



My Pay My Say – Mackinac Center for Public Policy

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy is sending emails to NJEA members advertising a project named My Pay My Say, urging NJEA members to visit their website and use an online tool to opt-out of paying their dues. We have received notice of these communications in many districts across the state on June 27, 2018. Other state affiliates around the country report similar communications.

What is the Mackinac Center for Public Policy?

The Mackinac Center is a radical “think-tank” established in Michigan in 1987. It is the largest organization in the State Policy Network, a national web of state-based anti-union organizations with affiliates in every state. The Mackinac Center has worked to support anti-union legislation around the country, while also denying climate change and supporting privatization of prisons. They have played a role in supporting the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a corporate-driven “bill mill” which provides boilerplate legislation to legislators across the country.

Who provides funding for the Mackinac Center?

The Mackinac Center is funded by a large network of wealthy individuals, corporate special interests, and family trusts. Significant donors include the [Koch Family Foundations](#), [The Bradley Foundation](#), [The DeVos Foundation](#), and [The Walton Family Foundation](#). Much of the funding from this network of donors flows through [DonorsTrust](#) and [Donors Capital Fund](#), non-profits established for the purpose of obfuscating the source of funding to anti-worker organizations. Tax filings show that DonorsTrust and Donors Capital Fund money comes from the Koch network of donors.

Are there New Jersey organizations involved?

YES. New Jersey’s State Policy Network affiliate is Garden State Initiative, headed up by Chris Christie’s former Chief of Staff Regina Egea. Egea was instrumental in crafting his 2011 pension “reform” package and was suspected to be involved in the Bridgegate cover-up. Egea is a former AT&T executive who boasted in 2017 about how she eliminated over 1,000 jobs and relocated hundreds more to benefit the company’s bottom line.

In the wake of the Janus decision, several NJ legislators attacked NJEA, including Sen. O’Scanlon (R-13), Asw. Handlin (R-13) and Asm. Auth (R-39). Auth and Handlin are the prime sponsors of the New Jersey Right-to-Work Act, and O’Scanlon directly promoted My Pay My Say in a press release.

Americans for Prosperity – NJ, headed by Erica Jedynek, announced their partnership with My Pay My Say, and promised to add more in-state partners in the coming months. Bill Spadea promoted My Pay My Say on NJ 101.5 on-air and on Twitter.



Membership
Protection Center



ALERT

How did they get my information?

Through third-party legal representation, State Policy Network affiliates have filed Open Public Records Act requests in school districts across the country to obtain lists of school employees, in many cases including school email addresses. The recently enacted Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act currently protects those records as not subject to OPRA requests, but many requests were made prior to enactment of the law.

What should I do?

Report suspicious activity related to your membership using the Membership Protection Center. Visit www.njea.org/MPC and let us know when you receive communications like this from The Mackinac Center or any other organizations. This won't be the last you hear from them and they won't be the only ones you'll hear from.

Educate yourself and your colleagues. Make sure that people understand who these groups are and what they're after. When out-of-state billionaires and corporate special interests start to tell you about your rights, it's a safe bet they don't have your best interests at heart. They've bankrolled anti-union court cases for years, they've supported the politicians that dismantle worker protections around the country, and now they're urging YOU to drop your membership. Unionism is the most effective force to propel working people into the middle class. Your union is the only thing standing in the way of their destruction of workers' rights in the name of corporate profit.

Review Open Public Records Act requests in your school district. Ask your business administrator to provide any OPRA requests made for lists of district employees or contact information. Drop us a note at www.njea.org/MPC and let us know who is requesting employee lists in your district. Please provide us with names, organization names, addresses, phone numbers, emails, and any other relevant information you discover about the request. This will help us get a clearer picture of what these groups currently have.

Ask your school district's IT department to block these emails. This is purely spam communication and they have no right to flood your inbox with this propaganda. Emails like this disrupt the educational environment and make it difficult for staff to respond to parents and administrators on legitimate school business. The Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act protects our right to communicate with our members over email, and specifies that employers must not encourage negotiations unit members to resign their membership. These communications should not be allowed to occur on district email servers. If emails can be filtered by keyword, consider blocking emails containing "my pay my say" or "mackinac center". If emails can be filtered by domain name or sender, let them know that the emails were sent from Amanda Burke at info@mypaymysay.com.