



## **How not to create jobs in America**

**By U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman**

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Last month, I went to China as part of a U.S. China Working Group with four other members of Congress. The trip was funded by the National Committee on United States-China Relations, a foundation whose mission is to promote better relations between the United States and China.

No doubt, it felt strange to travel to a country that is the largest holder of U.S. debt, continues to expand its industrial base at the expense of ours, and has enjoyed sustained economic growth based on the free market principles that we have long abandoned in favor of the redistributionist policies of a welfare state.

The ruling elite of China are communists in name only but cling to power based solely on an ideology of economic growth that most of the population accepts in exchange for a complete lack of political freedom. The government knows that if they are unable to sustain economic growth then the Chinese people will question their authoritarian rule and unrest will follow. The Chinese are nationalistic in their pride; in only three decades this economic experiment has already lifted a third of their nation out of abject poverty.

During my visit, I went to Chengdu in central China to visit a state run Chinese aircraft manufacturing facility where both military and civilian aircraft were being designed, tested and built. While they didn't allow our U.S. congressional delegation to see the area dedicated to the production of military aircraft, they did take us over to where they were making aircraft frames for both Boeing and Airbus, Boeing's European-based competitor.

Boeing and Airbus, two manufacturing giants in the aviation industry, dominate the global market when it comes to making commercial airliners. In order to stay competitive, both were

forced to move some of their more labor intensive manufacturing processes to China to lower their costs.

Unfortunately, just before I departed for China, the President Obama appointed National Labor Relations Board filed a complaint against Boeing to block the location of the company's additional production of its 787 Dreamliner to a new assembly plant in the lower cost state of South Carolina, where there is a right-to-work law that prohibits compulsory union membership.

Boeing will challenge the actions of the NLRB at a hearing next month. This will be the first time an agency of the federal government has moved to block an American company from relocating part of its operations based solely on protecting the interest of a labor union. The express purpose of the NLRB is to prevent direct competition from right-to-work states with union shop states where workers can be required to either join a union or to pay the equivalent dues. One of the complaints filed by the NLRB is an admission by Boeing that the company could not "afford a work stoppage every three years" as had happened in Washington state over the past decade with striking workers.

According to the NLRB, Boeing's move is proof of "retaliation" against union workers. If the NLRB prevails, Boeing may be forced to only assemble the Dreamliner in Washington, a union-shop state, providing more than 1,000 jobs unless, that is, Boeing chooses to expand their existing contracts with China, a likely scenario given their cost conscious reasons for wanting to leave the Seattle area to remain globally competitive.

The tragic thing about the NLRB's actions is they are saying to Boeing and other U.S. corporations that if they have to choose between allowing a manufacturer to move from a higher cost pro organized labor state with restrictive work rules and compulsory union membership to a lower cost right-to-work state to stay globally competitive then the NLRB would rather have the jobs move overseas, to places like China, than to challenge the politically-connected power of big labor unions.

The actions of the NLRB are wrong and I will work with the members of Congress from South Carolina to do my best to reverse this dangerous course that will cost American jobs and hurt our economy.

*Read more at the [Littleton Independent](#)*