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Small Business Man Speaks Up

Citizen's Choice

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Since his selection as “Small Business Person of 1976”—a selection made by the U.S. Small Business Administration—Duane D. Pearsall of Lakewood, Colo. has been speaking in many parts of the United States.

But one of his most important public appearances came in a Congressional hearing room where he spent much of the day listening to other witnesses as he waited to testify before the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly of the Committee on the Judiciary. For most of the day the only Senator present was Sen. James Abourezk (D-S.D.) who, besides presiding, also happens to be the chief sponsor of the pending legislation.

“It was quite an experience,” Mr. Pearsall commented afterward. “This is a kind of adversary procedure, with the adversary on one side presiding and also asking the questions.”

Mr. Pearsall gained fame and fortune as the entrepreneur behind the highly successful company which developed and marketed the first battery-powered home smoke detector. Shortly before he came to Washington to testify, his Statitrol Company, which manufactures the detectors, was sold to Emerson Electric Co., and Mr. Pearsall became president of the new Statitrol division for Emerson.

Taking time from a busy schedule, he appeared as a witness at the hearing for the Chamber of Commerce of the United States and its Small Business Council to oppose legislation that in his words, would create “panic” among thousands of small business operators in this country.

Sen. Abourezk’s bill would set up a new federal agency to regulate development of industry standards and testing of thousands of manufactured products. The standards, now developed by private industry, establish safety and other requirements manufacturers must meet in order to place products on the market.

Mr. Pearsall said he was shocked at the proposal and denied that small business is impeded or discriminated against under the present system.

In his company’s case, Mr. Pearsall said, the current system was its “salvation.”

“We were brought back from the brink of financial disaster and put on the road to success,” he said. “Because of help from our present system our sales have grown from a million to over $10 million in the past four years.” He added: “The introduction of our battery-powered detector was the beginning of an industry, now representing over 5 million units a year and $200 million in sales. The number of manufacturers has grown from less than five to approximately 50 in the past three years. Equally important, from the competitive and consumer points of view, the prices are now lower than they once were.”

The country does not need another new law such as Sen. Abourezk proposes. But, it does need more businessmen, taking time off and flying into Washington, to tell U.S. senators how it is out there in the real world.

Citizen’s Choice HOT LINE 800 424-9820

As a member of Citizen’s Choice you can dial toll-free, seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day to hear an important message of news from Washington — and facts about what you can do to prevent further encroachment on individual liberties. Residents of the District of Columbia should call 223-2666.

CITIZEN’S CHOICE
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LABOR TRIES TO PRESSURE CONGRESSMAN

Representative Gene Snyder (R-Ky.) was one of many who voted against the Common Situs Picketing Bill. As a result of his position on the issue, he received the following letter from an executive in the Louisville Building and Construction Trades Council:

"Dear Congressman Snyder:

I am writing on behalf of all the members of the Greater Louisville Building and Construction Trades Council to express our great disappointment with your vote on H.R. 4250, The Equal Treatment of Craft and Industrial Workers Bill.

Building Tradesmen have long sought this equal treatment and rest assured we will remember, come the next election, our Congressmen who bowed to the pressure of big business and voted to deny us this equal treatment."

Luckily for this country, Representative Snyder will hold his ground and not let this threat influence his position on future legislation which he feels is inflationary and not in the best interest of the majority of his constituents.

ONE VOTE SHORT ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY

On May 10, 1977, the House Government Operations Committee voted on the proposed Consumer Protection Agency (CPA). What was once seen as an easy victory for the Administration, was passed in the committee by just one vote.

Citizen's Choice had contacted many members who resided in the districts of selected Representatives on the House Government Operations Committee in an effort to demonstrate the grass roots concern over the proposed agency. As a result of this effort and the combined forces of a number of business leaders, the CPA Bill was in trouble. But, at the last minute the White House and organized labor stepped up its efforts and the bill squeezed through.

The Consumer Protection Agency Bill will now go to the floor of the House of Representatives. Please contact your Representative now to let him know you are against the proposed Consumer Protection Agency and any other increase in the federal bureaucracy.

YOUR OPINIONS

This spring, Citizen's Choice turned to its members for their views on labor-related issues. The response was extremely encouraging. A tabulation of the ballots clearly indicates that the American taxpayers are strongly opposed to this year's labor-backed legislation. In fact, more than 75 percent of those polled said that they would be willing to come to Washington to prove it.

If Citizen's Choice members have their way, two high priority labor issues will meet the fate of the Common Situs Picketing Bill. Close to 99 percent of those polled said that the right-to-work laws under Section 14b of the Taft-Hartley Act should not be repealed. Almost 98 percent opposed legalizing public employee strikes as proposed by the labor-supported Right-to-Strike Bill, H.R. 777.

Judging from the comments on many ballots, the most emotional issue was the question of the comparability of public and private employee pension plans. Over 70 percent said that the retirement levels should be equal. For example, one member wrote, "Why should public employees get any more of the taxpayers' dollar on retirement than private employees—I resent having to contribute under the (present) circumstances." Another controversial issue was that of Social Security—more than 75 percent of those polled showed strong dissatisfaction with the Social Security retirement system. In fact, one member called our social security system: "The great American rip-off."

Other highlights of the poll show:
- More than 70 percent were against labor's efforts to increase minimum wage levels. Many said minimum levels ought to be abolished completely.
- 98 percent opposed military unionization.
- Close to 99 percent said that union members should not be able to collect unemployment while on strike.

According to Dr. Richard L. Lesher, President of Citizen's Choice, "The results of the poll indicate a strong national feeling that labor unions have had a disproportionate influence. Union members comprise only 21 percent of the nation's total labor force. Yet, all too often their unreasonable demands have been met by Congress. The Citizen's Choice opinion poll demonstrates that the time has come for Congress to listen to the voters back home."

And listen they will. On May 4, the results of this poll were sent to the 534 Members of the House and the Senate, as well as to over 150 newspapers across the country. We appreciate your time and effort—thank you members!

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

Citizen's Choice needs part-time volunteers here in Washington, D.C. and in cities across the country.
Can you help?
• Contact corporations and associations and encourage them to send out Citizen's Choice mailings.
• Make phone calls to members on important legislative issues urging them to write to their Representatives.

• Write newsletters, press releases and feature stories.
• Type, file and clerical help.
• Make speeches and presentations on Citizen's Choice.

If you can help Citizen's Choice, please write us at Citizen's Choice, 1615 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20062 and let us know your name, address, phone number, amount of time you would be willing to spend and what you can do to help Citizen's Choice.