



WESTERN MARYLAND CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

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The Honorable Chairman Dereck Davis and
Members of the Economic Matters Committee

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RE: OPPOSE HB-163

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **opposition to HB-163**, the "*Labor and Employment – Labor Organizations – Right to Work Act.*"

My name is George Koontz and I am President of the Western Maryland Central Labor Council of the Maryland State & D.C. AFL-CIO. Our jurisdiction is Allegany and Garrett counties in Western Maryland.

Our affiliates members work in all areas of employment and are represented by dozens of different labor organizations.

The ability for a labor organization to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement with employers that requires membership in the union, or at a minimum service fees, for the services performed on behalf of each employee is paramount to providing proper representation of their members. When this ability is preempted by passage of laws such as the law contained in HB-163 it allows employees to receive a free ride of representation and it places the labor organization at a distinct disadvantage.

Every survey shows that in states where these laws are in place the wages and benefits are demonstrably less. The effect of the laws is a downward pressure on wages due to the diminished resources of the unions.

The very purpose of this legislation is to weaken unions, who the sponsors view as restraints to business profits. They believe unions offer very limited support for their legislative agenda that favors profits over employees.

On behalf of the Western Maryland Central Labor Council and all our affiliates we urge your committee to give an unfavorable report to HB-163

Sincerely,

George A. Koontz

President WMCLC