



March 17, 2011

An Open Letter to the Arizona State Legislature: Support Legislation to Protect Workers!

Dear Legislator:

On behalf of the National Taxpayers Union's (NTU's) 8,300 members in Arizona, I urge you to support Senate Constitutional Referendum 1028 (SCR 1028), which would prevent unauthorized deductions from workers' pay for use on political activities.

SCR 1028, also known as the Paycheck Protection Referendum, would let Arizona voters decide if public and private employers should be prohibited from deducting payments from any employee's paycheck for political purposes without the annually affirmed written consent of the employee. NTU believes this reform is necessary to prevent the misuse of workers' earnings by interest groups seeking to advance their agendas, which can often consist of more government spending and higher taxes.

A study by the Heritage Foundation found that nearly 70 percent of union dues are spent on union staff salaries and political activities, including campaigning. Most of the funds are expended without workers' knowledge. Increasingly, public sector unions utilize the funds collected through dues to influence elections for state and federal offices, and they are now the biggest player in such campaigns. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees spent at least \$87.6 million on the 2010 elections, making the public sector union the largest single outside spender of the campaign.

What's more, unions are using their influence to promote candidates who advance their interests, such as higher spending on government personnel and programs, despite huge budget deficits. Public sector unions are also among the most strident opponents to public pension reform despite evidence that unfunded public pension liabilities are somewhere between \$1 trillion and \$3 trillion. Ultimately, taxpayers must bear the costs of these policies. However, unsuspecting public employees could eventually shoulder these burdens as well, since their retirement security is endangered when their union leaders push for benefit schemes that may prove impossible to maintain.

The time for meaningful political reform that protects taxpayers in Arizona is now. Therefore, our members hope you will help provide that protection by passing SCR 1028.

Sincerely,

John Stephenson
State Government Affairs Manager

Cc: Governor Jan Brewer