

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

LOCAL 37

AFFILIATED WITH THE AFL-CIO

Chartered May 1, 1900

March 1, 2022

Robert A. Holsey, Jr.
*Business Manager and
Financial Secretary*

To: MD House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee (ECM)

Mark F. McQuay
*President and Business
Representative*

Strong Opposition to HB 1203
Labor and Employment- Right to Work

March 8th, 2022

Thomas M. Boschi
Vice President

From: Robert A. Holsey Jr., Business Manager

Michael B. Funk
*Recording Secretary
and Training Director*

I.U.O.E. Local 37
3615 North Point Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21222

Daniel S. Humbertson
*Treasurer and Business
Representative*

Dear Chairman CT Wilson, Honorable Delegates and Committee Members; I am writing today on the behalf of the 1500 members of IUOE Local 37 to ask you to vote unfavorably on The Right to Work Bill, HB 1203.

Executive Board

Robert A. Holsey, Jr.
Mark F. McQuay
Thomas M. Boschi
Michael B. Funk
Daniel S. Humbertson
Steve J. Rohrman, Sr.
James E. Nunley, Jr.
Anthony J. Crandall
Phillip E. Grothe
Michael V. McKew
Robert J. Pucci

This legislation will severely impact the middle-class working men and women in the state of Maryland. This legislation is very deceiving, it does not guarantee a person a job, it only guarantees them the right not to join a union; a right every man and woman already has. No union can force an individual to join its ranks, just as no government or agency can deny an individual the right to join a union. In every state that has Right to Work legislation these same men and women have experienced a much lower standard of living, causing extreme hardships to their families which in turn will lead them to seek assistance from state agencies in order for them to put food on the table, care for their sick or any other help they may need.

Trustees

Vasilis Peros
Stephen
VanBoesschoten
Thomas W. Costanzi

I ask you to look at the states that have had RTW legislation in place for several years and see what changed after its passage. I believe you will find a much higher poverty level and a large increase in minimum wage job opportunities. Most family's need to work several jobs just to make ends meet.

Auditors

Thomas I. Judge
Bruce J. Clark
Walter L. Wagner

I thank you for taking the time to read this correspondence and again ask you to vote against this legislation.

Conductor

Michael C. Wines

Best regards,

Guard

Jason R. Lewis

Robert A. Holsey Jr.
Business Manager
International Union of Operating Engineers Local 37



District Council No. 51
4700 Boston Way
Lanham, MD 20706
(301) 918-0182
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INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PAINTERS AND ALLIED TRADES, AFL-CIO DISTRICT COUNCIL NO. 51

March 3, 2022

House of Delegates Economic Matters Committee:

C.T. Wilson, Chair
Brian M. Crosby, Vice Chair
House Office Building, Room 231
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Honorable Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

I am Roxana Mejia, Director of Government Affairs of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 51 covering the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia jurisdictions. I represent over 2,000 members in the finishing trades of the construction industry.

I want to thank the Committee Members for taking the time to read our OPPOSITION to HB 1203 Labor and Employment- Private-Sector Employers- Right to Work.

I write to you today to urge you to vote against HB 1203. Right to Work does not create jobs and has no impact on the economic stimulus in any State where it has been enacted. In fact, workers in states with these laws earn an average of \$5,680 less a year than workers in other states. Right to work creates lower wages, poor job safety, no skills training, no health insurance, and no pension on which to retire with some security and dignity. States with right to work laws spend \$3,392 less per pupil on elementary and secondary education than other states, and students are less likely to be performing at their appropriate grade level in math and reading. Right to work is a partisan anti-union ploy to undermine the basic rights of workers. Working families without these rights to work laws benefit from healthier tax bases that improve their quality of life.

Please vote unfavorable on HB 1203.

Thank you

Roxana Mejia
Director of Government Affairs
IUPAT DC 51



March 8, 2022

The Honorable CT Wilson, Chair
The Honorable Brian Crosby, Vice Chair
House Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building Room 231
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**HB 1203 – Labor and Employment – Private–Sector Employers – Right to Work
Position – Oppose**

Thank you Chair Wilson and Vice Chair Crosby and members of the House Economic Matters Committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to HB 1203.

My name is Victoria Leonard, Political and Legislative Director for the Baltimore Washington Laborers’ District Council (BWLDC), an affiliate of the Laborers’ International Union of North America, or LiUNA for short. The BWLDC represents more than 7,500 members across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Our members are proudly employed on many infrastructure construction projects across the region.

LiUNA strongly opposes HB 1203, which would make Maryland a right-to-work state. Right-to-work is a segregationist-era law that Southern and Mid-Western states enacted to block workers of all races from organizing. Martin Luther King, Jr. sounded the alarm back in 1961 when he said, “We must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as ‘right to work.’ It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights.” When he said those remarks, right-to-work laws had already been passed in 18 states. The total has climbed to 27, thanks to concerted efforts by Republicans when they seize control of state legislatures.

Right-to-work is one of the most misunderstood phrases of all time. People think right-to-work means right to a job—that a person cannot be fired without being given a reason. This is absolutely wrong. What right-to-work really means is that employees cannot be compelled to join a union or pay union dues, but can access the benefits of union representation at no cost. Simply put, right-to-work is about limiting unionization and the power of working families.

Recent studies demonstrate the devastating impact of right-to-work laws on wages. A 2018 analysis found that the hourly wage of males in right-to-work states is \$18.25, compared with \$20.78 in non-right-to-work states, nearly a 14 percent difference. The pattern of lower wages is even more pronounced for women and people of color. For example, women on average earn 15.5 percent less in right-to-work states than in non-right-to-work states, and African-American males on average earn 17.3 percent less.

Right-work-laws also choke off union membership. Only 5.2 percent of private-sector workers in right-to-work states are union members or are covered by a union contract, compared with 10.2 percent in non-right-to-work states. A 2017 study found that union membership rates in three states that recently went right-to-work—Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin—have fallen faster compared with the rates in three nearby collective bargaining states—Illinois, Minnesota and Ohio.

Moreover, right-to-work laws have a disproportionate impact on minorities because of their greater rates of work in unionized industries. The number of Black and Hispanic union members has grown, while the number of White union members in organized labor has declined. African American workers are most-likely to be union members.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. also noted about right-to-work in 1961: “Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone. Wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer and there are no civil rights.”

LiUNA strongly opposes HB 1203 and urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report.



House Economic Matters Committee

To: Delegate CT Wilson, Chair; Delegate Brian Crosby Vice-Chair; and Members of the Committee.
From: Jason Ascher, Political Director, Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association.

HB 1203 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association and our 10,000+ United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitter members across Maryland, I ask you to **OPPOSE HB 1203**.

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 1203**.

Sincerely,

Jason Ascher
Political Director
Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association
7050 Oakland Mills Road, Suite 180
Columbia, MD 21046

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



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 1203

Labor and Employment – Right to Work

March 8th, 2022

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TO: Hon. CT Wilson, 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 1203, 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

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**National
Nurses
United**

The National Voice for Direct-Care RNs

WASHINGTON DC
8455 Colesville Road
Suite 1100
Silver Spring MD 20910
phone: 800-287-5021
fax: 240-235-2019

OAKLAND
155 Grand Avenue
Suite 100
Oakland CA 94612
phone: 800-504-7859
fax: 510-663-1625

Maryland General Assembly
House Economic Matters Committee
Testimony of Corey Lanham, National Collective Bargaining Director
In OPPOSITION TO HB1203
Labor and Employment – Labor Organizations – Right to Work
March 8, 2022

Thank you, Chairman Wilson and members of the House Economic Matters Committee, for the opportunity to express the strong opposition of National Nurses United, the nation's largest union of registered nurses with 175,000 members, to HB1203.

My name is Corey Lanham. I am NNU's National Collective Bargaining Director.

On behalf of our several thousand members in Maryland, National Nurses United strongly urges you to give HB1203 an unfavorable report.

This radical anti-worker, so-called "right-to-work" legislation poses a significant threat to public health and safety that would also threaten to reduce living standards for Maryland workers.

Under the deceptive facade of protecting workers' rights, this bill is nothing short of a full-scale assault on living standards for all workers that would seriously erode the ability of working people to speak out when public protections are at risk.

And this bill threatens the economic stability and future of Maryland workers. Data shows that states with "right-to-work" laws have lower wages, worse healthcare outcomes, including lower life expectancies, and higher workplace injury and death rates. And data shows that so-called "right-to-work" states have larger pay gaps between men and women, and have more discrimination charges than average.

Even the promise of an improved business climate is illusory. While this kind of bill has been on the wish lists of the nation's biggest and wealthiest corporate interests for years, and pushed in state legislatures across the country, they do not benefit working people.

Dangerous legislation like this should not be moved forward here in Maryland. This legislation would prohibit collective bargaining agreements that require all employees in a unionized workplace to pay fees to support the work of the union in negotiating improvements in their pay, benefits and working conditions. Federal law already provides for exemptions.

The real goal of 'right-to-work' has nothing to do with free speech or worker rights, and everything to do with increasing employer profits and suppression of the ability of workers to act

collectively to improve their conditions and advocate for the public interest. Such legislation has no place in Maryland and this bill should be given an unfavorable report.

These laws are also intended to deprive unions of the resources they need in a corporate dominated political system to participate in the electoral process and elect candidates who will stand for worker rights, not corporate profits.

In healthcare, attacking the collective rights of nurses is particularly dangerous. Through their union, registered nurses who are members of National Nurses United have far greater strength to advocate for a broad range of patient protections and serve as a public watchdog of violations of patient safety by corporate healthcare employers.

Without the protection of a union, nurses do not have protections from retaliation for speaking out about unsafe hospital and clinic conditions. This has become even more important during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. We have seen repeatedly over the past two years how essential it has been for nurses to have the protection of a collective bargaining agreement. Unionized nurses have been able to speak out collectively for safe patient care, including necessary infectious disease control protocols and safe staffing levels, and ensuring that hospital staff are provided with optimal personal protective equipment. This bill would dramatically undermine the registered nurses who are working every day to save lives across Maryland and, therefore, it must be rejected.

I am a Marylander and I know that this bill puts our families, our neighbors and all Marylanders at risk. National Nurses United strongly urges every member of the committee to do what is best for Maryland workers and their families, and those people nurses care for, by giving HB1203 the unfavorable report it deserves.

Nurses will never be silent in the face of attacks on their rights to advocate for their patients and for public health and safety, or their right to form unions and act collectively for their own livelihood and for safe working conditions. We ask that you join nurses in opposing this dangerous bill. Thank you for your consideration.

National Nurses United (NNU) is the largest union and professional organization of registered nurses in the country, representing more than 175,000 members, including thousands of Maryland residents. NNU works with nurses to improve patient care and working conditions at hospitals, advocate for nurses and patients, and win health care justice and quality health care for all. For more information about National Nurses United's work in Maryland, please contact Kenneth Zinn, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, at kzinn@nationalnursesunited.org or call 240-235-2000.



**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1203
Labor and Employment - Right to Work
March 8, 2022**

TO: Hon. CT Wilson, Chair, and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Patricia M. O'Donnell, SAG-AFTRA Washington - Mid Atlantic Local Executive Director
DATE: March 2, 2022

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 1203, the “Right to Work” bill that is set for hearing in your Committee on March 8, 2022.

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 freeload.

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 significantly less than in 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 1203.

We strongly urge you to stand with our members in opposition of HB 1203 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



**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 C.T. Wilson,
Chair House Committee on Economics Matters
6 Bladen Street Annapolis, MD 21401

March 1, 2022

We strongly oppose Right to work legislation (HB 1203) 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 HB1203, 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

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utusldmd@gmail.com

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Chairman C.T. Wilson and
Members of the Economic Matters Committee

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 600
LAWRENCE KASECAMP

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
KENZELL CRAWFORD

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHNNY WALKER

Local 1949
ERIC BILSON

RE: OPPOSE HB-1203

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-1203**, "*Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work.*"

First and foremost, Right to Work (RTW) legislation is a serious attack against most working men and women of the state of Maryland who are members of Organized Labor. But it really goes well beyond that. It 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.

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 result if HB-1203 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-1203, 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-1203!

Sincerely



Lawrence E. Kasecamp

MD State Legislative Director

 SMART Transportation Division



**TEAMSTERS, CHAUFFEURS, WAREHOUSEMEN & HELPERS
LOCAL UNION 453**

Affiliated With The
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Lawrence A. Wolfe, Jr.
President

Jerry M. Rumer
Secretary-Treasurer

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1203
Labor and Employment - Right to Work
March 8, 2022**

**TO: Hon. CT Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic
Matters Committee**

FROM: Lawrence A. Wolfe Jr., President

Dear Chairman Wilson and Members of the Committee:

I am President of the Western Maryland Building & Construction Trades Council, representing approximately 2,000 men and women in the building and construction trades industry, covering the three western counties in Maryland. I am also Secretary-Treasurer and Legislative Representative for Teamsters Joint Council 62, representing over 15,000 working families across Maryland. We **oppose HB1203 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work**.

“Right to Work” is wrong for Maryland and her citizens. “Right to Work” is not about one’s right to work; it’s all about benefitting big business and crushing workers’ protections and their ability to negotiate with their employers. Supported across this country by ALEC and the Koch Brothers, “Right to Work” allows union objectors to receive all the benefits negotiated by the union, including the union health care and pension, and guarantees union representation without those objectors paying a dime for it.

“Right to Work” is really the Right to Work for Less. Twelve of the fifteen states with the worst pay gap between men and women are “right to work” states. The average worker in states with “right to work” laws makes over \$6,000 less than workers in states without “right to work.” Education investment in “right to work” states compared to other states is approximately 30% less and the rate of workplace fatalities is more than 50% higher in “right to work” states.

“Right to work” is wrong for Maryland and her citizens. We oppose this legislation and ask that you give HB1203 an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lawrence A. Wolfe Jr.", written in black ink.

Lawrence A. Wolfe Jr.
President



WESTERN MARYLAND BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

AFFILIATED WITH AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
COVERING ALLEGANY, GARRETT & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1203 Labor and Employment - Right to Work March 8, 2022

TO: Hon. CT Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic
Matters Committee
FROM: Lawrence A. Wolfe Jr., President

Dear Chairman Wilson and Members of the Committee:

I am President of the Western Maryland Building & Construction Trades Council, representing approximately 2,000 men and women in the building and construction trades industry, covering the three western counties in Maryland. I am also Secretary-Treasurer and Legislative Representative for Teamsters Joint Council 62, representing over 15,000 working families across Maryland. We **oppose HB1203 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work.**

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compared to other states is approximately 30% less and the rate of workplace fatalities is more than 50% higher in "right to work" states.

"Right to work" is wrong for Maryland and her citizens. We oppose this legislation and ask that you give HB1203 an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence A. Wolfe Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Lawrence A. Wolfe Jr.
President



WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 1203

Labor and Employment- Right to Work

March 8th, 2022
Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House

TO: Hon. CT Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

FR: Jason Chorpenning
President, United Food & Commercial Workers International Union Local 27
21 West Road, Towson, MD 21204

Chair Wilson, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of the 23,000 working men and women represented by United Food & Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 27, I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 1203.

Our members work in retail food, food processing, manufacturing, distribution, gaming, health care and other industries. These hard-working men and women help form the backbone of Maryland's middle class. A middle class where everyday union members in Maryland feed our families, educate our children, protect our streets, pick up our trash, erect new buildings and care for our elderly. Unfortunately, if passed HB 1203 will make it harder for these middle-class workers to provide for their own families.

This legislation is an effort to weaken unions thereby weakening the middle class and the workers position to influence working conditions. HB 1203 would also suppress wages and endanger workplace safety and health standards. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 58% higher in states with these laws.

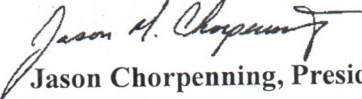
So-called "Right To Work" legislation is nothing more than a nationwide orchestrated campaign to erode the living standards and political power of working families. Data has shown that workers in so-called "Right-to-Work" states earn far less than their counterparts in Non-Right-to-Work states. In addition, states with Right To Work laws have lower rates of health insurance and higher rates of poverty.

Make no mistake, the advocates of this bill falsely claim concern for worker rights, while actually promoting corporate profits. This is NOT an effort to advance a worker rights...This is NOT a proposal to increase worker pay...This is NOT a way to make Maryland more attractive to businesses.

We should call this bill what it is – the Right To Work for LESS, our members and all Maryland families deserve better. We should be discussing proposals to create new jobs, rebuild manufacturing and increase living standards; not be wasting our time on proposals that only serve to exacerbate income inequality.

I urge the Committee to OPPOSE HB 1203.

In solidarity,


Jason Chorpenny, President

Testimony in Opposition to HB 1203

Labor and Employment – Private Sector Employers – Right to Work

March 4, 2022

To: Hon. Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Kayla Mock, Political Organizer
United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 400

Chair Wilson and members of the Economic Matters Committee, I appreciate the chance to share my testimony on behalf of our over 10,000 members in Maryland, working on the front lines of the ongoing pandemic in grocery, retail, food distribution, law enforcement, and health care. Through collective bargaining, our members raise the workplace standards of wages, benefits, safety, and retirement for all workers. Union members are critical to the addressing inequality and uplifting the middle class.

We oppose HB 1203, the Right to Work proposal for private sector employees.

The passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 paved the way for Right to Work (RTW) laws by allowing states to prohibit union security agreements, or mandatory union membership when working in a unionized place of employment. In the early development of RTW policy, many segregationists pushed these policies so that white workers did not have to belong to the same organizations as black workers.

Right to work simply means that employees of a unionized shop do not have to join the union. What this translates to, however, is the weakening of the unions ability to collectively bargain. Unions are still obligated, under law, to represent and bargain for non-union workers, spreading resources and bargaining power thin. Often, on the shop floor, this creates tension amongst employees because some are paying membership fees while others are not, while all are benefitting.

Collective bargaining power comes workers acting together to bargain with employers over wages, benefits, and safety. Union members set the standards, addressed inequality,

Testimony in Opposition of HB 1203

UFCW

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and created and maintained the middle class for all workers. With weakened collective bargaining, wages are driven down, and inequality goes unchecked. Of the twenty-one states stuck at minimum wage, nineteen have RTW laws. The average worker in states with these laws make \$7,443 a year less than workers in other states. Twelve of the fifteen states with the worst pay gap between men and women are RTW. RTW states also have a 36% higher than the average number of discrimination charges filed with the EEOC.

Additionally, RTW endangers the health and safety standards that protect workers. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 58% higher in RTW states.

In 2016, the West Virginia legislature facing with dying coal industries, dwindling jobs, and a crumbling infrastructure, passed RTW legislation, branding it as the boost the state would need to get their economy started and to open doors for employers and jobs to come to the state. Unfortunately, none of this happened. In 2021, Republican Governor Jim Justice said, “Really and truly, let’s just be brutally honest. We passed the right-to-work law in West Virginia. And we ran to the windows looking to see all the people that were going to come — and they didn’t come. We got rid of prevailing wage. We changed our corporate taxes and we’ve done a lot of different things. And we’ve run to the windows, and they haven’t come.”

Right to Work legislation is a Jim Crow era law, based in racism, used as a carrot by corporations to make promises to states that will never be fulfilled. Right to work laws are intended to weaken unions’ collective bargaining power by spreading resources thin, and ultimately, driving down wages, benefits, and standards of living for workers. Right to work is wrong and dangerous for Maryland and Maryland workers.

For all of these reasons, on behalf of our members and all of Marylanders, we urge an unfavorable report on HB 1203.