

CONGRATULATIONS GRAND JUNCTION KNOWLEDGE BOWL TEAM

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Grand Junction High School's Knowledge Bowl for winning the State championship in Colorado, and going on to the national finals in Florida this month.

Team members were asked as many as 500 questions during the event at Fort Lewis College, and competed among 60 Colorado schools. The young scholars include Jacob Johnson, Sarah Smith, David Tice, Jeff Mohrlang, Jeff Hurd; alternates, Mark Richards, Elizabeth Buescher, Elizabeth Ryan and they were coached by Lorena Thompson.

In this day and age, it is heartening to see our youth aspire to intellectual excellence. Their success, as well as Custer County's success in taking second place, demonstrates the personal dedication of our youth in western and southern Colorado.

The Grand Junction team spent several hours a week practicing, and their hard work paid off handsomely. I congratulate them on their efforts, Mr. Speaker, and wish them the best of luck in the national championship. Even though they are now known as Team Colorado, they will always be Team Grand Junction to me.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join with me in recognizing the hard work and dedication of these young people. I know they will make Colorado proud.

TRIBUTE TO F.E. (BUZ) SPOONER, CHUCK SHAW, AND RON RHODES

HON. HARRY JOHNSTON

OF FLORIDA

HON. MARK ADAM FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to congratulate F.E. (Buz) Spooner, Chuck Shaw, and Ron Rhodes for their long dedication to the students of Palm Beach County. For 38 years, they have provided over 55,000 students with the opportunity to visit our Nation's Capitol. It has been our pleasure to greet the thousands of students they brought to Washington, DC. Every year the patrols arrive and fill the seats on the floor of the House of Representatives, bringing their interest and excited enthusiasm to normally staid chambers. Their enthusiasm reminded all of us who work here of the awesome nature of the Capitol and what it represents.

We commend Buz, Chuck, and Ron for granting this opportunity to so many students over the years. One of the greatest problems in our country today is a lack of understanding and appreciation for our democratic system and the way we make laws and why. Introducing young people to the Capitol and educating them on the lawmaking process is a truly admirable pursuit that will serve our entire country as those same students become adults

who have the power to vote and affect change.

The efforts and dedication of Buz Spooner, Chuck Shaw, and Ron Rhodes are remembered and appreciated by our south Florida colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives and our predecessors, the Honorable DAN MICA and the Honorable TOM LEWIS. Most importantly, they are remembered by the students who will retain the experience and grow up to be citizens actively involved in the democratic process. We can only hope that others will take up the challenge and continue providing this service for future generations. It would be the best way to honor the legacy of these three men.

MANDATORY ASSESSMENT OF UNION DUES

HON. HARRIS W. FAWELL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

Mr. FAWELL. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduced the Worker Right to Know Act, legislation which will make real the rights created by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Communication Workers of America versus Beck*. This legislation strengthens Beck and gives workers a procedural bill of rights so they will have the ability and the knowledge to stand up to unions and exercise their right to object to the payment of dues not necessary for collective bargaining. This legislation places workers on more even footing with unions who have the extraordinary power, bestowed upon them by the Congress, to compel employees to pay union dues as a condition of employment.

The Worker Right to Know Act is necessary because, under current law, unfortunately Beck does not offer employees a meaningful right to object to union dues payments not necessary for collective bargaining. The problems begin with the notice, or lack thereof, that employees have of their rights under Beck. A recent poll of union members conducted for Americans for a Balanced Budget found that only 19 percent of union members know that they can object to the use of union dues for political purposes. The National Labor Relations Board has taken few steps to address this widespread lack of notice and, in its recent ruling, some 8 years after the Beck decision, concluded that it was enough for the union to print a notice of Beck rights once a year in the inside of its monthly magazine. Although, why nonunion fee payers are expected to pick up and read the union magazine is less than clear. Further, both the Board and the current administration have steadfastly refused to require that Beck notices be posted in the workplace.

Employees who clear this initial hurdle of knowledge of their rights under Beck and want to object to the use of their union dues for political or social causes may be required to first resign their membership in the union. This is not an easy thing for many employees to do for a number of reasons. First and foremost, unions often either wittingly or unwittingly mislead their employees on the effect resignation from the union will have on their employment. Union security clauses often require membership in the union as a condition of employment, even though the courts have made it

clear that this is not allowed. Even for employees who find out the truth, many who object to the union's extracurricular activities may believe that union representation brings them benefits in the workplace and thus may be reluctant to resign. Some employees may also fear the reaction that union resignation may bring from fellow employees.

On top of these more personal reasons, once an employee resigns from the union they lose their right to have a voice in the myriad decisions made between the exclusive bargaining representative and the employer about the terms and conditions affecting his or her employment. In most workplaces, employees who are part of a bargaining unit that is represented by a union, but who are not union members, have no right to participate in the internal affairs of the union, for example, cannot vote in union elections, have no right to vote in decisions to strike an employer, and have no right to vote to ratify a contract offer of an employer. Under a union security agreement, a nonmember can be forced—as a condition of employment—to pay for the costs of union representation but can be denied participation in all decisionmaking with regard to what that representation entails.

If the employee is willing to accept these very real limitations on his or her role in the workplace, there are additional practical obstacles that dilute the meaningfulness of the employee's right to object to dues being used for political purposes. The procedural hurdles faced by employees include limited window period for making objections, annual renewal requirements for objectors, very specific requirements regarding mailing objections, objections must be made to multiple parties, and so forth. Further, the employee must rely on the union to determine what percentage of dues is used for purposes related to collective bargaining and thus how much dues the employee may be required to pay. And, the union may use its own auditors to make this determination. The employee may ultimately file a lawsuit or unfair labor practice charge to challenge the union's determination, but it is often months and years before the appropriate amount of dues is resolved. Keep in mind that, throughout this process, the employee may be required to pay the disputed amount on pain of losing his or her job.

Suffice to say there are not any easy answers for employees, whether they are union members or not, who want to take issue with the activities of the union that go beyond what may be a yeoman's effort by that union in representing employees in the workplace. It seems to me that we are talking about basic issues of fairness. Employees have a right to know why money is taken out of their paycheck, how money legitimately taken is used, and a realistic and available right to stop money from being taken out of their paychecks that is illegitimately used. This is exactly what the Worker Right to Know Act is designed to provide.

The Worker Right to Know Act provides that an employee cannot be required to pay to a union—nor can a union accept payment of—any dues not necessary for collective bargaining unless the employee first agrees to pay such dues in a signed written agreement with the union. The bill also provides that the agreement must include a ratio—certified by an independent auditor—of both collective bargaining and noncollective bargaining dues.