

MID-ATLANTIC PIPE TRADES ASSOCIATION



PLUMBERS - STEAMFITTERS - SPRINKLER FITTERS
PIPE FITTERS - PIPE WELDERS - HVAC SERVICE TECH

**7050 Oakland Mills Road
Suite 180
Columbia, MD 21046**

**Phone: 410-290-3890
www.midatlanticpipetrades.org**

Maryland House of Delegates – Economic Matters Committee

TO: Delegate Derrick Davis, Chair; and Member of the House Economic Matters Committee.

FROM: Jason Ascher, Political Director – Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

Oppose HB 1321 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and our over 15,000 members and families from United Association Locals living across Maryland, I ask you to OPPOSE HB 1321 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work.

Throughout the last century, workers have achieved great things, from better wages to a safer working environment to benefits like healthcare, vacation time, and weekends. None of this would have been possible under "Right to Work." From its racist origins in the Jim Crow south, "Right to Work" was used to keep workers from joining together to organize freely. That freedom to organize and bargain collectively led to the creation of the middle class in the mid 20th century. Unfortunately, in the last 30 years, the increased use of "Right to Work" and other attacks on workers and unions has led to the disappearance of the middle class and an increase in the wealth gap between the wealthy and the working class.

The only thing that "Right to Work" does is force a union to represent workers who choose not to join. It does this by making security clauses in their contracts invalid. Lack of a security clause hinders the worker's ability to collectively bargain, thereby lowering wages, benefits, and other worker protections. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, workers in states with "Right to Work" laws earn \$7443 less per year than in states without these laws.¹ These laws do not guarantee a job or cannot get fired from it if you have a job. In Maryland, a contract is the only way for a worker to protect him/herself. Even Republican Governor of West Virginia Jim Justice admitted that the "Right to Work" law in his state did not have the intended consequences of bringing more businesses and jobs to the state during a town hall meeting.

Workers need to earn a fair wage, have a safe workplace, access affordable healthcare, and have retirement security. "Right to Work" hurts access to all of these. When workers have these rights, the middle class grows, and there is greater social and economic mobility.

For all of the reasons listed above, I ask that you OPPOSE HB 1321.

Sincerely,
Jason Ascher
Political Director

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (all industries, all establishments, average annual pay), final 2016 data, accessed Oct. 10, 2017

Plumbers and Gasfitter Local 5 – Camp Springs, MD
Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 10 – Richmond, VA/Roanoke, VA
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 110 – Norfolk, VA
Road Sprinkler Fitters Local 669 – Columbia, MD

Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486 – Baltimore, MD
Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 489 – Cumberland, MD
Steamfitters Local 602 – Capitol Heights, MD



Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO

815 16th Street, NW, • Washington, DC 20006 • (202) 974-8150 • Fax (202) 974-8152

An AFL-CIO "Union City"

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1321

Labor and Employment – Right to Work

March 5th, 2020

Executive Board

Officers

Robert Hollingsworth (AFSCME 2776)

1st Vice President

Chuck Clay (IATSE 22)

2nd Vice President

Herb Harris (IBT/BLET)

3rd Vice President

Lisa Wilsonia-Blackwell (UFCW 1994)

Secretary

Eric Bunn (AFGE District 14)

Treasurer

Members

Dena Briscoe (APWU)

Donna Brockington (DC CLUW)

Robin Burns (DCNA)

Tom Clarke (IBEW 26)

Jaime Contreras (SEIU 32BJ)

Elizabeth Davis (WTU 6)

George Farenthold (OPEIU 277)

Mark Federici (UFCW 400)

Dan Fields (SEIU 722)

Stephen Frum (NNU)

Don Havard (IUOE 99)

Roxie Mejia (Painters DC 51)

Doris Reed (ASASP)

Wanda Shelton-Martin (NUHCE 1199DC)

Gina Walton (AFGE 1975)

Trustees

Djawa Hall (1199 SEIU)

Tim Traylor (AFSCME 2250)

Dave Richardson (AFGE 12)

TO: Hon. Dereck Davis, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Dyana Forester, Metropolitan Washington Council

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Labor Council, AFL-CIO (MWC), I write this letter in strong opposition to HB 1321, the so-called "Right to Work" in Maryland bill.

The MWC represents nearly 150,000 area union members in every line of work, from service and hospitality industries, retail sales, and communications to transportation, manufacturing, construction, building trades, and throughout the public sector. This bill will have a direct impact on the livelihoods of all of our affiliates and not only hurts the growth of the unions that our council represents, but would also make it difficult, if not impossible, for unions to even operate in the state of Maryland.

This proposed bill only seeks to take away the freedom of collective bargaining and forming strong unions. Proponents claim to be protecting workers against forcing them to join a union, but the reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force a worker to join a union.

Collective bargaining is an essential right that we must protect at all costs for a thriving Maryland. Through collective bargaining, working people have earned higher wages, better benefits, and safer workplaces. These are the principles the Maryland legislature should be working to uphold, and not erode.

We urge this committee to continue to protect all workers' rights to fairness, justice, and a good job with decent wages and benefits. In this once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, we must not allow well-funded corporate campaigns that seek to hurt workers year after year. The time is now for us to focus on the issues that make working people in the state of Maryland stronger.

Mr. Chairman, in the strongest possible terms, I urge you not to give this bill an unfavorable report. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Dyana Forester

Bringing Labor Together Since 1896

www.dclabor.org



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1321
Labor and Employment - Right to Work
March 5, 2021

TO: Hon. Dereck Davis, Chair, and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Patricia M. O'Donnell, SAG-AFTRA Washington - Mid Atlantic Local Executive Director
DATE: March 3, 2021

Dear Chair and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the roughly 1,500 union members of the Washington – Mid Atlantic Local of SAG-AFTRA who reside and work in Maryland to urge you to oppose HB 1321, the “Right to Work” bill that is set for hearing in your Committee on March 5, 2021.

The phrase “Right to Work” is misleading in that such legislation does not help to create jobs, lift up the working class, or strengthen the economy. In fact, “Right to Work” legislation does nothing to assist workers in finding jobs. In reality, “Right to Work” legislation is simply a guise to allow employees access to the benefits of union representation without having to pay their fair share for the union’s services – all on the backs of their fellow employees who financially support the work of the union. “Right to Work” legislation does not provide employees with a choice of union representation (U.S. labor law already provides for that opportunity), but misguidedly allows for the legal option to freeloader.

In reality, “Right to Work” legislation serves to undermine workers and a state’s economy. In states where “Right to Work” legislation has been enacted, the average workers’ wages are approximately sixteen percent less than those states that do not have such legislation. Any version of this so-called “Right to Work” bill puts Marylanders in a position where resources in workplaces dwindle, accountability in workplaces declines (including in the areas of safety and the equal and fair treatment of workers), wages start to decrease, and ultimately less money is put back into Maryland’s economy. This is not simply a union issue, it is a Maryland issue. The members of the Washington – Mid Atlantic Local of SAG-AFTRA believe in strengthening the economy of Maryland, not diminishing it, and strongly oppose HB 1321.

We urge you to stand with our members in opposition of HB 1321 by voting unfavorably on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia M. O'Donnell".

Patricia M. O'Donnell

PO:apr

Patricia M. O'Donnell, Washington – Mid Atlantic Local Executive Director
pat.odonnell@sagaftra.org • 301-545-0021 (home office) • SAGAFTRA.org/wma
SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
7735 Old Georgetown Road, Suite 950, Bethesda, MD 20814
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO



**International Association of Sheet Metal, Air,
Rail & Transportation Workers,
Local Union 100— Sheet Metal Division**
Affiliated with AFL-CIO

Richard D. LaBille, III
Business Manager/President
Russell K. Robinson
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

The Honorable Delegate Dereck E. Davis,
Chair House Committee on Economics Matters
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 1, 2021

We strongly oppose Right to work legislation (HB 1321) for the following reasons.

- On average, workers in states with right to work laws make 12.1% less annually than workers in other states. Median household income in states with these laws is 13.9% less than in other states.
- People in states with right to work laws under the age of 65 are more likely to be uninsured.
- Poverty rates are higher in states with right to work laws.
- States with right to work laws spend 32.5% less per pupil on elementary and secondary education than other states.
- The rate of workplace deaths is 49% higher in state with right to work laws, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Standards.

*Most of the figures list above can be found at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Henry Kaiser foundation and the NEA.

One of the most important things associated with a right to work law, is a less taxable income base, which in turn hurts the State of Maryland.

Please oppose HB1321, as we do, for the betterment of the State of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Thomas Killeen
Legislative Director
SMART Local Union 100

LARRY KASECAMP
Legislative Director

TOM CAHILL
Assistant Director

JOHNNY WALKER
Secretary



ANNAPOLIS OFFICE
176 Conduit St., Suite 206
Annapolis, MD 21401-2597

PH: 301-697-2695
utusldmd@gmail.com

March 5, 2021

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

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 600
JASON WEAVER

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
KENZELL CRAWFORD

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHNNY WALKER

Local 1949
ERIC BILSON

RE: OPPOSE HB-1321

As Legislative Director in Maryland for the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Worker's (SMART) we urge your committee to **oppose HB-1321**, "*Labor and Employment – Right to Work.*"

First and foremost, Right to Work (RTW) legislation is a serious attack against the vast majority of working men and women of the state of Maryland who are members of Organized Labor. But it really goes well beyond that. It actually attacks **all** working men and women of the state of Maryland through its attempt to diminish the effectiveness of Organized Labor and ultimately depress the wages of all workers.

As the studies show, in RTW States wages are 3.2% lower than non-RTW states. This is a direct result of the effect of stronger, fully funded labor organizations. When labor organizations negotiate their higher wage packages for their members it results in higher wages for all workers, union and non-union alike, due to the competitive pressure that non-union employers experience.

The exact opposite occurs in RTW States where labor organizations are weakened by the passage of RTW laws. The effect is that a downward pressure is applied on the level of wages paid by employers, which affects **all** workers. Who doesn't experience a downward pressure on their level of income? Of course, it's the business owners, who, if they are successful in advancing this legislation, will experience an increase in their profits.

There are many misconceptions in the public about labor organizations, which are perpetuated by the anti-union factions. One such misconception is that non-RTW States require compulsory membership in the union. Nothing is further from the truth. Nowhere in Maryland law or regulation does this requirement exist. What does exist is the right of labor and management to negotiate in good faith through the collective bargaining process a clause to require all employees to pay their fair share toward the operating costs of their labor organization in negotiating their wages, benefits and working conditions.

That is the labor organization they chose to represent them through the election process outlined under federal law. The unfettered right to accept or reject such a clause is held by each party to the collective bargaining process.

Another misconception is that labor organizations can spend their members' dues monies on the political campaigns of politicians that their members oppose. This also is not true. Federal law prohibits labor organizations to directly contribute to political campaigns with members' dues monies. Monies that are contributed directly to political campaigns by labor organizations are monies obtained through strictly voluntary contributions by members. In addition, any member has the right under federal law to object to their dues monies being spent on anything other than costs attributed to representation, such as, contract negotiations or grievance handling procedures.

This legislation is part and parcel to the anti-union agenda being espoused by the Republican Party in many states across the nation. From RTW to so-called "paycheck protection" to the elimination of Project Labor Agreements to the elimination of Prevailing Wage Laws to the elimination of Collective Bargaining Rights, their agenda is a direct attack on labor unions.

The resulting uproar around the country over these union busting tactics is a passionate statement by working families, both union and non-union, that they will not be denied the right to freely join unions and collectively bargain for their wages, benefits and working conditions.

The end result if HB-1321 were to pass would be to give a free ride to a sector of workers who are represented by a labor organization by allowing them to opt out of paying their fair share toward the expense of operations of their representative organization. This would of course reduce the effectiveness of their Labor Organization by reducing their operational funding thereby weakening them, which is the ultimate goal of the proponents.

Imagine if a small dissident group of anti-tax constituents from around the state had legislation introduced that would allow them to reap the benefits provided to all the citizens of the state through taxation but would allow them to opt out of paying their share of taxes. As legislators you would recognize it for what it was and give the legislation zero consideration. We believe this is the exact amount of consideration you should give HB-1321, as it is nothing more than a veiled attempt to weaken Unions and depress the wages of your constituents.

We urge an unfavorable report for HB-1321!

Sincerely



Lawrence E. Kasecamp
MD State Legislative Director
 Transportation Division

Journeyman Pipe Fitters and Apprentices



Local Union No. 602

8700 ASHWOOD DRIVE • 2ND FLOOR • CAPITOL HEIGHTS, MD 20743

TELEPHONE: (301) 333-2356 • FAX: (301) 333-1730

AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO

TESTIMONY

HB 1321 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work

OPPOSITION / UNFAVORABLE

Esteemed members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

Please accept this testimony in the strongest possible opposition to HB1321, the so-called “Right to work” legislation.

This legislation is an affront to the hard working women and men in the Great State of Maryland, who have earned their collective bargaining rights over decades and generations. This mislabeled legislation is part of an ongoing national strategy to strip workers of these rights, and shift the fair benefits of those wages to the management and the wealthiest 1%. It does not provide any “rights to work,” but rather, makes it illegal to ensure that workers who receive the benefit of union representation, collaborate in the workings of those unions.

This is a state-by-state race to the bottom effort, which is clearly exposed when looking at the levels of wages in “right-to-work” jurisdictions, including: states with some of the lowest minimum wages; the worst pay disparities between women and men, and some of the highest EEOC discrimination charges in the nation.

This is bad legislation, with no place in the State of Maryland.

For these reasons, we request an unfavorable committee report.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel W Loveless,
Business Manager/
Financial Secretary Treasurer

DANIEL W. LOVELESS
BUSINESS MANAGER
FINANCIAL SECRETARY TREASURER

CHRISTOPHER M. MADELLA
ASSISTANT
BUSINESS MANAGER

SEAN T. STRASER
BUSINESS AGENT

GREGORY L. DAVIS
BUSINESS AGENT

SIDNEY O. BONILLA
BUSINESS AGENT

TIMOTHY L. BIGGS
BUSINESS AGENT