

# SEIU Local 1984

The State Employees' Association of New Hampshire

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **BREAKING: NH SENATE BUCKS DECADES OF HISTORY, VOTES TO PASS HB 474, RIGHT TO WORK FOR LESS**

*Senators Disagree with Policy But Choose Politics Over People,  
Bend to Will of Former Republican Party Boss John Sununu*

CONCORD, NH – The New Hampshire Senate today voted to pass the Right to Work for Less bill, HB 474, despite massive mobilization by workers and community allies in protest to the legislation and statements by Senators themselves discrediting arguments in support of it.

“The New Hampshire Senate should be ashamed for choosing politics over the working people of New Hampshire,” said **Diana Lacey, President of the State Employees Association, SEA/SEIU Local 1984** and an employee of the Department of Health and Human Services. “The Senators themselves publicly discredited the reasoning behind the bill. Labor Commissioner George Copadis testified that no business owner had ever asked him about it. Each of the Senators heard from hundreds upon hundreds of their constituents, opposing HB 474. Yet a majority of Senators voted to approve the bill. We know that former Republican Party chair John Sununu has been making the rounds and we think it is despicable that one man and his corporate cohorts would have more say than the middle class families in New Hampshire.”

The vote today bucks decades of history in New Hampshire, a state that has repeatedly rejected Right to Work for Less under both Republican and Democratic leadership. With the exception of a few years in the 1940's, New Hampshire has always stood with workers and rejected Right to Work for Less. Comprehensive studies show that New Hampshire and other states without the legislation fare better on economic measures, including wages and benefits.

“People over politics, that’s what politicians tell us when they are campaigning and with this vote, these Senators absolutely lied,” said **Randy Hunneyman, a professor at the Adult Vocational Technical Center at the Men’s Prison in Concord**. Hunneyman is an independent (undeclared) voter. “Right to Work for Less will hurt families all across New Hampshire. During the committee vote, these Senators outright rejected the notion that this legislation would be an economic incentive for businesses to move to our state and create jobs. So what do they do? They pass the legislation anyway. That makes no sense. People are going to realize that this was politics first, people last.”

“I am incredibly disappointed in this vote,” said **Joan Hamblet, a SEA chapter leader who hosted a walk-thru of the Portsmouth DHHS facility with Senator Nancy Stiles on Monday**. “We all worked so hard to share the facts, economic data and personal stories about what Right to Work for Less will do to both union and non-union families in New Hampshire. When our chapter met with Senator Nancy Stiles on Monday, she told us she was honestly undecided and was open to our information. Now we hear that the former Republican Chair was leaning on her, and all of the hard work by so many is out the window.”

SEA received reports that former Republican Party Chair and Governor John Sununu was putting pressure on Senators Chuck Morse, Nancy Stiles and Jim Rausch to pass the legislation. The Senate Republicans also held a caucus late afternoon yesterday, rumored to be focused solely on HB 474.

“Right to Work for Less interferes in private business matters, hurts the middle class in New Hampshire and sends a message that the Senate is open for business for corporate interests instead of representing the voters that sent them here,” **Lacey** said. “We will take our fight for the middle class back to the House, where both Republicans and Democrats have stood up against party politics and instead represented the working families in our community.”

#### **Additional Facts:**

- The Virginia-based Right to Work National Committee had testified that the legislation would be an economic incentive for business to move to the state. NH’s Labor Commissioner’s experience is a stark contrast to those allegations: he testified that not one company in his six-year tenure has ever asked about Right to Work when deciding whether to locate here. The only local businesses to testify on the bill were in opposition to it.
- If passed, New Hampshire would become the only state north of the Mason-Dixon Line to have Right to Work for Less.
- The Senate did strip an amendment from the House legislation which would have fractured bargaining units in public sector unions by removing non-union members from collective representation, calling the method unworkable. This means the bill passed by the Senate today may go to Committee of Conference before heading to the Governor’s desk, although it is thought that the House will concur with the change outright. Removing the amendment, however, does mean that additional votes against Right to Work for Less may be found in the House - members there expressed concern about non-union employees benefitting from collective bargaining without paying their fair share of the costs.

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