

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1. DOD CONTRACTING OUT (358)

Summary: AFGE supported a motion to recommit the defense authorization bill (H.R. 2586) in order to reattach the Department of Defense (DoD) Service Contracting Reform Act, which would have ensured DoD employees were allowed to compete in defense of their own jobs, for at least a fraction of new work, and for contractors' work.

AFGE supported a “forthwith” motion to recommit offered by then House Minority Whip David Bonior (D-MI) to the defense authorization bill (H.R. 2586) that would have reattached the DoD Service Contracting Reform Act. That measure would have ensured DoD employees always had the right to compete in defense of their jobs, for at least a fraction of new work, and for contractors’ work. The measure would have also reattached an inventory to the defense authorization bill that would have tracked the cost and size of DoD’s contractor workforce.

The DoD Service Contracting Reform Act had been added to the defense authorization bill at its markup by a bipartisan majority of lawmakers on the House Armed Services Committee. Certain lawmakers in the House Republican leadership threatened to keep any defense authorization bill that held contractors accountable to the taxpayers from ever being considered, even in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Not wanting to be perceived as responsible for keeping the Congress from passing a defense authorization bill when the nation was at war, the author of the DoD Service Contracting Reform Act agreed to strip it from the defense authorization bill “provided (a particular House Republican leader) would work with him on the outsourcing issue” in a House-Senate conference, according to *Federal Human Resources Week*.

Knowing that this commitment was unlikely to be kept, given how many previous commitments to deal with concerns of federal employees had been broken, AFGE was determined to keep fighting. At the request of AFGE, Representative Bonior led the effort to reattach the DoD Service Contracting Reform Act to the defense authorization bill through a forthwith motion to recommit. Such motions to recommit are usually used by the minority to kill bills favored by the majority, sending them back to their committees of jurisdiction in order to be reworked. A forthwith motion to recommit, like the one offered by Mr. Bonior, does not, if successful, send legislation back to committee; rather, it simply amends the legislation on the floor, like a regular amendment.

Representative Bonior spoke forcefully on behalf of his motion:

“The motion to recommit will make the service contracting process at the Department of Defense more fair to Federal employees and more accountable to taxpayers. It will save an enormous amount of taxpayer dollars. Right now, Mr.

Speaker, less than 1 percent of defense contracts allow Federal employees a chance to openly compete for their work before it goes to the private sector. Less than 1 percent. That is not fair. When given a chance to compete, Federal employees actually win 60 percent of the contracts. Why? Because they do a great job, and they do it for less money...

"Too often what happens at our bases, and those of you who have facilities know this, private contractors get the work, they fail to do the job; and then when the Federal Government has to take over, the employees are gone. Their work experience is gone. Competition for defense contracts can reduce costs and give workers a chance to compete for their jobs before they are contracted out...This would not prevent the Department of Defense from contracting out as long as it is done fairly. DoD is given the maximum flexibility and can waive the requirement if it is threatened by national security...This motion to recommit is a win for the Department of Defense, a win for Federal employees, and I think a win for the taxpayers."

Representative Rob Andrews (D-NJ) also spoke in favor of the motion:

"(I)f a military base is deciding whether or not to contract out car washing at that military base, this amendment says before they can make that decision to take those jobs away from public employees, they must give those public employees a fair chance to compete for and win the contract...The record shows that privatization is often a failure. It means lower quality at a higher price. It means taking jobs away from people with benefits and giving them to people without benefits for private profit. But this motion is not anti-privatization. It is pro-competition and it is pro-taxpayer and it is pro-Department of Defense."

Because motions to recommit, even those of a forthwith nature, are seen as referenda on the House's leadership, they almost always fail. Indeed, this vote fell along party lines, with Democrats supporting taxpayers and federal employees and all but four Republicans supporting contractors.

On September 25, Representative Bonior's motion failed to pass by a vote of 197-221. However, a significant number of Republican lawmakers who voted against the public-private competition motion to recommit told AFGE at the time that they would not have done so had the vote been on a regular amendment. Unfortunately, that was the only option left to AFGE by the House Republican leadership.

2. FEDERALIZATION OF AIRPORT SCREENING (423)

Summary: AFGE supported an amendment that would have ensured the important work of airport passenger and baggage screening was performed by federal employees.

AFGE supported an amendment offered by Representative James Oberstar (D-MN) to The Secure Transportation for America Act (H.R. 3150) that would have, among other things, ensured that the important work of airport passenger and baggage screening was performed by reliable and experienced federal employees.

Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) spoke in favor of Representative Oberstar's amendment:

“(The measure) is a comprehensive attempt to improve our nation's airline security. We cannot allow any of the past deficiencies in the screening of passengers and property to continue. The past problems with unstructured and mostly private aviation security systems now in place at our airports must be scrapped, replaced, and repaired.

“The current system is broken. Unfortunately, the private security systems have not in the past, and certainly cannot now be expected to deal with the new magnitude of terrorist threats America faces. Every day brings news of some new incident where somebody with a box cutter, knife, or gun manages to walk onto an airplane...Why can't we just admit that while the private sector does many things well, they are just not up to the task of airport security? How many more guns have to get onto aircraft before we face reality?

“When it comes to the overriding and paramount interests of protecting American lives and our national security, I believe that we can trust and count on federal workers. They have proven themselves at the Defense Department, and at our borders with the Customs Service and the Border Patrol. We don't contract these jobs out because they are too important to leave in the hands of the private sector. The job of protecting 96,000 miles of U.S. land, air, and sea borders and more than 300 ports of entry is entrusted each day to the 20,000 dedicated employees of the U.S. Customs Service. The job of protecting our own security right here in our offices and on this House floor is performed by the very capable and dedicated federal employees of the Capitol Police Force.

“I ask my colleagues this question: if private security firms are so great, why not go with private security firms at the Customs Service or the Capitol Police Force? Maybe we should privatize the Secret Service protection of the President while we are at it. Why should Congress and the President be protected by federal employees, while the rest of the country's security is provided by often poorly paid, poorly trained `rent-a-cop' outfits? Airport security is a national law enforcement function and cannot be subject to cost-cutting measures that have fostered the poor standards that have contributed to serious security lapses.”

The AFGE-supported motion to federalize airport baggage screening failed, on November 1, by a vote of 214-218. However, AFGE never gave up the fight.

The subsequent House-Senate conference on the aviation security legislation included provisions federalizing airport screening.

3. WORKPLACE HEALTH (33)

Summary: AFGE opposed legislation that disapproved of a sensible ergonomics rule to promote workplace health and safety.

AFGE and the rest of the labor movement strongly opposed a joint resolution (S. J. Res. 6) that put the Congress on record as opposing a sensible rule issued by the Clinton Administration to promote workplace health and safety.

Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) spoke against the anti-workplace safety measure:

“The 20th century began with Ida Tarbell and Upton Sinclair pointing out the dangers in the workplace to American workers. Here we are at the beginning of a new century much more enlightened, yet still debating whether or not we should protect workers...

“Today, the Republican majority is taking extreme measures to undermine the voluminous scientific evidence supporting a workplace safety standard. In prior Republican administrations, Labor Secretaries supported an ergonomic standard. (George H. W. Bush Administration) Secretary (Elizabeth) Dole stated, ‘By reducing repetitive motion injuries, we will increase both the safety and productivity of America’s workforce. I have no higher priority than accomplishing just that.’ And (Reagan Administration) Secretary Lynn Martin also reiterated her commitment in 1992 to an OSHA rule...

“The scientific evidence supporting a standard is extensive. The National Academy of Science, responding to conservatives and business groups, issued a report saying that the weight of evidence justifies the introduction of appropriate and selective interventions to reduce the risk of muscular-skeletal disorders of lower back and upper extremities...This disproportionately affects women.”

However, the House voted to repeal the AFGE-supported rule, on March 7, by a vote of 223-206.

4. SCHOOL VOUCHERS (135)

Summary: AFGE opposed a demonstration voucher program because it would have weakened the nation’s public schools.

AFGE, like the AFL-CIO and its affiliates, opposed an effort by Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) to add an amendment to an education bill (H.R. 1) to establish a school voucher program. AFGE opposes vouchers because public funding of private or religious education transfers precious tax dollars from public schools—which are free and open to all children, accountable to taxpayers and parents alike, and essential to our democracy—to private and religious schools that charge for their services, select their students on the basis of religious or academic or family or personal characteristics, and are accountable only to their boards and clients.

Representative George Miller (D-CA) led the opposition to Representative Armey's amendment:

“America does something that no other country in the world does: It makes a commitment to a child born in this Nation that we will provide them a public education. A free education. We have been doing it throughout most of the history of this country, and we have done a remarkable job. Not a perfect job, not a job that is acceptable to all of us, but we have done a remarkable job. No other country in history has attempted to do what we do here, to take children from any background, to take children of any status and say we commit to them that we are going to provide them an education.

“What has been the result of that basic foundation of American society? The result is the greatest economy in the history of the world; more patents, more inventions than any country in the world, the freest country in the world, the greatest democracy in the world, a public discourse, and more tolerance than any other country in the world. That is not to suggest the landscape in America is perfect; that it does not have its problems; that we do not have our pockets of trouble. We do. We do.

“But to come along now and to suggest that we are going to start draining the resources from the public school education system in this country so that we can hold out to somebody the idea that they are going to go and take that \$500, and they are going to get a private school education is simply to mislead those individuals. The harm it does is in draining the resources that are necessary...We should not give up on a system that has done something that no other country in the world has done, and has given us what America enjoys and benefits from today.”

The AFGE-opposed amendment was defeated by a vote of 155-273, on May 23.

5. SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION (144)

Summary: AFGE supported a motion that would have provided much-needed funding for additional school construction.

AFGE supported a motion to recommit legislation to authorize spending on education (H.R. 1) so that it would include additional funding for school construction, renovation, and modernization.

Even the amount of additional funding that would be provided through the motion to recommit, according to Representative Major Owens (D-NY), would still be

“a small amount compared to the need. We know that in 1994, the General Accounting Office said we needed \$110 billion at that time for school renovation, construction, and repairs...It is important we say to the children in the public schools of America, 53 million children, that we care about more than just testing them. Accountability means more than accountability of the students and school and the massive testing we have proposed. Accountability also means we will stand up and make certain that those tools that they need to work with are there, especially the infrastructure, the facilities...So this is a modest proposal...We want to raise (school construction funding) to \$2 billion to take care of emergency repairs and renovations...”

However, the AFGE-supported motion was rejected by the House, by a vote of 207-223, on May 23.

6. DANGEROUS TRUCKS (193)

Summary: AFGE supported an effort to ensure that foreign trucks operating in the U.S. meet the same standards as American trucks.

AFGE supported an effort led by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters to keep America's highways safe from dangerous trucks. Representative Martin Sabo (D-MN) offered an amendment to the Transportation Appropriations Bill (H.R. 2299) to deny funding to process Mexican motor carrier applications for authority to operate outside of commercial areas near the U.S.-Mexican border. (Representative Sabo had earlier sought permission, unsuccessfully, to offer an amendment that would have required a rigorous inspection system be established for Mexican trucks.)

Representative Bob Filner (D-CA) spoke in favor of Representative Sabo's amendment:

“I represent the southern half of San Diego, California, a district which borders Mexico and which has all of the border crossings for California, at least the great majority. Thirty-five to 40 percent of all truck traffic between Mexico and the United States crosses my district...”

“My constituents will tell the gentleman what it is like to be in an accident with a Mexican truck whose brakes have failed; in an accident where the driver did not have adequate insurance; in an accident where the truck driver was a teenager or who had just driven for 20 hours straight. My constituents are the experts on what happens when we do not have adequate inspection for the trucks to enter into the United States...

“And it is clear we do not have an adequate inspection system...Twelve thousand trucks are crossing every day...There is no Federal support for State inspections, and all States can do what they want. That does not strike me as a way to assure U.S. citizens of truck safety.”

The House voted in favor of Representative Sabo’s AFGE-supported amendment to safeguard the nation’s highways, on June 26, by a vote of 285-143.

7. BREAKING FAITH WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR (254)

Summary: AFGE opposed an effort to divert funding for programs that benefit low-income families and communities.

The Bush Administration has waged a campaign to remove federal "barriers" to participation of faith-based organizations in charitable programs.

According to the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), “(t)raditionally, religious organizations have received federal funds to provide social services as long as they set up a separate non-profit organization that has no relationship to the religious mission of the church. Such religiously-affiliated organizations as Catholic Charities and Lutheran Services currently receive millions in federal funds.

“Under ‘charitable choice,’ houses of worship could receive federal funds directly. Charitable choice advocates claim this new arrangement is necessary because government funding policy discriminates against churches, synagogues, and other houses of worship. They imply, if not actually assert, that opponents of ‘charitable choice’ are against religion.

“This is not true. Many in the religious community, ranging from the mainstream Jewish organizations to conservative evangelists, Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, fear ‘charitable choice’ will lead to too much government intrusion in their ministries and have expressed concerns about the proposal. In addition, civil rights organizations and civil liberties groups have raised concerns about religious discrimination in federal programs.

Like the AFL-CIO and other affiliates, AFGE has opposed “charitable choice” because it will lead to religious discrimination in government programs and

government interference in religion. As AFSCME has noted, “Under current law houses of worship can limit their hiring to people of their own faith and individuals who follow their teachings. ‘Charitable choice’ would allow them to extend this very narrow exception to programs for which they receive federal funding. Hiring decisions and adverse personnel actions could be based on such considerations as sexual preference, abortion, premarital sexual relations, interracial dating and other considerations based on religious tenets and teachings.”

Moreover, “charitable choice” is an attempt by the Bush Administration to slash spending for domestic programs that help low-income families and communities in order to pay for large tax cuts skewed towards corporations and the wealthy. As AFSCME has noted, the Bush Administration “wants to give houses of worship special help in getting federal funding. This strategy will pit religious, secular non-profit and public agencies against each other, put government in the business of picking and choosing among religions for federal grants, and divert funds away from current providers to religious grantees. It will undermine current funding arrangements and create a premise for ‘doing more with less,’ or cutting back further on federal assistance for human services activities.

“Charitable choice” also could leave workers in faith-based organizations without any labor protections. According to AFSCME’s “review of federal court and National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) cases...if ‘charitable choice’ allows entities to promulgate, propagate, or indoctrinate a religious faith, they would not come under the NLRB’s jurisdiction and their workers could not organize and bargain collectively. In addition, they would not be subject to the federal unemployment tax, and their employees could not get unemployment benefits if they become unemployed.”

The Community Solutions Act (H.R. 7) would expand ‘charitable choice’ to nine more federal programs: juvenile delinquency and prevention, crime prevention, housing, job training, senior citizen programs, child care, community development block grants, domestic violence, and hunger relief funds.

Representative John Conyers (D-MI) spoke against passage of H.R. 7:

“(W)hen I was first elected to this body, if someone had told me that in the first year of the 21st century, the U.S. Congress would be on the verge of passing a bill making it lawful to discriminate with taxpayer funds, I wouldn’t have believed them. I would have told them that too many had fought too long for us to backtrack in the battle against bigotry. Yet that is exactly what this bill does...

“This bill is so extreme it sanctions employment discrimination based on so-called ‘tenets and teachings.’ This means a religious organization could use taxpayer funds to discriminate against gays and lesbians, against divorced persons, against unmarried pregnant women, against women who have had an abortion, and against persons involved in an interracial marriage. If you can

believe it, the bill gets even worse. The legislation not only sets aside federal civil rights laws, it goes as far as to eliminate state and local civil rights laws...

"We shouldn't be surprised that the civil rights community is so strongly opposed to the bill. Just last week, Julian Bond, the Chairman of the NAACP, declared H.R. 7 will 'erase sixty years of civil rights protections.' The NAACP Legal Defense Fund has written that charitable choice is 'wholly inconsistent with longstanding principle that federal monies should not be used to discriminate in any form.' The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights has stated in no uncertain terms that charitable choice will 'erode the fundamental principle of non-discrimination.'"

On July 19, the House approved the AFGE-opposed H.R. 7 by a vote of 233-198.

8. HELPING AVIATION WORKERS (347)

Summary: AFGE supported a motion to help airlines workers who lost their jobs in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, particularly since the airlines for whom they worked had already received a massive bailout.

The House considered legislation that would provide financial assistance to the commercial airlines industry, The Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act (H.R. 2926), in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks that have severely reduced the number of air travelers.

Some lawmakers were interested in adding provisions to the legislation that would have helped those airlines workers who had been laid off. Some lawmakers wanted the legislation to make airport screening a federal responsibility.

A motion to recommit H.R. 2926 was offered by Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR) that would have required airlines to cover all health insurance costs for airlines workers for 18 months after their layoffs and also required that airlines passengers be screened by federal employees.

Representative Pete Stark (D-CA) urged lawmakers to use the legislation to help airlines workers as well as airlines:

"The commercial airline industry is asking American taxpayers for a \$20 billion bailout. I don't want to see the airline industry dissolve, and I don't want to see thousands of hard-working Americans lose their jobs. But the bill before us today provides a bailout for corporations and their highly compensated executive officers that would have faced insolvency despite the current crisis. Furthermore, the bill does very little for the thousands of employees who are about to lose their jobs over this crisis. It is unconscionable to provide a bailout for the airline

industry without simultaneously addressing the more pressing needs of U.S. airline workers.

“The package does not include health insurance benefits or job retraining assistance for workers who have been laid off as a result of the loss. With this bill, Congress writes a fat check to the airline industry without any protections for airline workers. I am particularly concerned that we have done nothing to ensure that these workers' and their families' health needs will be met during this difficult time. On top of losing their jobs, their income and their livelihood, these hard working Americans are in danger of losing their health benefits and joining the already-massive ranks of the uninsured.

“Fifteen years ago we passed a bill that enabled displaced workers to retain their health insurance for a limited time while they look for other work. But there's a catch--employers may charge employees the full premium, plus an additional 2 percent. Laid-off airline workers thus face a Hobson's choice between making ends meet and protecting their families against the risks of high health care bills. This legislation does nothing to save them from having to make that awful choice. At a minimum, we should ensure that part of this generous gift to the industry go toward guaranteeing these workers and their families continued health insurance coverage. I wish that my colleagues would develop the kind of compassion for working people that they have for corporations...(W)e must address the needs of airline employees first. These employees provide the foundation of the airline industry and must be taken into consideration before any CEO walks away with more than his fair share.”

However, Representative DeFazio's AFGE-supported motion was rejected by a vote of 174-239, on September 21.

9. BAD TRADE BILL (481)

Summary: AFGE opposed Fast Track legislation because it will make it easier to negotiate trade agreements that don't include even the most basic protections for workers' rights and the environment.

Fast Track grants the President the authority to negotiate trade deals and forbids Congress any opportunity to correct flaws or problems, including lack of worker or environmental rights. Lawmakers who opposed Fast Track said the measure would aid powerful corporations searching the globe for cheap labor—lowering standards globally for workers' rights, public health, consumers and the environment.

The AFL-CIO and its affiliate unions have opposed Fast Track legislation vociferously because it has not required the president to include enforceable protections for workers' rights and the environment in our trade agreements. The

AFL-CIO also has criticized the basic format of the legislation, since it lacks adequate procedures for consultation with Congress and the public and limits democratic debate about trade policy. The AFL-CIO worked with allies in the environmental movement, consumer groups and fair trade coalitions to successfully defeat Fast Track in 1997 and again in 1998.

Despite aggressive grassroots lobbying by America's workers, the House of Representatives, on December 6, voted to approve Fast Track, by the narrowest of margins, 215-214.

10. BAD INCOME TAX CUT (45)

Summary: AFGE opposed legislation to slash income taxes because the cuts are excessive, skewed largely towards the wealthy, reduce funding for important government programs, and make it more difficult to address important domestic concerns.

AFGE opposed legislation (H.R. 3) that would slash income taxes because it cut taxes far too severely, because its tax cuts were tilted towards the wealthy, because its tax cuts will likely lead to large federal deficits in the years ahead, and because it will surely reduce funding for programs that are important to working Americans.

Representative Charles Rangel (D-NY) noted that H.R. 3 "takes care of politically the top rollers in the United States...60 percent of the relief that is in this part of the bill...will go to the top 10 percent of the people in America, 43 percent of it goes to the top 1 percent..."

Representative Robert Matsui (D-CA) pointed out that the loss of revenue that would be inflicted on the American people by H.R. 3 would mean that "we are going to have to cut health care benefits. We are not going to be able to get prescription drug treatment to our senior citizens...I will guarantee that we will have to make significant cuts in Social Security, if, in fact, this tax cut occurs..."

The AFGE-opposed income tax cut passed the House by a vote of 230-198, on March 8.

11. BAD BUDGET RESOLUTION (70)

Summary: AFGE opposed the budget resolution because it called for excessive tax cuts, skewed largely towards corporations and the wealthy, that reduce funding for important government programs and make it more difficult to address important domestic concerns.

AFGE opposed the House budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 83) because it cut taxes far too severely, because its tax cuts were tilted towards corporations and the wealthy, because its tax cuts will likely lead to large federal deficits in the years ahead, and because it will surely reduce funding for programs that are important to working Americans.

Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-TX) expressed his opposition to the budget resolution:

“(I oppose) this budget resolution because it is not balanced. The consuming desire of our Republican colleagues for immediate political gratification has caused them to pursue exploding tax cuts for the most privileged people in our society without regard to our obligations both to our parents for Social Security and Medicare and to our children for educational opportunities...”

“(W)ith the tax cuts for the privileged that are authorized by this resolution, we are setting a course, a path, to head back to the era of deficits, to head back to a period when we are no longer reducing the national debt and encouraging economic expansion and lower interest rates. That is a fiscal mistake.

“Last year, (President) Bush borrowed the slogan from the Children's Defense Fund, ‘leave no child behind,’ but the unrealistic tax breaks for those at the top make clear that this Republican budget has as its mantra ‘leave no millionaire behind.’”

The AFGE-opposed House budget resolution passed by a vote of 222-205, on March 28.

12. BAD TAX LIMITATION (87)

Summary: AFGE opposed an attempt to enshrine an extreme anti-tax philosophy in the Constitution which likely would have required significant cuts in federal employees' jobs and benefits.

AFGE opposed H. J. Res. 41, which would require a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate for almost any bill that would increase taxes. Under the measure, the Congress could waive the supermajority requirement only to pass a tax increase during a period of declared war between the United States and another country, or when the Congress and the President have enacted a resolution stating that the United States is engaged in a military conflict which threatens national security.

Since it would become nearly impossible to increase revenues, the Congress would instead be forced to eliminate important government programs and lay off

valuable federal employees in order to reduce any deficits which might subsequently arise.

The AFGE-opposed measure was defeated by a vote of 232-189, on April 25. A two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting (281 in this case) is required to pass a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution.

13. ECONOMIC STIMULUS (404)

Summary: AFGE opposed an economic stimulus package that was far too generous to business interests.

AFGE opposed an economic stimulus package (H.R. 3090) that provided large tax cuts for business interests and insufficient assistance for workers who had lost their jobs in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Representative Jerry Nadler (D-NY) criticized the stimulus package for its misplaced priorities:

“Christmas has come early for the special interests this year. This so-called stimulus package is nothing more than the eternal wish list of big business wrapped up in a nice, neat, little bow. When the President put together his mammoth tax cut for the rich earlier this year, businesses were told to wait their turn. They would get their huge tax cut, but it couldn't be in the same package or it would shatter the illusion that the first one was for working families.

“So, we all knew this big tax cut was coming. But frankly, I'm shocked that the Republican Leadership would trot it out so soon, under the guise of `economic stimulus.' Quite simply, there is virtually no economic value to this package. The key to economic stimulus is to put money in the pockets of people who will spend it immediately. At Democrats' insistence, there is at least a small amount of money going to those who are hardest hit by these economic times. But the overwhelming majority of cuts in this bill are skewed to the very rich, who are more likely to put savings in the bank than to spend it. By some estimates a whopping 75% of the benefits of this package would go to the top 10% of wage earners. This is not just dramatically unfair, it is economically foolish.

“Not surprisingly, the portions of this bill that are aimed at lower income workers are temporary. But, the special breaks to big business, like capital gains reductions and repeal of the corporate Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) are permanent. This bill even has the gall to provide for refunds to any business that has paid the corporate AMT since 1986. That's not economic stimulus, that is corporate give-away...

“The flaws in this bill are not just limited to what's in it. It is equally poor policy because of what's missing. Any responsible stimulus package would include new direct spending on the pressing needs of the nation. This would create jobs while shoring up the infrastructure critical to our future economic growth. For example, in this new world of heightened security at the airports, we must invest in high-speed rail to accommodate travel between short distances. But, as usual, this bill simply relies on the old gospel of the Republican Party--that tax cuts are the solution to any problem. This corporate wish list may settle some old debts in the potential arena, but it will do nothing to nurse our ailing economy back to health. It is special interest pandering at its worst and should be defeated.”

The AFGE-opposed package of tax cuts posing as a stimulus package passed the House by 216-214, on October 24.

14. PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS (332)

Summary: AFGE opposed a fake Patients' Bill of Rights that failed to make health care providers accountable to all Americans.

AFGE supported the real Patients' Bill of Rights (S. 1052) that was passed by the Senate on June 29 because, in the words of Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD):

“This bill ensures that doctors, not insurance companies, make medical decisions. It guarantees patients the right to hear all treatment options, not just the cheapest ones. It says you have the right to go to the nearest emergency room when you need emergency care. It guarantees you the right to see a specialist if you need one. It gives women the right to see an obstetrician-gynecologist without having to see another doctor to get permission. And it guarantees that parents can choose a pediatrician as their child's primary care provider. But rights without remedies are no rights at all. That is why our bill guarantees people the right to appeal decisions by their Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) to an independent review board, and get a timely response. Finally, our bill allows people to hold HMO's accountable when their decisions harm patients—the same way doctors and employers—and everyone else in America—is held accountable for their actions...”

However, the Bush Administration, working closely with the House Republican leadership and Representative Charles Norwood (R-GA), who had actually been a key sponsor of a good Patients' Bill of Rights, insisted that the House consider a bad Patients' Bill of Rights.

Representative Jim Turner (D-TX) declared that

“(T)his is a sad day for patients and their doctors. A good bipartisan bill, the Patients' Bill of Rights, went down to the White House yesterday and came back as the insurance companies' bill of rights. It went down to the White House as the patient protection act and came back the insurance company protection act.

“The President took a bill that has passed the Senate, the same bill that received almost two-thirds of the votes of this Chamber last year, and he negotiated away the rights of patients to secure the health care their doctors prescribe.

“The Patients' Bill of Rights was negotiated away by the President to giving a special deal to the insurance company, a deal that has never been granted to any individual or any business in the history of this country. If we vote for this bill, we will be rolling back the rights of patients for every State in the union.

“In Texas, we have had a Patients' Bill of Rights since 1997. It is working. It has not resulted in a flood of litigation. It has not resulted in higher health insurance premiums. We have had only 17 lawsuits. The President's proposal will repeal this good law that is working. I urge my colleagues to stand up for...patients and their doctors and pass the real patients' bill of rights.”

The House approved the bad Patients' Bill of Rights, on August 2, by a vote of 226-203.

15. CAMPAIGN FINANCE (228)

Summary: AFGE supports a real reform of the federal campaign finance process that would maximize the influence of working Americans. The House Republican leadership drafted a rule for the consideration of campaign finance reform legislation that all but guaranteed its defeat. That's why AFGE was forced to oppose the rule and then work to force the House Republican leadership to draft a rule that would allow for the fair consideration of campaign finance reform legislation.

The House Rules Committee, which is responsible for determining how the House will consider legislation on the floor, operates under the direction of the House leadership. The House Rules Committee determines whether and how amendments will be offered to legislation that goes to the floor.

The House Republican leadership strongly opposes real campaign finance reform legislation. However, the considerable bipartisan support for the legislation in the House forced the Republican leadership to commit to schedule for floor consideration H.R. 2356, a reform measure sponsored by Representatives Christopher Shays (R-CT) and Martin Meehan (D-MA). However, the House Republican leadership directed the Rules Committee to draft a rule governing floor consideration of H.R. 2356 that forced

Representatives Shays and Meehan to break up their corrective amendment into 14 different corrective amendments.

House Republican leaders understood that many lawmakers who support H.R. 2356 would vote against the rule because forcing so many different votes on the Shays-Meehan corrective amendment would likely leave the legislation changed from its original intent. And once the rule for H.R. 2356 was voted down, House Republican leaders could indefinitely postpone any further consideration of campaign finance reform legislation.

Representative John Baldacci (D-ME) summed up the cynical strategy of opponents of campaign finance reform:

“I am outraged by the unprecedented rule that has been developed for consideration of the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform legislation. I have never before seen a rule that divides a Manager's Amendment into 14 separate provisions and requires each of them to be passed individually. The Republican Leadership has really outdone themselves this time in finding new and creative ways to thwart the will of the American people...

“The Senate has passed McCain-Feingold (campaign finance reform legislation). The House Leadership committed to allowing a vote on Shays-Meehan. But the Republican Leadership is still trying to pull the rug from under reform again. The Republican Leadership's rule is designed to make it as difficult as possible for Shays-Meehan to pass in the form its sponsors recommend.

“If the Rule is defeated, as I believe it should be, the Leadership should rest assured that supporters of campaign finance reform will not go quietly. The American people have said time and again that they want to see our campaign finance system cleaned up in a meaningful way. Defeating this rule will not defeat this issue. We will be back, and Shays-Meehan will ultimately pass this body. Americans have lost all confidence in the campaign finance system. Rules like this may cause them to lose all confidence in the U.S. Congress...”

The AFGE-opposed rule was defeated by the House, on July 12, by a vote of 203-228. As expected, the House Republican leaders took advantage of the rule's failure to indefinitely postpone consideration of campaign finance reform legislation.

CD	Party		DOD Contracting	Airport Federalization	Ergonomics	Vouchers	School Construction	Trucks	Public Sector	Aviation Workers	Trade	Tax Cuts	Budget	Tax Limitation	Stimulus	Patients Rights	Campaign Finance	AFGE Score
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Florida (cont.)																		
5	D	Karen Thurman	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
6	R	Cliff Stearns	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
7	R	John Mica	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
8	R	Richard Keller	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
9	R	Michael Bilirakis	W	W	R	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
10	R	C.W. Young	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
11	D	Jim Davis	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
12	R	Adam Putnam	W	W	W	W	W	?	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
13	R	Dan Miller	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
14	R	Porter Goss	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
15	R	Dave Weldon	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
16	R	Mark Foley	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
17	D	Carrie Meek	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
18	R	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
19	D	Robert Wexler	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
20	D	Peter Deutsch	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
21	R	Lincoln Diaz-Balart	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
22	R	E. Shaw	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W
23	D	Alcee Hastings	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Georgia																		
1	R	Jack Kingston	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
2	D	Sanford Bishop	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
3	R	Mac Collins	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
4	D	Cynthia McKinney	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
5	D	John Lewis	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
6	R	Johnny Isakson	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
7	R	Bob Barr	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
8	R	Saxby Chambliss	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
9	R	Nathan Deal	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
10	R	Charlie Norwood	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
11	R	John Linder	W	W	W	W	W	W	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Hawaii																		
1	D	Neil Abercrombie	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
2	D	Patsy Mink	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Iowa																		
1	R	James Leach	W	R	W	R	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	R	W	R
2	R	Jim Nussle	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
3	D	Leonard Boswell	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R
4	R	Greg Ganske	W	R	W	R	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	R	W	R
5	R	Tom Latham	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Idaho																		
1	R	Clement Otter	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
2	R	Michael Simpson	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Illinois																		
1	D	Bobby Rush	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
2	D	Jesse Jackson	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
3	D	William Lipinski	R	R	R	W	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R
4	D	Luis Gutierrez	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R
5	D	Rod Blagojevich	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
6	R	Henry Hyde	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W

CD	Party		DOD Contracting	Airport Federalization	Ergonomics	Vouchers	School Construction	Trucks	Public Sector	Aviation Workers	Trade	Tax Cuts	Budget	Tax Limitation	Stimulus	Patients Rights	Campaign Finance	AFGE Score
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
New Jersey (cont.)																		
9	D	Steven Rothman	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	100
10	D	Donald Payne	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
11	R	Rodney Frelinghuysen	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
12	D	Rush Holt	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
13	D	Robert Menendez	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
New Mexico																		
1	R	Heather Wilson	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
2	R	Joe Skeen	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
3	D	Tom Udall	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
Nevada																		
1	D	Shelley Berkley	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	87
2	R	Jim Gibbons	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
New York																		
1	R	Felix Grucci	W	W	R	R	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	20
2	D	Steve Israel	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
3	R	Peter King	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	13
4	D	Carolyn McCarthy	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	93
5	D	Gary Ackerman	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	R	100
6	D	Gregory Meeks	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
7	D	Joseph Crowley	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
8	D	Jerrold Nadler	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
9	D	Anthony Weiner	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
10	D	Edolphus Towns	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
11	D	Major Owens	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
12	D	Nydia Velazquez	?	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	93
13	R	Vito Fossella	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
14	D	Carolyn Maloney	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
15	D	Charles Rangel	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
16	D	Jose Serrano	?	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	93
17	D	Eliot Engel	?	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
18	D	Nita Lowey	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
19	R	Sue Kelly	W	W	W	R	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	13
20	R	Benjamin Gilman	R	W	R	R	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	33
21	D	Michael McNulty	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
22	R	John Sweeney	W	W	W	R	W	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
23	R	Sherwood Boehlert	W	W	R	R	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	33
24	R	John McHugh	W	W	R	R	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	?	W	W	W	29
25	R	James Walsh	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
26	D	Maurice Hinchey	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
27	R	Thomas Reynolds	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
28	D	Louise Slaughter	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
29	D	John LaFalce	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	93
30	R	Jack Quinn	W	W	R	R	W	R	W	W	?	W	W	W	R	W	W	29
31	R	Amo Houghton	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	20
Ohio																		
1	R	Steve Chabot	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
2	R	Rob Portman	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
3	D	Tony Hall	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	93
4	R	Michael Oxley	W	W	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
5	R	Paul Gillmor	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	?	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	14

CD	Party		DOD Contracting	Airport Federalization	Ergonomics	Vouchers	School Construction	Trucks	Public Sector	Aviation Workers	Trade	Tax Cuts	Budget	Tax Limitation	Stimulus	Patients Rights	Campaign Finance	AFGE Score
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Texas (cont.)																		
29	D	Gene Green	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	93
30	D	Eddie Johnson	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	93
Utah																		
1	R	James Hansen	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
2	D	James Matheson	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	87
3	R	Christopher Cannon	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
Virginia																		
1	R	Jo Ann Davis	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
2	R	Edward Schrock	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
3	D	Robert Scott	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
4	R	Randy Forbes *	W	W	?	?	?	?	W	W	?	?	?	W	W	W	0	
5	R	Virgil Goode	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	13
6	R	Robert Goodlatte	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
7	R	Eric Cantor	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
8	D	James Moran	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	?	R	R	R	86	
9	D	Rick Boucher	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
10	R	Frank Wolf	W	R	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	20	
11	R	Thomas Davis	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7	
Vermont																		
AL	I	Bernard Sanders	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
Washington																		
1	D	Jay Inslee	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
2	D	Richard Larsen	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
3	D	Brian Baird	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
4	R	Richard Hastings	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
5	R	George Nethercutt	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0
6	D	Norman Dicks	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	93	
7	D	Jim McDermott	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
8	R	Jennifer Dunn	W	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	0	
9	D	Adam Smith	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	93
Wisconsin																		
1	R	Paul Ryan	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7
2	D	Tammy Baldwin	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	?	R	R	R	R	100	
3	D	Ron Kind	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
4	D	Gerald Kleczka	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
5	D	Thomas Barrett	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
6	R	Thomas Petri	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	R	13	
7	D	David Obey	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
8	R	Mark Green	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7	
9	R	F. Sensenbrenner	W	W	W	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	7	
West Virginia																		
1	D	Alan Mollohan	W	R	R	R	R	R	W	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	87
2	R	Shelley Capito	W	W	W	R	W	R	W	W	R	W	W	W	W	W	W	20
3	D	Nick Rahall	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	100
Wyoming																		
AL	R	Barbara Cubin	W	W	W	?	?	W	W	W	W	W	W	?	W	W	0	

KEY

- R** Voted Right
- W** Voted Wrong
- ?** Did Not Vote
- *** Took office later in 2001 or in 2002