

Unions Continue to Win Majority of Representation Elections

Virtually all U.S. and Canadian unions have been losing members for a number of years. This trend has forced the merger of the Graphic Communications International Union into the Teamsters Union, now known as GCC/IBT. Statistics show, however, that the labor movement is trying its best to get the “pendulum swinging the other way”:

- The NLRB conducted 1,502 union representation elections in 2007. Unions prevailed in 902 of these elections or 60.1%, down slightly from 61.4% in 2006.
- 2007 marks the end of ten consecutive years in which unions have improved their win rate. However, unions have won **more than half** of all representation elections in each of the past eleven years.
- Unions in the “Change to Win” federation, including the Graphic Communications Conference/International Brotherhood of Teamsters (GCC/IBT), won 349 of 669 or 52.2% of their representation elections. 46,515 workers were eligible to vote in the 669 elections. Of these, 22,626 or 48.6% became organized.
- The Teamsters Union was again the most active union in 2007 with 407 NLRB conducted elections, winning 48.6% of them. 22,678 workers were eligible to vote; 10,546 or 46.5% became organized.
- The ten most active unions (in terms of number of representation elections held) for the period 2003 – 2007 are: International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Service Employees International Union, United Food & Commercial Workers, International Union of Operating Engineers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, International Association of Machinists, United Steelworkers, Laborers International Union of North America, United Auto Workers, and Communications Workers of America.
- Greater union success exists among very small and very large bargaining units. Units of 49 workers and under had the greatest number of representation elections with a total of 1,016 in 2007. Of these, 631 elections or 62.1% were won by the union. While there were only 26 representation elections held in units with 500 workers or more, 18 or 69.2% were won by the union.
- Of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, five had a union success rate of 80% or more in 2007: Maine (5 of 5 or 100.0%), Utah (8 of 9 or 88.9%), District of Columbia (10 of 12 or 83.3%), Hawaii (9 of 11 or 81.8%), and South Carolina (4 of 5 or 80.0%).
- Four states conducted more than 100 representation elections in 2007: New York (158, of which 108 or 68.4% were won by the union), California (150, 91 or 60.7% won by the union), Illinois (120, 70 or 58.3% won by the union), and Pennsylvania (103, 52 or 50.5% won by the union).

Countering an organizing drive is expensive. The AFL-CIO estimates that companies spend up to \$3,000 per vote fighting unions prior to an election. Costs are escalating as unions are using more sophisticated techniques to sway opinions, including high-priced advertising.

No employer wants to face an organizing drive without funds needed to mount a successful counter-offensive. By having the financial confidence to react swiftly and effectively, many organizing campaigns will fizzle and die. United Insurance Company Limited's Union Organizing Defense Insurance can provide you with that confidence. For more information, contact UIC at (800) 825-1527 or visit the website at www.uic-bermuda.bm.

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