

Don't give me flex time, give me my money

Written by Fred Easter
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Nobody asked me, but Republicans seem to think that the American people aren't very bright.

John Kline, Republican Congressperson who represents Burnsville (Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District), has introduced a bill in Congress titled "The Working Families Flexibility Act."

You're not going to believe this. The proposed act provides for employers to require their employees to work overtime for "comp time" instead of good, old-fashioned money; like "time and a half." Now, if you're not feeling queasy already, consider the back end of the bill. Employers get to decide when the employees get to use the comp time. Kline even has the "stones" to talk about how mothers can get to see their kids' soccer games. Yes, mom, you can see your child play soccer, if your employer lets you have your comp time before the season is over, and on the day of a game.

I think Kline and his Republican cronies decided to call this "The Working Families Flexibility Act" because working families will need to be flexible enough to get screwed twice, at their employer's discretion, and smile. For working families who work less than full-time, so employers can save on benefits; this gives employers the "flexibility" to work their staff full time without additional labor cost or paying for benefits. Republicans must laugh themselves to sleep at night and snicker up their sleeves at the thought of how their constituents accept this activity as "legislating." What a country. Put an older, white guy in a nice suit and whatever nonsense falls out of his mouth is accepted as reasonably sensible.

Consider, if you have a fulltime job, you are going to get paid for the 260 yearly working days, anyway. Obviously you'll get paid for the 50 weeks you work. You should get paid, generally, for 12 holidays and your two weeks vacation. With luck, you'll get some sick or personal time off as well. So, what Kline's bill actually does is take the "flexibility" out of employers' annual labor expenses. Those of you who'd prefer to have later, unspecified, employer discretionary time off rather than extra cash for overtime work please raise your hand. This bill is going to be "debated" in Congress very soon. I'm betting that debate doesn't go into overtime.

Google says U.S. Congresspersons earn \$174,000 per year. That's way more money than anyone should make for urinating down our backs and swearing it's raining. Those clowns couldn't even stand waiting overtime for their "sequestered" flights home.

On the other hand, our state legislators earn \$31,000 per year. That strikes me as not enough, even for half a year's work. I like my elected officials to be paid enough so they are not susceptible to the requests of big money interests. And, while I have my issues with Pam Myhra, who is my State Representative, I like our Legislature's record way better than the record of Congress.

John Kline and his cronies may have their reasons to want to disadvantage poor working families. After all, a lot of poor people voted for President Obama. They have attempted to disadvantage each segment of Obama's base – unions, seniors, college students, Latinos, African-Americans, gays and women. But luckily for Republicans, rich folks and dumb folks are still on their side.