Debate on Ecuadorean Labor Reforms to Go Ahead

Quito, December 24 (RHC-teleSUR) -- The Law for Labor Justice and Recognition of Work from Home has been approved with eight votes in favor and two against by the Commission of Workers Rights and Social Security in the Ecuadorean National Assembly. To be debated are 44 articles, 41 of which are reforms to the Labor Code, and three to the Social Security Law.

The reforms to the 1948 labor code seek to provide job stability, ensure greater equality, universalize the social security system, update worker salaries, and democratize labor representation.

Having completed their trial period, workers are not subjected to fixed term contracts, in an effort to provide greater stability and eliminate arbitrary dismissal. Additionally, greater protection would be provided to historically marginalized groups, such as women and Afro-Ecuadoreans.

Homemakers would for the first time be recognized for their work and be incorporated into the social security system. If the reforms are passed, they would receive a subsidy of 24 basic salaries, adding up to $8,160.

President Rafael Correa has said that a total of $120 million will be invested by the state to fully cover homemakers, whose work according to official figures contributes 15 percent to the total gross domestic product. It is expected that 70 percent of homemakers will be registered in the social security system by

the end of President Correa's term in 2017.

To further democratize labor representation, workers would elect committees in their workplace, and there would be a regularized voting procedure for union leaders. The salary gap between management and employees would be reduced, so that management may only earn 20 times more than the minimum wage of workers.

Debates surrounding the Law for Labor Justice and Recognition of Work from the Home are scheduled to occur before the end of 2014.

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