

HB 1321 - UNFAVORABLE

Rick Compher

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HB 1321 - UNFAVORABLE

Labor and Employment – Right to Work

Economic Matters Committee

March 5, 2021

To the Honorable Chairman Dereck E. Davis and Distinguished Members

My name is Rick Compher and I am the District 4 Directing Business Representative for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, headquartered in Maryland. We are one of the largest industrial and most diverse unions in the country representing aerospace, transportation, manufacturing and public and private sector employees.

I am submitting testimony in opposition of HB 1321 – the Right to Work legislation and I ask that you give an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT** on this bill.

Right to Work is wrong. It strips all workers of our fundamental right to join together to have a meaningful voice in the workplace. It lowers wages for all families. It makes work places unsafe for all workers. Right to Work is wrong, and hurts our economy. Everyone who lives in Right to Work states make up to \$5,000 less per year than workers who do the same job in Non-Right to Work states. Even the National Right to Work Committee stated that, “We’re not purporting to prove that right-to-work produces superior economic performance.”

Right to work is an attack on all working families, both union and non-union. It is an attempt by Wall Street billionaires and political extremists to strip our freedoms in order to line their pockets. These same people are moving workers into part-time positions, off-shoring profits, shipping our jobs to countries with subpar working conditions, and support gutting laws that protect our health and safety on the job. Right to Work is about taking our freedoms so that the wealthiest people in the nation can further maximize profits.

Right to work is also a distraction from what the people of Maryland sent their elected officials to Annapolis to do: balance the budget, create good jobs, and healthy communities, not play political games with unnecessary and deceptive Right to Work legislation.

The title of this bill is a misnomer and what it does is actually prevent workers from enjoying collective bargaining that would provide workers with stability, seniority and assurances of respect and dignity on the job.

For these reasons, we would ask this committee to oppose H.B. 1321 “Right to Work” bill and give it an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT**.

Thank you,

Rick Compher
District 4, DBR

RC:mls



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD OF
ELECTRICAL WORKERS
FOURTH DISTRICT**



LONNIER STEPHENSON
International President

KENNETH W. COOPER
International Secretary-Treasurer

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Testimony in **OPPOSITION** to
HB 1321 Labor and Employment - Right To Work

March 5, 2021

To: Honorable Dereck Davis, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Gary R. Griffin, International Representative, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Chairman Davis and distinguished Committee members, I am respectfully requesting you to vote unfavorably on HB 1321.

The IBEW cannot support this anti-worker legislation that is harmful to not only union members, but all working people in the State of Maryland.

“Right to Work” is very misleading branding. Right to work laws do not increase a worker’s chance or opportunity of finding a job, being paid higher wages, and it definitely does not create a right to a job. Right to work states are at the bottom of the list regarding a worker’s rights and benefits. Of the twenty-one (21) states that are at the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, nineteen (19) are right to work states.

HB 1321 is designed to divide and conquer by separating workers and their elected representatives that negotiate on their behalf. Right to work laws prohibit contracts that require all workers to help pay for the costs associated with the collective bargaining process, even though all workers are entitled to the wage and benefits negotiated. Our goals in representing the working people of Maryland are to offer them a good days pay for a good days work, good health benefits for them and their families and to allow them to retire with security and dignity.

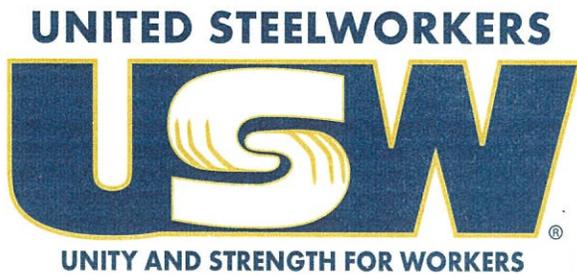
Right to work laws endanger safety and health standards that protect workers on the job. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 58% higher in states with right to work laws. Twelve (12) of the fifteen (15) states with the largest pay gaps between men and women are right to work states. Right to work states have a thirty-six percent (36%) higher than average, number of discrimination charges filed with the EEOC.

In closing, I respectfully request that you support our goal of improving the lives of not only our members, but all workers in Maryland by giving HB 1321 a **NONFAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for accepting my testimony and consideration of my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Gary R. Griffin
International Representative, IBEW



District 8

Ernest R. Thompson
District Director

James Strong
Assistant to the Director

**HB 1321
HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTER
OPPOSITION TESTIMONY**

To the Honorable Chairman Derek E. Davis and distinguished members of the committee, on behalf of the United Steelworkers International Union, I am offering written testimony in opposition to HB 1321- Right to Work. My name is Jim Strong, Maryland Assistant to the Director, District 8. The United Steelworkers is the largest manufacturing union in North America representing over 850,000 workers.

So called “Right to Work” legislation is a well thought out slogan designed to trick workers into believing that it protects a workers right to a job. Nothing could be further from the truth. So called “Right to Work” legislation does not guarantee a worker a job, it does not protect a worker against employer bias or retaliation. “Right to Work” legislation undermines fair wages and benefits. The sole purpose of “Right to Work” legislation is to undermine the ability to collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits, safe working conditions and other employee rights in the work place.

**The Myth of Forced Unionism
and the
Freedom of Association**

The drive for “Right to Work” laws began in 1947 with the Taft-Hartley Act; Section 7 of the NLRB expressly states that employees shall have the right to refrain from joining a union.

Further, there are two (2) U.S. Supreme Court cases that supporters of so-called “Right to Work” tend to overlook. In the 1988 Communication Workers vs. Beck (487 U.S. 735) case, the court ruled that workers could not be forced to pay the portion of their union dues that went to political purposes with which they did not agree.

What “Right to Work” laws do, is allow some workers to receive a “free ride” getting the advantage of a collective bargaining agreement, such as wages, benefits, seniority and protection against arbitrary discipline **without** paying any cost.

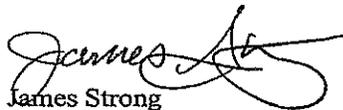
Wages Benefits and other Conditions

Union dues provide the financial resources it takes to empower workers on the job. It allows for things like training in collective bargaining, grievance handling, and safety and health. Even with “Right to Work” Laws, unions, must represent every employee whether or not he or she pays dues, if not the union would violate its duty to fair representation and could be held financially liable to that employee. That’s unfair, and it hurt the union’s ability to secure a good contract and provide a good working environment.

According to the Bureau of Labor statistic, workers in states with “Right to Work” laws make five thousand nine hundred seventy one (\$5971.00) dollars less on average annually compared to workers in other states. Union density will also impact the wages and benefits of nonunion workers by setting standards that gradually become norms throughout the various industries.

Union provides the checks and balances that grow the standard of living for all workers. It is no accident that the wage inequity has grown larger with declining union membership. “Right to Work” legislation laws are designed to weaken unions, which in turns, destroys the Middle Class

We ask that this committee give HB 1321 an unfavorable report.



James Strong
USW, Assistant to the Director, District 8