

# HOUSE BILL 802

K3

4lr0731  
CF 4lr3311

---

By: **Delegates Vogel, Charkoudian, and Stewart**

Introduced and read first time: January 31, 2024

Assigned to: Economic Matters

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Labor and Employment – Mandatory Meetings on Religious or Political Matters**  
3 **– Employee Attendance and Participation**  
4 **(Protecting Workers From Captive Audience Meetings Act)**

5 FOR the purpose of prohibiting employers from taking certain actions against an employee  
6 or applicant for employment because the employee or applicant declines to attend or  
7 participate in employer–sponsored meetings during which the employer  
8 communicates the opinion of the employer regarding religious matters or political  
9 matters; and generally relating to employee attendance and participation in  
10 employer meetings on religious or political matters.

11 BY adding to  
12 Article – Labor and Employment  
13 Section 3–718  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Labor and Employment**  
19 **3–718.**

20 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
21 INDICATED.

22 (2) “POLITICAL MATTERS” MEANS MATTERS RELATING TO:

23 (I) ELECTIONS FOR POLITICAL OFFICE;

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (II) POLITICAL PARTIES;

2 (III) PROPOSALS TO CHANGE:

3 1. LEGISLATION;

4 2. REGULATIONS; OR

5 3. PUBLIC POLICY; OR

6 (IV) THE DECISION TO JOIN OR SUPPORT A POLITICAL PARTY OR  
7 POTENTIAL CIVIC, COMMUNITY, FRATERNAL, OR LABOR ORGANIZATION.

8 (3) "RELIGIOUS MATTERS" MEANS MATTERS RELATING TO  
9 RELIGIOUS BELIEF, AFFILIATION, AND PRACTICE OR THE DECISION TO JOIN OR  
10 SUPPORT A RELIGIOUS ENTITY.

11 (B) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO AN EMPLOYER THAT IS A RELIGIOUS  
12 CORPORATION, ORGANIZATION, OR ASSOCIATION, OR AN EDUCATIONAL  
13 INSTITUTION OR SOCIETY THAT IS EXEMPT FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF TITLE VII  
14 OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 UNDER 42 U.S.C. § 2000E-1(A).

15 (C) AN EMPLOYER MAY NOT:

16 (1) DISCHARGE, DISCIPLINE, OR OTHERWISE PENALIZE OR  
17 THREATEN TO DISCHARGE, DISCIPLINE, OR OTHERWISE PENALIZE AN EMPLOYEE  
18 BECAUSE THE EMPLOYEE DECLINES TO ATTEND OR PARTICIPATE IN AN  
19 EMPLOYER-SPONSORED MEETING DURING WHICH THE EMPLOYER COMMUNICATES  
20 THE OPINION OF THE EMPLOYER REGARDING RELIGIOUS MATTERS OR POLITICAL  
21 MATTERS; OR

22 (2) FAIL OR REFUSE TO HIRE AN APPLICANT FOR EMPLOYMENT AS A  
23 RESULT OF THE APPLICANT'S REFUSAL TO ATTEND OR PARTICIPATE IN AN  
24 EMPLOYER-SPONSORED MEETING DURING WHICH THE EMPLOYER COMMUNICATES  
25 THE OPINION OF THE EMPLOYER REGARDING RELIGIOUS MATTERS OR POLITICAL  
26 MATTERS.

27 (D) THIS SECTION DOES NOT PROHIBIT AN EMPLOYER FROM:

28 (1) COMMUNICATING INFORMATION THAT THE EMPLOYER IS  
29 REQUIRED BY LAW TO COMMUNICATE; OR

1                   **(2) CONDUCTING A MEETING THAT INVOLVES RELIGIOUS MATTERS**  
2 **OR POLITICAL MATTERS IF ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION ARE VOLUNTARY.**

3                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
4 October 1, 2024.