

NPP legislators go on hunger strike to protest DPP bill

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 06 January 2018 06:49 -



New Power Party legislators stage a hunger strike in front of the Presidential Office Building in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Chen Chih-chu, Taipei Times

Five New Power Party (NPP) legislators yesterday began a hunger strike in front of the Presidential Office Building in Taipei, calling on President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文), in her capacity as Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) chairperson, to order the DPP caucus to retract draft amendments to the Labor Standards Act (勞基法) from bills to be reviewed during an extraordinary legislative session that began yesterday.

As of press time last night, Tsai had not met with the NPP lawmakers, who said they would not leave until she issues a response in person.

Holding a banner that read: "Retract the Labor Standards Act," NPP Executive Chairman Huang Kuo-chang (黃國昌), NPP caucus convener Hsu Yung-ming (許毓仁) and NPP legislators Kawlo Iyun Pacidal, Hung Tsu-yung (洪素珍) and Freddy Lim (林錫山) in the afternoon marched from the Legislative Yuan to Ketagalan Boulevard, where they sat down and began the hunger strike at about 6:15pm.

"In a bid to exercise the [DPP's] will, the government wants to pander to corporations and ignore workers' rights and the future of young people," Huang said. "As the person who should bear the greatest responsibility for this, President and Chairperson Tsai, please tell us why in the 2016 election you promised to protect workers' rights, but now you have assembled a 'voting army' in an attempt to push through labor amendments that are opposed by the large majority of workers and young people."

NPP legislators go on hunger strike to protest DPP bill

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 06 January 2018 06:49 -

The results of a Ministry of Labor survey “were a slap in its own face and exposed its sugarcoated lies,” Huang said, referring to a survey released by the ministry last week which found that 48.2 percent of workers were against raising the monthly overtime cap and 58.4 percent were against offering employers the option to tweak the “one fixed day off and one flexible rest day” workweek policy.

The legislators would not leave until Tsai offers an explanation to all workers and young people, many of whom are paid low wages, he said.

The move came after Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) lawmakers entered the legislative chamber and surrounded the NPP members, who had occupied the speaker’s podium.

The NPP lawmakers then announced that they would march to the Presidential Office Building in the hope of blocking the passage of the bill.

Earlier yesterday, Hsu shattered windows in the doors of the legislative chamber, which he sealed with chain locks to protest the DPP caucus sending the draft amendments to the extraordinary session via a majority vote.

DPP lawmakers then cut through the chains with a hydraulic cutter and entered the chamber.

About an hour into the NPP’s sit-in, Presidential Office spokesman Sidney Lin (林錫山) said in a statement that relevant agencies were gauging public opinion and determining how the act could be amended to best fit the needs of businesses and workers.

The draft amendments are being reviewed at the legislature and the five lawmakers should return to rational discussions in line with legislative procedure, Lin said.

Huang criticized the office’s response, asking whether Lin was ignorant of the progress of the amendments.

NPP legislators go on hunger strike to protest DPP bill

Written by Taipei Times

Saturday, 06 January 2018 06:49 -

He said Lin's remark that agencies are gathering public opinion was preposterous, and highlighted the recklessness and incompetence of the legislative process, as the passage of the draft amendments was expected imminently.

The office's release of such a perfunctory statement without first putting events into perspective was "completely unacceptable," Huang said.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2018/01/06](#)