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# News. . .

## *DSEA reacts strongly to aggressive teacher and union-bashing campaign*

**DOVER, DE, March 11, 2008** ..... Today the Center for Union Facts (CUF) launched an aggressive national campaign to "...educate Americans about how teachers unions protect incompetent teachers, demoralize good teachers, block reform and ultimately hurt our public education system" according to CUF's news release.

The CUF's new million dollar advertising blitz features full-page ads this morning in *USA TODAY* as well as the *New York Times* (attached), and a television commercial airing on CNN and Fox News.

The ad in *USA TODAY* announces CUF's "Ten Worst (union-protected) Teachers" contest, which will be further publicized by a seven-story billboard going up in Times Square later this week. The contest will allow anyone 13 and up to nominate the worst "union-protected" teachers in America. Once CUF has identified the ten worst, they will offer each of them \$10,000 to quit the profession forever. "The purpose of the contest is to encourage teachers known to be incompetent to quit the profession because it is too difficult to have them terminated," says their news release.

"We have been working for years with policymakers to do what it takes to both recruit and retain the best teachers for every child in every classroom," chastises DSEA President Barbara Grogg. "These advertisements are shameful and – in the case of the New York Times ad - outrageous in its bid for attention. The similarity of this ad with a student death in Texas is nothing short of exploitation, in its worse sense." She added that this organization is pandering to extremists at a time, in Delaware and in other states, when the local business community understands the value of a strong public education system, the value of our highly-trained and respected educators.

The mastermind of this organization is **CUF Executive Director Richard Berman** who says, "Teachers unions are failing children all over the country by protecting incompetent teachers and fighting to maintain the status quo . . . Worst of all, teachers unions hurt all of the amazing teachers in America by treating them exactly the same as incompetent teachers who shouldn't be in the profession." You can get a flavor of this attack by visiting [www.TeachersUnionExposed.com](http://www.TeachersUnionExposed.com).

According to Berman, Union Facts will focus on "the negative effects of specific teachers unions in 20 school districts across the country." Although Delaware is not targeted, there is information on the web site about each state. **In Delaware's case, the facts are wrong:**

- In Delaware, it is illegal for public school employees to strike. The site says it is legal.
- The site also misleads the public about Delaware not being a "right-to-work" state. What is true is that joining a union is NOT a condition of employment for teachers, as it can be for other occupations and professions. So in Delaware, teachers do not have to join their union. The implication on their site is that they must join.

The Center for so-called Union Facts (CUF) is a privately-funded gun for hire.

- They have campaigned against higher minimum wages and employer-provided health care.
- They have misrepresented work by the American Medical Association, Center for Food Safety, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Association of High School Principals and Surgeon General of the United States.
- They have lobbied on behalf of pesticide, alcohol and tobacco companies and against the Americans with Disabilities Act, checkpoints to catch drunken drivers, minimum wage increases, and union card-check. A 2006 USA Today article reported that his lobbying firm brings in \$10 million per years for his work on ultra-conservative, anti-union clients. They have even waged a campaign against Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

"DSEA wants only great teachers in every classroom," concluded Grogg, a member of Delaware's Professional Standards Board and a Nationally Board-Certified teacher. "Great schools benefit everyone, and the men and women who work in Delaware's public schools serve their students best when they can use their professional judgment without the fear of arbitrary, discriminatory or unfair punishment or firing. That's why they join DSEA."



*With 11,500 members, DSEA is a public employee union representing the public school teachers in all 19 school districts, as well as many support employee groups in 18 school districts. DSEA also represents the*

*teachers employed by the Division of Children, Youth and their Families as well as the state's public health nurses.*

*DSEA is a private, non-profit membership organization dedicated to promoting and defending outstanding public education for all students; and advancing and protecting the interests of its members.*

***Moving education forward***