

Faster Labor Contracts Act

Rep. Donald Norcross (D-NJ) and Rep. Pete Stauber (R-MN)

Background

Collective bargaining is a fundamental right guaranteed to most workers in the United States through the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). The right of workers to form a union and collectively bargain is central to improving wages, hours, working conditions, and more.

After workers vote to form a union, they don't immediately see these benefits of collective bargaining. Instead, they first need to obtain an initial agreement with management. Unfortunately, the NLRA does not impose a time limit on reaching a first contract, meaning that workers can vote to unionize only to be slow rolled by their employer on reaching a collective bargaining agreement. In fact, according to Bloomberg Law, it takes an average of 458 days for unions and employers to agree on a first contract. This hurts workers who, despite exercising their right to bargain collectively, are prevented from doing so by employers who enjoy the benefits of the status quo.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act will speed up first contracts for new unions, ensuring that when workers vote to unionize, a collective bargaining agreement follows.

Faster Labor Contracts Act

The Faster Labor Contracts Act is a bipartisan bill led by Congressman Donald Norcross (D-NJ) and Congressman Pete Stauber (R-MN) to speed up first contracts for new unions. This important legislation will ensure that when workers vote to form a union, employers are not allowed to drag out negotiations on a first collective bargaining agreement.

Summary

The Faster Labor Contracts Act would amend Section 8(d) of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), to require that:

1. Employers begin negotiating with a newly certified union within 10 days of receiving a written request.
2. If no agreement is reached after 90 days of negotiation, either party can request mediation from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS).
3. If mediation fails after 30 days, or additional periods agreed upon by both parties, the dispute will be referred to a binding 3-person arbitration panel to secure an initial contract.
4. That initial contract is binding for 2 years unless both parties agree to amend it.
5. The Government Accountability Office commission a report on average workplace time-to-contract one year after enactment.