

Journeyman Pipe Fitters and Apprentices



Local Union No. 602

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AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO

TESTIMONY

CHRIS MADELLO, UA STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 602

HB494 - LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT - PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYERS –
RIGHT TO WORK

UNFAVORABLE

Honorable members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

On behalf of the UA Steamfitters Local 602, the more than 5000 Journeymen, Apprentices and Helpers we represent, and the roughly 200 signatory contractors under the Mechanical Contractors Association of Metro Washington with whom we work, I write today to express our strong opposition to HB494, the so called "Right to Work" legislation.

As we stated last year, this legislation is patently misleading, in that nothing in this legislation empowers workers to work, or protects any worker rights. The truth is that this legislation undermines the very rights that the bill purports to protect, by separating those workers from the unions who protect their rights, and, through union organizing and collective bargaining agreements, enable those rights.

With due respect, it is irresponsible for lawmakers to suggest or legislate who may or may not join a union, when they may or may not do so, or what the terms of that work must be. Those decisions are the rights of individuals, protected by law, by contract, and through the constructive engagement process embodied by collective bargaining.

In fact, collective bargaining is the very currency by which worker and employer rights manifest through contract negotiations. It is a collaborative process, of willing parties, that is embedded in American jurisprudence, both in statute and in case law. To effectively outlaw participation and support for that process, as this legislation attempts to do, violates the very rights that this legislation misleadingly suggests.

It is a dangerous and cynical proposal that must not be allowed to come to pass.

For these reasons, we ask for an unfavorable committee report.

Sincerely,

Christopher M Madello
Business Manager / Financial Secretary Treasurer

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