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), 11/1/01

So said Majority Whip Reid in response to a Republican effort to help charities raise money for victims of terrorism. He is absolutely correct, of course. Yet he supports an amendment to the Labor-HHS-Education appropriation bill ([H.R. 3061](#)) that is as anti-worker as they come. The Daschle amendment ([No. 2044](#)) would force policemen, firefighters, and emergency medical workers to surrender their bargaining rights, would kick volunteer firefighters to the curb, and would endanger the safety of all those who depend on public safety officers.

- ***It is anti-worker to force workers to join, be represented by, or pay money to a union against their will.*** The Daschle amendment would grant unions the privilege of bargaining for all public safety employees – even those who don't want to join or be represented by the union. Moreover, the amendment would allow unions to garnish the wages of those non-consenting workers. (The Daschle amendment does not contain a right-to-work provision to prevent this theft, and not all state right-to-work laws apply to public safety workers.)
- ***It is anti-worker to threaten the role of volunteer firefighters.*** According to the National Volunteer Fire Council, 75 percent of all U.S. firefighters are volunteers. Many areas depend on these generous souls because they cannot afford to hire a comparable number of paid firefighters. Yet the Daschle amendment would allow and encourage unions to prohibit volunteers, which would be disrespectful to the firefighters and their communities, and would raise taxes on all workers.
- ***It is anti-worker to threaten the public safety services on which all workers rely.*** Whether legal or illegal, strikes happen. A study by the Public Sector Research Council estimates that state laws similar to the Daschle amendment – even those that prohibit strikes – have led to a four-fold increase in strikes against public services. Shutting down police and fire departments jeopardizes the safety of all workers.

Senator Reid, it would be inappropriate to use the events of September 11 as an excuse to grant unions unfair privileges at the expense of workers.

RPC Staff Contact: Michael Cannon - 4-2946