

HOUSE BILL 233

K3
HB 802/24 – ECM

(PRE-FILED)

5lr1028

By: **Delegates Vogel, Foley, Kaufman, Pasteur, Pena–Melnyk, Terrasa, Wims, and
Woorman**

Requested: October 1, 2024

Introduced and read first time: January 8, 2025

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 **(Maryland Worker Freedom 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 2024 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:**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (I) ELECTIONS FOR POLITICAL OFFICE;

2 (II) POLITICAL PARTIES;

3 (III) PROPOSALS TO CHANGE:

4 1. LEGISLATION;

5 2. REGULATIONS; OR

6 3. PUBLIC POLICY; OR

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

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

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

16 (C) AN EMPLOYER MAY NOT:

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

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

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

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

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

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
6 October 1, 2025.