

## Madore floats right to work resolution in Clark County, Wash.

VANCOUVER, Wash. — Clark County Commissioner David Madore has introduced a right-to-work resolution that would give county employees the ability to receive all of the protections and benefits of their union without having to pay for it.

The resolution states in part that “it shall be the policy of Clark County ... to advocate against requiring county employees to join a union as a condition of employment.”

Madore’s proposal follows efforts last year to qualify local ballot measures in the Washington cities of Blaine, Sequim, Shelton and Chelan. In each of those cases, city councils refused to permit the ballot measures to go forward, having been advised by city attorneys that the measures violated state law.

The measures were spearheaded by the anti-union Freedom Foundation, based in Olympia. Union officials believe the ultra-conservative group helped Madore draft the resolution in Clark County.

“It’s a right-wing plan to defund unions to make us go

away,” said Shannon Walker, president of the Southwest Washington Labor Council.

Walker said Madore, a multi-millionaire, is couching the Clark County resolution as nothing more than “guidance” from the Commission.

“Why would the Commission be ‘guiding’ county agencies to do something that is illegal under state law?” she said.

Walker said the resolution, if passed, sets up the county for a costly legal battle.

The Columbian newspaper reported that Madore has only introduced the resolution during the commissioners’ Wednesday board time meetings, when they discuss recent and upcoming business.

At press time, the Labor Council was calling for union members to denounce the resolution during the public comment period of the March 17 Commission meeting.

A second resolution drafted by Madore — and opposed by labor — calls for opening collective bargaining of county contracts to the general public.

## ...Right to work bill filed in Washington

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Columbian newspaper called for a state right-to-work law in a March 5 editorial entitled “Right to Work = Freedom.”

Right-to-work bills have been introduced in Washington and a number of other states, but nowhere besides Wisconsin are they considered likely this year to get past both legislative chambers and the governor.

But starting in 2014, some right-wing groups began encouraging cities and counties to pass local right-to-work ordinances, even though those ordinances are likely to be struck down by the courts. The National Labor Relations Act allows states to enact right-to-work statutes, but says nothing about cities or counties.

So far, at least 10 counties in Kentucky have passed local

right-to-work measures; the Kentucky AFL-CIO has filed suit in federal court to strike them down.


And in Southwest Washington, Clark County Commissioner David Madore has introduced a right-to-work resolution that would apply to county employees (see story on this page).

Right-to-work laws aren’t what they sound like: They don’t guarantee the right to a


job. Rather, they bar any union contract from requiring that workers pay dues or the equivalent. In other words, “right-to-work” laws give union-represented employees the “right to work” under the terms of a union contract without paying any of the union’s costs. The laws are intended to produce economically weak unions, and to create workplace rancor between dues-payers and shirkers.

### Tentative contract could end Steelworkers strike

United Steelworkers (USW) reached a tentative agreement March 12 with Royal Dutch Shell. If ratified, the contract — a “pattern” for the industry — could end a strike at 14 other oil companies. Over 6,550 Steelworkers have been on strike since Feb. 1. The tentative four-year deal at Shell includes safety improvements and raises of 2.5 to 3.5 percent a year, and maintains the current health care plan cost-sharing ratio. It also addresses concerns about performance of routine maintenance by contractors rather than union members. Local bargaining continues at oil refineries operated by BP, Tesoro, LyondellBasell, and Marathon Petroleum Corp.




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