

6-28-05



THE WIGGINS

MESSENGER

## Labor union 'salting' is a death of a thousand cuts

*Chairwoman Musgrave probes economic damages caused by union coercion*

**Washington, DC:** In a hearing held today by Chairwoman Marilyn Musgrave (CO-04), small business leaders detailed abuse and coercion practiced by labor unions to economically harm non-union companies. These acts are often referred to as "salting." Musgrave chaired the hearing in the House Subcommittee on Workforce, Empowerment, and Government Programs.

Described in their own words, union salting is used to "threaten or actually apply the economic pressure necessary to cause the employer to...raise his prices to recoup additional costs, scale back his business activities, leave the union's jurisdiction, go out of business, and so on." International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Organization Manual.

"Salting is a practice rooted in dishonesty and deception. Its focus is to make small businesses die the death of a thousand cuts," said Musgrave. "The brutal practice is extremely harmful to an employer, who acting in good faith, wants to provide a service, make a living, create jobs, and provide for families in his community."

Although AFL-CIO President John Sweeney was invited as a witness for the minority, he declined the opportunity to testify. Speaking before the subcommittee were Representative Steve King (IA-05), Mark Mix, President, National Right to Work Committee; Ray Isaac, Isaac Heating & A/C Inc., Air Conditioning Contractors of America; Michael Aldi, Aldi Electric; Anita Drummond, Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Associated Builders and

Contractors; Michael Avakian, Center on National Labor Policy, Inc.; AFL-CIO lawyer as minority witness.

Testifying before the subcommittee Representative Steve King (IA-05) stated, "When I say 'salting' abuse, I'm not talking about legitimate union organizing. I'm talking about an economic weapon of mass destruction that is used by certain unions deliberately to harm businesses by increasing cost, to force them to spend time, energy, and money to defend themselves against frivolous charges filed at the National Labor Relations Board, and often, to run employers out of business."

Earlier this year, King introduced the Truth in Employment Act of 2005, a bill to protect both unions and workers, as the National Labor Relations Act intended. Unions would keep the right to organize employers by legitimate means, while employers would retain their right to choose who to hire.

Unions salt businesses by placing professionally trained and paid union agents into an open merit shop, undisclosed. Once hired, the agent harasses employees, disrupts business, applies economic pressure, and increases operating and legal costs. Many companies ultimately go out of business.

These goals are accomplished by destroying equipment and making working conditions hazardous, as well as through frivolous and costly complaints with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). If the union agent is not hired, then the union helps them file discrimination suits at the NLRB, OSHA, and EEOC.