

News From NJ Senate Democrats



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SMITH BILL AUTHORIZING GREATER LABOR ORGANIZATION APPROVED IN COMMITTEE

TRENTON - A bill sponsored by Senator Bob Smith which would make it easier for non-unionized employees to organize to increase their negotiating power was approved by the Senate Labor Committee today by a vote of 3-0.

"The right of employees to organize in order to negotiate better contracts with employers has always been symbolic of the American ideals of hard work and determination winning out over classism and social division," said Senator Smith, D-Middlesex and Somerset. "By allowing employees to designate a majority spokesperson through card-check, we're opening up the power to organize to occupations that have traditionally been closed off to organized labor. We're giving employees in those occupations the right to choose a voice and have a seat at the negotiating table."

The bill, S-194, would authorize the State Board of Mediation to recognize representatives of employees of private employers who are not covered under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). The employees would be allowed to choose their representative through a traditional election as outlined under the NLRA, or they could legitimately choose representatives by signing cards to demonstrate a majority interest in having a representative, known as the card-check method. The bill would authorize the Board of Mediation to determine whether an employee unit is an appropriate unit for collective bargaining, and would require a fine of up to \$1000 and court costs to those employers who refuse to provide information to the Board of Mediation or seek to prevent the Board from ruling on any labor negotiations.

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"The right to organize in order to negotiate better terms has been a time-honored tradition in New Jersey, and throughout the nation since the early days of American industry," said Senator Smith. "That a group of employees might be denied that right is a travesty to the spirit of organized labor to push for better working conditions for everyone. This bill rights a very egregious wrong, and puts the decision to organize squarely where it belongs, in the hands of the employees."

The bill now heads to the full Senate for consideration.

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