



6240 Old Dobbin Lane ■ Suite 110 ■ Columbia, MD 21045

February 19, 2021

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **SUPPORT - HB 1321 Labor and Employment - Labor Organizations - Right to Work**

Dear Chairman Davis:

For existing and potential business entities that might consider Maryland as a location for new or increased investment, this bill, if enacted, would significantly improve Maryland's chances.

We don't have to imagine whether it's possible to lose out on a site selection or a business re-location of an existing business to a Right to Work (RTW) state. We have witnessed this a number of times in the past, recently and perhaps most notably in the case of AMAZON. There are many unemployed and under-employed people who would benefit if the Baltimore area were able to attract one or more sizable employers.

Is RTW the only way to improve Maryland's business climate? No, but it would be an important step in the process toward improving our ability to compete with a states like Virginia that are more competitive with substantially lower taxes and cost of living. Investors are drawn to RTW states because they demonstrate a higher return on an employment investment, be it union or non-union, in a more stable and predictable political environment.

The representatives from organized labor will adamantly oppose this bill. We regret that the unions feel threatened by RTW. We disagree that RTW places unions or union members at a disadvantage. There are 27 RTW states, including Michigan, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin, all of which have active labor unions representing workers.

Employees in every state are protected by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), which insures that they have the right to engage in all standard union negotiations and other activities, including strikes.

What **does not occur** in RTW states: employers may not refuse to employ or discharge individuals, whether they join a union or not. Nor may employers deduct dues or union fees from workers who choose not to join the union.

What **does occur** in Maryland and other non RTW states: employers and union officials negotiate agreements that require all employees, including those who are opposed to the union, to join the union and pay union dues **or be discharged**.

We ask that the Committee members give HB 1321 a favorable report. In doing so, you will give Maryland workers the freedom to join or not join a union without losing the "Right to Work."

Respectfully,

Leonardo McClarty
President, Howard County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Howard County General Assembly Delegation; Howard County Chamber Board of Directors
Howard County Legislative Affairs Committee Members