



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 494 - Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work
House Economic Matters Committee
February 14, 2023**

OPPOSE

**Donna S. Edwards
President**

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong opposition to HB 494 - Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Right to Work is clever branding. Meant to be misleading, Right to Work laws do nothing to increase workers' chances of finding a job, being paid more, and it definitely does not create a right to a job. Right to Work is a political strategy designed to confuse and divide workers so that corporate interests can take away rights from workers. This rigs the economic system in favor of the wealthiest 1% and erodes the middle class.

In a stunning admission of failure, anti-labor Gov. Jim Justice of West Virginia explained on February 23, 2021, that the state's "right to work" law and repeal of prevailing wage did not deliver the jobs and the economic boom that was promised. "Well, the bottom line to the whole thing is just really simple. We went out and passed a 'right to work' law, we got rid of prevailing wage, we built fields all over the place thinking that they will come," Justice said. "They didn't come, did they?" he added. It is surprising and encouraging that Governor Justice released a statement acknowledging the truth about Right to Work and its bad policies.

Other states have shown a reticence to embrace this failed policy. In Missouri in 2018, voters rejected a Right to Work ballot question by 67% to 33%. In 2016, the voters of Virginia rejected a ballot initiative to enshrine Right to Work in the State Constitution. When put directly in front of the voters – and the negative effects are fully exposed – Right to Work is rejected. Montana legislators failed to pass a right to work law in 2021 after a groundswell of community opposition. In 2022, voters in Illinois overwhelmingly passed a ballot measure that enshrined the freedom to form unions and bargain collectively into their state's constitution. In 2023, Michigan legislators in both chambers introduced legislation to repeal their state's Right to Work law.

Proponents of RTW laws claim to be protecting workers against being forced to join a union. The fact is that federal law already makes it illegal to force a worker to join a union. Instead, RTW forces the union to represent the non-paying worker no matter the cost or the detriment to other workers. RTW laws prohibit contracts that require all workers who benefit from the union's collective efforts in a bargaining unit to help pay for these benefits. The non-paying worker receives all the increased wages and benefits negotiated by the union and must be represented by the union in grievances against management.

Corporate funded organizations such as the National Right to Work Foundation and the State Policy Network are financed by a network of extremely wealthy individuals and corporate billionaires who want to use state legislatures, Congress, and the courts to rig rules against working people. RTW is a well-funded centralized campaign to weaken unions thereby weakening working people's leverage over their working conditions and ability to collectively negotiate for better wages, benefits and quality of life. RTW laws result in suppressing wages and forces union members to pay for and provide services for free to nonpaying workers. The RTW crowd want to strike a "mortal blow" and "defund and defang" unions and they bankroll politicians who will carry their water.¹

In the five states that adopted right to work laws between 2011 and 2017, average wages in construction, education, and public administration declined.² Of the 20 States stuck at federal minimum wage (\$7.25) 19 are right to work states. Twelve of the 15 states with the worst pay gap between men and women are right to work states. Wages are lower in states with RTW laws. The average worker in states with RTW laws makes \$8,989 (15.2%) a year less than workers in other states (\$50,174, compared with \$59,163)³, median household income in states with RTW laws is \$11,628 (15.4%) less than in other states (\$64,071, compared with \$75,700)⁴ and, 24.0% of jobs in RTW states are in low-wage occupations, compared with 14.5% of jobs in other states⁵. On average, wages drop 3.1% when RTW laws are enacted in a state. Because of the higher wages and quality of jobs, working families in states without RTW laws also benefit from healthier tax bases that improve the quality of life for everyone.

Right to Work laws endanger safety and health standards that protect workers on the job. Working people and their unions have a long history of fighting for tougher workplace safety and health rules. Right to work laws weaken workers' ability to stand together in order to maintain and strengthen workplace safety and health standards. According to the most recent 2019 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 37% higher in states with RTW laws⁶.

The Economic Policy Institute memorandum, "What's Wrong With 'Right-to-Work'"⁷, examined the claims that states with right-to-work laws experienced personal income growth and employment growth by separating ideological passion and scientific fact. Studies finding positive employment effects of

¹ Tracie Sharp, SPN's CEO and President, stated clearly in an internal document provided to [The Guardian by the Center for Media and Democracy](#), that their objective is to "defund and defang one of our freedom movement's most powerful opponents, the government unions" and to "deal a major blow to the left's ability to control government at the state and national levels. I'm talking about *permanently depriving* the left from access to millions of dollars in dues extracted from unwilling union members every election cycle."

² National Bureau of Economic Research, Impacts of Right-to-Work Laws on Unionization and Wages, 8th Edition, August 2022

³ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, data extracted on December 3, 2020, <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/dsrv?en>

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements. Table H-8.

Median Household Income by State: 1984 to 2019

⁵ Prosperity Now Scorecard, Low Wage Jobs, 2019 data,

⁶ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2019, www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cfoi.pdf.

⁷ <http://www.epi.org/publication/pm174/>

RTW laws failed to control for numerous factors affecting employment such as educational levels, disparity in health care, and infant mortality:

- People younger than 65 in states with right to work laws are more likely to lack health insurance (11.9%, compared with 8.1% in free-bargaining states).⁸
- Poverty rates are higher in states with right to work laws (11.2% overall and 15.6% for children), compared with poverty rates in states without these laws (8.9% overall and 12.2% for children).⁹
- States with right to work laws spend 31.6% less per pupil on elementary and secondary education than other states.¹⁰
- The EEOC reports it receives 36% higher than average discrimination complaints from RTW states.

New data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that non-union workers earned only 85% of what union workers made, with union workers averaging \$1,216 each week versus \$1,029 for nonunion workers.¹¹ Black workers were also more likely than any other demographic to be union members.

There is ample evidence that Right to Work laws hurt all workers, union and nonunion, and our communities. The false claims that supporters give for right to work laws are an attempt to deceive people from the real reasons they want to pass these bills – to rig the laws against working people, and rake in profits for large businesses and corporate CEO’s by securing a pathway for them to pay workers less, provide less benefits, work us more and prevent us from doing anything about it at the worksite or with elected officials and legislatures.

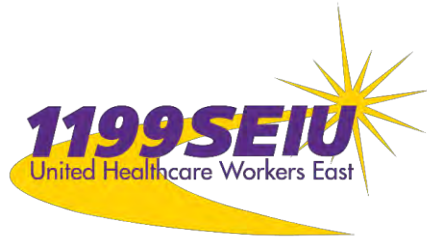
We ask for an unfavorable report on HB 494.

⁸ US Census Bureau, Table HIC 06, Health Insurance Status and Type of Coverage by State: Persons Under 65 2008 - 2019, https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/demo/tables/health-insurance/time-series/acs/hic06_acs.xlsx

⁹ US Census Bureau, POV46: Poverty Status by State: 2019, Below 100% and 50% of Poverty -- People Under 18 Years of Age, weighted average count, https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/tables/pov-46/2020/pov46_weight_10050_3.xlsx; US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, POV46: Poverty Status by State: 2019 Below 100% and 50% of Poverty -- All People, weighted average count,

https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/tables/pov-46/2020/pov46_weight_10050_1.xlsx
¹⁰ Source: NEA Research, Rankings of the States 2019 and Estimates of School Statistics 2020, Table F-8 Public school current expenditures per student in fall enrollment, June 2020, https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/2020%20Rankings%20and%20Estimates%20Report%20FINAL_0.pdf

¹¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Union Members 2022 Data, Published January 19, 2023.



Testimony in Opposition to HB 494

Labor and Employment – Private Sector Employers – Right to Work

To Chair Wilson and members of the Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the nation – representing 10,000 healthcare workers in long-term care facilities and hospitals across Maryland. Our union **opposes** HB 494 and urge the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report.

1199 SEIU fights for healthcare workers in hospitals, clinics, and long-term care settings ensuring that our healthcare system puts people over profits. Our members are on the front lines amidst an ongoing pandemic and staffing crisis. 1199 SEIU has successfully negotiated contracts that have increased pay and created safer scheduling and workplace conditions so that workers are better able to take care of their patients. Unions are vital to protect care workers and quality of care for patients. The Journal of Public Health published research last year that unionization and protecting direct care workers’ right to collectively bargain has deep implications for patients and health workforce stability.¹

The Economic Policy Institute memorandum, “What’s Wrong With ‘Right-to-Work’” , examined the claims that states with right-to-work laws experienced personal income growth and employment growth by separating ideological passion and scientific fact. Studies finding positive employment effects of RTW laws failed to control for numerous factors affecting employment such as educational levels, disparity in health care, and infant mortality:

- People younger than 65 in states with right to work laws are more likely to lack health insurance (11.9%, compared with 8.1% in free-bargaining states).
- Poverty rates are higher in states with right to work laws (11.2% overall and 15.6% for children), compared with poverty rates in states without these laws (8.9% overall and 12.2% for children).
- States with right to work laws spend 31.6% less per pupil on elementary and secondary education than other states.
- The EEOC reports it receives 36% higher than average discrimination complaints from RTW states

There is ample evidence that Right to Work laws hurt all workers, union and nonunion, and our communities. We urge members of the committee to take a stance against profit driven businesses and corporations that benefit from paying workers less, providing less benefits, and overworking our healthcare workers. For these reasons and more, we ask for an unfavorable report on HB 494.

In unity,

Ricarra Jones

Political Director, 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East

Ricarra.jones@1199.org

1. Dill J, Tanem J. Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Unionization in Direct Care Occupations. Am J Public Health. 2022 Nov;112(11):1676-1684. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2022.307022. PMID: 36223582; PMCID: PMC9558197.



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Patrick Moran - President

HB 494 - Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work POSITION: UNFAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 opposes HB 494. This legislation makes it optional for workers covered by a union contract in the private sector to help pay for the expenses that the union incurs while protecting the rights of all employees. The intent of HB 494 is to make it harder for unions to sustain themselves financially and to undermine the bargaining strength of workers.

“Right-to-work” laws drive down the wages for all workers, including non-union members, women, and people of color. Workers living in states with right to work laws earn less per year than workers without these laws. Women and people of color feel a disproportionate impact. Workers in “right-to-work” states are both less likely to have health insurance, and a safe and healthy workplace. “Right-to-work” laws also harm local economies by reducing the number of good-paying jobs that support the local community.

In 1961, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said this about “right-to-work” laws:

“In our glorious fight for civil rights, 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. 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. We do not intend to let them do this to us. We demand this fraud be stopped.”

We urge the committee to provide an unfavorable report on HB 494.

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.
An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
800.492.1996

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HB 494-EMPLOYMENT- LABOR ORGANIZATIONS- RIGHT TO WORK
HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

February 14, 2023

UNFAVORABLE

AFSCME Maryland Council 67 representing county and municipal public employees in local government, stands in opposition to HB494.

“Right to work” is the name for a policy that is designed to take away the rights of hard-working people. Supporters of right to work claim that these laws protect workers from being forced to join a union. The reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force someone to join a union. The real purpose of right to work is to tilt the balance towards big corporations and further rig the system at the expense of working families. These laws make it harder for workers to form unions and to collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits, and proper working conditions.

Supporters of right to work claim that it will help spur job growth and attract new companies to states which is quite the misconception considering states with the highest unemployment rates are also right to work states. Many factors influence business site location decisions, but right to work isn’t among the top five – not even in the top ten. The availability of skilled laborers, the quality of life the company’s executives will have, access to major highways, proximity to markets, robust telecom infrastructure, facility and energy costs, the provision of training subsidies, construction costs, and corporate tax incentives matter the most —not right to work laws.

As the elected union for most bargaining units of State and Local/Municipal Government Employees, AFSCME Council 67 negotiates for wages, benefits, and working conditions on behalf of employees. AFSCME Council 67 represents all the workers in a collective bargaining unit, whether they are a union member or not, to ensure that both the employer and the employees agreed upon contract is properly enforced. Most importantly, we work with the employee’s state and local government agencies to create things such as labor-management committees in order to work collaboratively to find resolutions on the many issues impacting government operations.

Enacting right to work would undo gains won over the years in Maryland for workers.

For these reasons we urge the committee to vote UNFAVORABLY on HB 494.

Testimony

HB- 494

Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work

Economic Matters February 14, 2023

Opposition To The Legislation

Chairperson Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I am David C Basler, Union member, AFSCME Local 434 and Council 67 Executive Board member, I am writing today to express my strong opposition to Bill 494 as this "Right to work" Legislation is bad for working people.

I have been in my Union represented job for almost 40 years. Yet when they created my position, Grounds Foreperson for Baltimore County Public Schools Grounds Department, I was prohibited by law from being represented. For 12 years I saw firsthand how "Unrepresented Workers" have less rights and lower wages. In 2000 I was told things had changed and I could join a union! The next day I signed a card to join the other workers at BCPS represented by AFSCME.

The Power of Collective Bargaining, the protections afforded by a Negotiated agreement such as "Due Process" in Discipline and "Transfer language" and others, protects me and my fellow workers in AFSCME Local 434 from the whims of any unscrupulous/ self-serving manager or Administrator. The protections afforded me by anti-retribution clauses allows me to speak to processes that have ill effects on our education system. Stakeholders know best how to improve Efficiencies and Services to our customers, the Students and Public in Baltimore County.

I ask, in the strongest means: Opposes this bill, HB 494 as it will only give folks in Maryland the right to work for less of what is needed in a "Good Job"!

Thank you,

David C Basler

AFSCME Local 434 & Council 67 Executive Board

Concerned Worker & Voting Citizen of Maryland.



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 495

Right to Work

February 4th 2023

To: Chairman and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Warren Randall Pointer, Electronics Technician III, AFSCME Local 1072 Shop Steward, AFSCME Local 1072 Recording Secretary of the Executive Board.

Chairman and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

I am writing you to express my strong opposition to the right to work legislation in HB 495. At a time when this country is in dire need to strengthen Unions this bill seeks to undermine that need. This type of legislation has personally affected me when I worked and lived in Virginia in the recent past. When management is free to fire employees without just cause the worker suffers, their family suffers and the local economy suffers. It is also demoralizing for the worker, who is doing the best they can at their job but has to go to the unemployment line regardless. Simply put this type of legislation is just not fair to the American worker. I have worked at the University of Maryland for the past 20 years as an Electronics Technician III. I am five years away from retirement. The Union, AFSCME, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees has really turned around my life for the better since I joined in 2006. I am having a positive experience in my work and I am fighting the good fight for my brother and sisters of AFSCME Local 1072. I have seen the Union fight for the rights of my coworkers and I then decided to increase my involvement with the Union as a way of showing my thanks to the Union and their efforts to improve the life of their members.

Unions are good for America and any legislation that undermines this is not good for America. I would like to reiterate my position on HB 495, I am against this legislation and I implore that you and your fellow committee members vote a resounding NO to this legislation. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter as the cause of fighting this type of legislation is something that I feel very strongly about.

Sincerely,

Warren Randall Pointer
Electronics Technician III
University of Maryland
Robert H. Smith School of Business
1530a Van Munching Hall
College Park, MD 20742
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301-405-5213



TESTIMONY
HB 494 LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT- PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYERS- RIGHT TO WORK
HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE
February 14, 2023

UNFAVORABLY

ACE-AFSCME Local 2250 representing over 6,000 Prince George's County School employees stands in opposition to HB494.

“Right to work” is the name for a policy that is designed to take away the rights of hard-working people. Supporters of right to work claim that these laws protect workers from being forced to join a union. The reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force someone to join a union. The real purpose of right to work is to tilt the balance towards big corporations and further rig the system at the expense of working families. These laws make it harder for workers to form unions and to collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits, and proper working conditions.

Supporters of right to work claim that it will help spur job growth and attract new companies to states which is quite the misconception considering states with the highest unemployment rates are also right to work states. Many factors influence business site location decisions, but right to work isn't among the top five – not even in the top ten. The availability of skilled laborers, the quality of life the company's executives will have, access to major highways, proximity to markets, robust telecom infrastructure, facility and energy costs, the provision of training subsidies, construction costs, and corporate tax incentives matter the most —not right to work laws.

As the elected union for most bargaining units support staff including workers from transportation, paraprofessionals, nurses, food services workers and more in Prince George's County Schools, AFSCME negotiates for wages, benefits, and working conditions on behalf of employees and represents all the workers in a collective bargaining unit, whether they are a union member or not, to ensure that both the employer and the employees agreed upon contract is properly enforced. Most importantly, we work with the school officials in order to work collaboratively to find resolutions on the many issues impacting school operations. The safety of our children is the most important priority of our members.

Enacting right to work would undo gains won over the years in Maryland for workers.

For these reasons we urge the committee to vote UNFAVORABLY on HB 494.



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TESTIMONY
HB 494 LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT- PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYERS
RIGHT TO WORK
HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE
February 14, 2023

UNFAVORABLY

AFSCME representing public employees across Maryland State's and local government, stands in opposition to HB 494.

“Right to work” is the name for a policy that is designed to take away the rights of hard-working people. Supporters of right to work claim that these laws protect workers from being forced to join a union. The reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force someone to join a union. The real purpose of right to work is to tilt the balance towards big corporations and further rig the system at the expense of working families. These laws make it harder for workers to form unions and to collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits, and proper working conditions.

Supporters of right to work claim that it will help spur job growth and attract new companies to states which is quite the misconception considering states with the highest unemployment rates are also right to work states. Many factors influence business site location decisions, but right to work isn't among the top five – not even in the top ten. The availability of skilled laborers, the quality of life the company's executives will have, access to major highways, proximity to markets, robust telecom infrastructure, facility and energy costs, the provision of training subsidies, construction costs, and corporate tax incentives matter the most —not right to work laws.

As the elected union for most bargaining units of State and Local/Municipal Government Employees, AFSCME negotiates for wages, benefits, and working conditions on behalf of employees. AFSCME represents all the workers in a collective bargaining unit, whether they are a union member or not, to ensure that both the employer and the employees agreed upon contract is properly enforced. Most importantly, we work with the employee's state and local government agencies to create things such as labor-management committees in order to work collaboratively to find resolutions on the many issues impacting government operations. For example, short staffing in state government, cost savings work projects in cities and counties. During the pandemic in some situation, we were able to voice our concerns regarding keeping our members safe, especially those essential workers who continued to keep Maryland running. Enacting right to work would undo gains won over the years in Maryland for workers.

For these reasons we urge the committee to vote UNFAVORABLY on HB 494.



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Kenya Campbell
PRESIDENT

LaBrina Hopkins
SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Written Testimony submitted to
The Maryland House Economic Matters Committee
HB 494 – Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work
March 14, 2023**

OPPOSE

Chair Wilson and members of the House Economic Matters Committee. On behalf of the American Federation of Teachers - Maryland (AFT-Maryland), which represents more than 20,000 educators, government, and healthcare workers across Maryland, I urge you to oppose HB 494 – bill, that is nothing less than an attack on America’s middle class.

The goal of this bill is to weaken the collective bargaining rights of Maryland’s workers. By doing so, it will work to eliminate the strong middle class in our state. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), workers in right to work states earn an average of \$6,000 less per year and are also less likely to be offered health insurance and retirement security.

Evidence shows, public health is better overall in states without right to work laws. The United Health Foundation (UHF), which publishes America’s Health Rankings, reports that in 2016, eight of the top ten healthiest states were free from this law, while nine of the ten unhealthiest states were right to work.

Furthermore, the BLS reports the rate of fatalities in the workplace is 54 percent higher in right to work states.

An important issue to Maryland, as we work to reform the education system in our state – funding for public schools is \$3,300 less per student in right to work states. This drives away good teachers and staff, making right to work states most of the lowest performing in the nation.

The right to work law is not just - right to work for less money and benefits, it also means less safety, less health care, and less money for education in our state.

I urge you to oppose HB 494. Thank you.



Testimony in Opposition of HB 494
Labor and Employment – Private-Sector Employers – Right to Work
House Economic Matters Committee
February 14, 2023

TO: Hon. C. T. Wilson, Chair; Hon. Brian M. Crosby, Vice Chair and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Carol Rosenblatt, President, MD/DC Alliance for Retired Americans

We seek your opposition of HB 494. The MD/DC Alliance for Retired Americans is a grassroots advocacy organization with more than 96,000 members. It is part of the Alliance for Retired Americans, which was founded in 2001 by the AFL -CIO and has 4.4 million members nationwide. Our members come from all walks of life and are united in the belief that everyone deserves a secure retirement after a lifetime of hard work. The MD/DC Alliance works closely with the labor movement and other grassroots organizations to build a more just and secure future for all Americans. We have retired members in our chapter from a large number of unions and allied organizations including the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; the United Auto Workers; the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; the Communications Workers of America; Service Employees International Union; International Brotherhood of Teamsters and National Active and Retired Federal Employees to name a sampling.

I am currently a retired member from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, but have also been a member of Service Employees International Union and Communications Workers of America and am proud that during my employment I gladly paid union dues and had the protection and received benefits of collective bargaining agreements including negotiated provisions regarding my retirement.

According the AFL-CIO website “Right to work” is the name for a policy designed to take away rights from working people. Backers of right to work laws claim that these laws protect workers against being forced to join a union. The reality is that federal law already makes it illegal to force someone to join a union.

The real purpose of right to work laws is to tilt the balance toward big corporations and further rig the system at the expense of working families. These laws make it harder for working people to form unions and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions.”

According to a study by the Economic Policy Institute, workers' wages in right-to-work states are 3.1 percent lower than in non-right-to-work states, after adjusting for differences in the cost of living with a worker's wages, on average, \$1,600 lower per year.

In a Nov. 19, 2022 opinion piece in the Detroit Free Press Steven Greenhouse found that, "Proponents of right-to-work tell workers that they can save, say, \$700 a year by opting out of paying any dues, enabling them to receive all the benefits of being in a union without paying for it. One study found that the portion of workers who opt out of paying union dues or fees ranges from 9 percent to 39 percent. When that many workers stop paying union dues, it undercuts the power of unions.... But the truth is that union members earn 10.2 percent more than comparable non-union workers, while Black union members earn 13.1 percent more on average than non-union Black workers. Unions also help narrow the gender wage gap. Non-union women workers earn, on average, 78 percent of what men earn, while unionized women workers earn 94 percent of what men earn. Although Republican lawmakers won't admit this, another reason they like right-to-work laws is that these laws help to reduce organized labor's voice in politics, and that in turn hurts Democrats. Three political scientists who did an extensive study on these laws found that "when right-to-work laws are in place, Democrats up and down the ballot do worse."

For all the reasons listed above the MD/DC Alliance for Retired Americans strongly opposes HB 494 and urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689



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Statement of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 HB 494 - Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work February 14th, 2023

TO: The Honorable C.T. Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Brian Wivell, Political & Communications Director, ATU Local 689

At the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689 we represent over 15,000 workers and retirees performing many skilled transportation crafts for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), MetroAccess, DASH, and DC Streetcar among others. Our union helped turn low-wage, exploitative transit jobs into transit careers and an engine for the middle-class of this region. So called “right to work” proposals are an attack on the power of working people and unions. It’s that simple. Proponents of these laws like to claim that they’re protecting the freedom of workers, but their true intentions are to weaken the power of workers to bargain collectively.

It's helpful to understand the racist history of “right to work” proposals and their original intention to divide working people. Right to work laws first popped up in the Jim Crow south as a way to undermine industrial organizing efforts that united working people into multiracial unions. Big businesses realized that they could undermine the unions by preying on the racism of white workers. Vance Muse, one of the main organizers behind the promotion of Right to Work laws in the ‘40s, distributed literature saying, “white women and white men will be forced into organizations [labor unions] with black African apes whom they will have to call ‘brother’ or lose their jobs.” There is no escaping this history.

We also know firsthand that “Right to Work” isn’t understood by workers as being about their freedom, but about a state being anti-union and opposing their organizing efforts. One of the first things we hear in Virginia when we organize workers is “But this is a right to work state? How can we have a union?” When the police kicked us off the premises at Cinder Bed Bus Garage when we were organizing workers in 2018, they said “This is Virginia, this is a Right to Work state.” Both of these comments are nonsensical. Right to work laws have nothing to do with any of those aspects of labor relations. But Right to Work laws are ultimately a signal to the working people of that area whether or not they live in an “anti-union” state. By passing a right to work law, you are telling the working people of your state that the government disapproves of any attempt that you make to work together to improve your conditions.

We encourage all committee members to stand against this anti-union bill.



Amalgamated Transit Union
LOCAL 1300

126 WEST 25TH STREET • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21218

Affiliated with AFL-CIO-CLC

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Testimony NOT in Support of House Bill 404

Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work
Economic Matters Committee
February 14, 2023

To: Honorable C.T. Wilson Chair, and Members of the Economic Matters
Committee

I am Michael McMillan President/Business Agent For Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300. I do not support HB 494 Labor and Employment-Private-Sector Employers- Right to Work. Contract negotiations by Unions for better wages, healthcare, paid vacations, sick pay, and safe working conditions is what attracts a person to be employed and stay employed. These are negotiated benefits provided for every employee. No one will say give me the job and keep the benefits because I'm not paying my fare share and frankly that shouldn't be a choice. The success of building a better Maryland will be on the backs of Organized Labor. Insuring that employees are getting the needed benefits for the work they do. The small amount for dues to be a member of a Labor Organization that uplifts so many is a must and not a choice. I am not in support of HB 494 and I ask that the Economic Matters Committee Vote Against it.



To Whom it May Concern:

My name is John Ertl and I am the Trustee of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1764, the Union which represents over 750 Maryland transit employees in MTA Mobility, Anne Arundel County, and the BWI Airport. I am writing to express our opposition to the proposed Right to Work legislation.

First and foremost, the term “Right to Work” is misleading. Right to Work grants no rights to anybody, certainly not the right to a job as the name might suggest. What it does is actually take away rights. Specifically, it takes away the freedom for workers and companies to agree to a Union Shop provision in a collective bargaining agreement. Keep in mind that these Union Security agreements are not automatic. They must be negotiated over and agreed to by both Labor and Management, and then subsequently voted on by the members of a union before they can go into effect. There is no problem with the way this system works now. If workers don’t want a union security clause, they don’t vote for it and that’s that. If companies or unions don’t want it, they don’t agree to them at the bargaining table. This law is, in this sense, a solution in search of a problem. Moreover, it is a naked power grab by the Right Wing to try and defund the labor movement and destroy working families’ ability to advocate for their interests on the job.

Right to Work has a sordid history. Right to Work legislation was originally pushed nationally by Vance Muse, a white supremacist who railed against racial integration and unions. Muse understood that unions are a force for uniting workers along racial lines, and so he despised unions and wanted to do everything he could to tear them down. In his words, Right to Work was important because otherwise “white workers would be forced to call Black African apes ‘brother’ or lose their job.” Accordingly, Right to Work became a central platform of the Jim Crow legal regime, because racists recognized their ability to help deny black workers the ability to advocate for themselves, keeping their wages low and working conditions worse, and thus keeping them subjugated. Hitching our wagon to such a terrible person’s legacy and policy would be a terrible thing to do.

Right to Work laws have been shown to lower wages for both union and non-union workers. In states with these laws, workers earn an average of \$6,109 less per year than those in states without them. This is because unions are often the only means by which workers can negotiate for higher wages and better benefits, and Right to Work laws weaken their bargaining power.

In addition to lowering wages, Right to Work laws also make it more difficult for workers to form and maintain unions. This is because these laws can sap unions of their resources and draw their attention and manpower away from organizing new workers. This has a deleterious effect on inequality and takes away from working class individuals the ability to support a family on one job.

Furthermore, Right to Work laws have been widely shown to have negative impacts on workplace safety. In states with these laws, workers are more likely to be injured on the job and are less likely to have access to the protections and benefits that unions provide. Many studies, such as those done by the Economic Policy Institute, demonstrate these facts.

In conclusion, the proposed Right to Work legislation is bad for workers, bad for families, and bad for our state as a whole. ATU Local 1764 strongly urges the legislature to reject this harmful and misguided policy, and instead work to strengthen the rights of workers and their ability to negotiate for better wages and working conditions.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Ertl
Collective Bargaining Administrator
Amalgamated Transit Union
10000 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20903
Mobile: (202) 826-4845



METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE COUNCIL AFL-CIO Unions

HB 494 - Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers – Right to Work
Economic Matters Committee
February 14, 2023

OPPOSE

To: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair & members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Courtney L. Jenkins, President, Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on *HB 494-Labor and Employment- Private-Sector Employers- Right to Work*. My name is Courtney Jenkins, President of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO--our central labor council coalition represents over 100 affiliated local unions and close to 80,000 proud union members in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, and Howard counties, and Baltimore City. On behalf of the Council, I write in **strong opposition** to HB 494, *Labor and Employment-Private-Sector Employers- Right to Work*.

Right to work legislation would do nothing to uplift working families in Maryland. In fact, the term “Right to Work” is a misnomer and does the exact opposite--its intent is to make it more difficult for working people to generate the resources it takes to collectively bargain in their workplace.

In states with right to work law, studies show that wages and other benefits are much weaker than in states such as Maryland, where right to work law does not exist. On average, wages in right to work states is 3.1% less than in non-right to work states. Where these disparities exist, the impacts are felt even greater across race and gender.

Legislation such as HB 494 is used as a tool and part of a larger effort to weaken organized labor and the collective bargaining power of workers. In a time where the public has shown a 70% approval rating for labor unions, this legislation does nothing to serve the public good or interests.

For the above reasons, we strongly urge an unfavorable report on HB 494.

Thank you,

Courtney L. Jenkins
President

opeiu2/afl-cio



February 14, 2023

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

HB 494 – 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 494.

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 494, 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 26, 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.

Numerous studies have documented the devastating impact of right-to-work laws on the levels of unionization and wages. For example, a 2022 study (NBER Working Paper 30098) found a difference of nearly 20 percent in the unionization rate between states with and without right-to-work laws. Right-to-work laws were also associated with 7.5 percent lower wages. The study also estimated that unionization appears to raise wages by approximately 40 percent.¹

¹ <https://www.nber.org/papers/w30098>

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 494 and urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report.



Maryland House of Delegates – Economic Matters Committee

Chair: C.T. Wilson

Vice Chair: Brian M. Crosby

House Bill 0494 – Labor and Employment - Private-Sector Employers - Right to Work

Position: Oppose

The Baltimore DC Metro Building Trades Council opposes HB 0494. Right to work is not right for Maryland. In 1947 Congress passed the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, generally known as the Taft–Hartley Act, with an over ride of President Harry S. Truman's veto. The act repealed some parts of the Wagner Act, including outlawing the closed shop. Section 14(b) of the Taft–Hartley Act also authorizes individual states (but not local governments, such as cities or counties) to outlaw the union shop and agency shop for employees working in their jurisdictions. Any state law that outlaws such arrangements is known as a right-to-work state. Mississippi adopted right to work in 1954. It was then and continues to be the poorest state in the country. U.S. census 2021 data shows Mississippi with a median income of \$49,111 with poverty at 19.4%. Maryland is the wealthiest state in the U.S. with a median income of \$91,431 and poverty at 9%. House Bill 0494 is anti union legislation with the sole purpose to place a financial burden on Labor organizations and lower the wages and benefits of working men and women by lowering the standard of living and increasing the poverty level in Maryland. Right to work states have lower wages and less employer provided health insurance and pensions resulting in a lower standard of living for all concerned.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MS,MD/BZA110220>

We urge the committee for an unfavorable report.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Jeffry Guido

(E) consultingbyjlg@gmail.com (C) 240-687-5195

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United Association

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Herbert Harris, Jr.
Chairman
State Representative

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION HB 494
Labor and Employment – Right to Work
February 10, 2023

Crew Bases

Pittsburg, PA

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Baltimore, MD

Washington, DC

Manassas, VA

Charlottesville, VA

Fredericksburg, VA

Richmond, VA

Raleigh, NC

Charlotte, NC

Florence, SC

TO: Honorable CT Wilson, Chairman
House of Delegates – Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Herbert Harris, Jr.
Chairman / State Representative
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen

We strongly encourage the Economic Matters Committee oppose HB 494: Labor and Employment – Right to Work.

HB 494 “Right to Work” (RTW) is an attempt to severely weaken or eliminate labor unions in Maryland and their ability to protect workers through collective bargaining. Proponents of RTW laws claim to be protecting workers against being forced to join a union. The fact is federal law makes it illegal and prohibits a worker from being forced to join a union.

Collective bargaining provides living wages, healthcare benefits, and retirement security that protect working families through good and tough times. Maryland should not limit its ability to attract skilled workers and develop a world-class future workforce by becoming a RTW states.

RTW undermines the ability of labor unions to meet the expenses incurred organizing, bargaining, and enforcing negotiated labor contracts. RTW encourages workers to opt out of membership dues, but the labor union must still represent those non-paying members. This means if an employer mistreats a worker not in the union. The union must represent the non-paying worker regardless of the time and cost of the union representation.

Most importantly, non-paying workers receive all the wage increases and benefits negotiated by the labor union but make NO contributions.

HB 494 also endangers safety and health standards protecting workers on the job. RTW laws weaken workers’ rights to implement and maintain safety and health

A Division of the Rail Conference – International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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

Finally, HB 494 would contribute to unprecedented economic erosion for working families in Maryland. All the future benefits from investments in education, training, and work-force development would be lost to the state for generations because of RTW.

Workers in RTW states make an average \$7,443 a year less than workers in other states. Statistically, workers in RTW states have the lowest economic indicators in the country. Maryland should not allow working families to be dragged to the bottom by RTW.

Again, I encourage you and members of the Economic Matters Committee oppose HB 494.



COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

LOCAL 2100

BOX F CHASE, MARYLAND 21027 • (410) 335-2100

Testimony in Opposition of HB 494

Right to Work

February 10, 2023

To: Honorable C.T. Wilson, Chair, and member of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Nick Riddle, President CWA Local 2100

Right to Work laws do not have anything to do with the right to a job. They do not create jobs. They do not boost the economy. They do strip Unions of their ability to work for the benefit of their members, the community and the state.

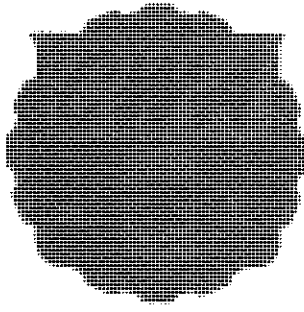
Job seekers have a choice when seeking employment. They are drawn to Union jobs for various reasons but mainly for the overall security they provide for themselves and their families. Security in wages, health care, safe working conditions and many others. Jobs with benefits like these have been fought for by Unions and their members contract after contract.

Unions are funded by dues paid by their members to allow for the collective bargaining and representation needed to maintain these securities that employers do not give freely out of their good nature and concern. Right to Work laws only aim is to weaken the Unions ability to operate. A strong Union not only benefits its members, it benefits everything it touches. Union members are community members. We pay taxes, we shop, we volunteer, we donate and we ultimately make our communities stronger. States that have chosen to adopt Right to Work laws have experienced lower wages and lower median household incomes; which ultimately lowers the economic strength of that state.

Right to Work benefits no one in the end. The working family suffers. The community suffers. The state suffers. The members and officers of Communications Workers of America Local 2100 stand together in OPPOSITION to this bill.

Nick Riddle

President CWA Local 2100



CWA MARYLAND STATE COUNCIL
“EFFECTING CHANGE THROUGH POLITICAL ACTION”

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 494
Labor and Employment - Right to Work
February 14, 2023

To: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Shannon Opfer, President CWA Maryland State Council, President CWA Local 2107

Chair Wilson and members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

Right to Work is Wrong for Maryland! Right to Work laws have nothing to do with a person’s right to work and everything to do with destroying people’s ability to organize and undermining a Union’s bargaining power. Research shows Right to Work laws have no positive impact on job growth.

On average, wages in Right to Work states are 12% lower than wages in states without Right to Work laws. Obviously this lowers the Median household income. Less money in households in a state means less money being spent in that state.

Right to Work states tend to have lower rates of health insurance coverage as well, which can lead to the state being responsible for more families with no health insurance. Right to Work states have a 36% higher than average number of discrimination charges filed with the EEOC.

Right to work is really saying you have the right to work for less. Please stand with Labor and stand against Right to Work. We, the members and officers of the Communications Workers of America stand in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to this bill.


Shannon J Opfer

President CWA Maryland State Council
President CWA Local 2107

Communications
Workers of America
AFL-CIO, CLC
District 2-13

9602 D Martin Luther King Jr. Hwy.
Lanham, MD 20706
Phone: 301-429-2500
Fax: 301-429-2501



February 9, 2023

TO: C.T. WILSON, CHAIR ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

RE: OPPOSITION TO HB 494 – RIGHT TO WORK

FROM: LISA M. FAZZINI, CWA STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

The Communications Workers of America (CWA) represent over 4,000 union members in Maryland. As the Staff Representative who provides support to the CWA Locals these members belong to, I am providing testimony in strong opposition to HB 494 – Labor and Employment – Right to Work.

It is ironic that the tagline coined for this legislation is Right to Work. Every citizen is afforded the basic “right to work.” Right to Work bills do not enhance a person’s ability to do that. It would be more transparent for those who push these types of bills to rename it a “Union Prevention” bill.

In Maryland, workers face a barrage of legislative attacks on their rights to form unions and bargain collectively, which include a yearly “right-to-work” legislative submission. This year it is HB 494. Right-to-work supporters falsely claim that right to work protects workers who don’t want to join a union or disagree with a union’s politics. **But federal labor law already protects workers who don’t want to join a union or make political contributions.**

Right to work’s true purpose is to hurt the ability of unions to advocate for all workers. This deceptively titled legislation drives down wages, benefits, and overall living standards for everyone. Research reveals that right-to-work does not create jobs or improve a state’s business climate. It is not only wrong for workers but wrong for the economy.

These laws drive down wages for all workers, including non-union members, women, and people of color. Workers living in right-to-work states earn about \$1,500 less per year than workers in states without these laws. The wage penalty is even higher for women and workers of color.
(www.epi.org/publication/bp299)

Communities lose jobs when wages are lowered by right to work. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that for every \$1 million in wage cuts, the local economy sheds six jobs. (www.epi.org/publication/working-hard-in-indiana-bad-tortured-uphill)

Right to work does not improve the employment rate. In fact, eight of the 12 states with the highest unemployment have right-to-work laws. (www.bls.gov/web/laus/laumstrk.htm). According to a report from Ohio University, **these laws actually led to a decrease in employment in certain industries.**

How does it affect wages? The average worker in a right to work state makes about \$5,333 a year less than workers in other states (\$35,500 compared with \$30,167). Weekly wages are \$72 greater in free-bargaining states than in right to work states (\$621 versus \$549).

How does it affect healthcare? 21 percent more people lack health insurance in right to work states compared to free-bargaining states.

How does it affect workplace incidents? According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of workplace deaths is 51 percent higher in states with right to work. States where unions can't speak up on behalf of workers.

There is ample evidence that Right to Work laws hurt all workers, union and nonunion, and our communities. The false claims that supporters give for right to work laws are an attempt to deceive people from the real reasons they want to pass these bills. Unions are not the "threat." Workers who choose to unionize are not the "threat." Right to Work is a well-funded centralized campaign to weaken unions, thereby weakening working people's leverage over their working conditions and ability to collectively negotiate for better wages and benefits.

We ask for an unfavorable report on HB 494.



Metro Washington Labor Council, AFL-CIO

815 Black Lives Matter Plaza NW • Washington, DC 20006 • 202-974-8150 • 202-974-8152 fax
An AFL-CIO “Union City”

14 February 2023

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Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building
Room 2
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Mister Chair and esteemed members of the Economic Matters Committee:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Labor Council, AFL-CIO (MWC), I write this letter in strong opposition to House Bill 494, 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

BALTIMORE LOCAL No.19

**International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists
and Allied Crafts of the United States and Canada, AFL-CIO-CLC**



February 8, 2023

**Michael Mixter
Business Agent
Union Steward
I.A.T.S.E. Local #19
P.O. Box 50098
Baltimore, MD 21211**

Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair
Members of the House Economic Matters Committee
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairperson Wilson and Committee Members:

I write to strongly oppose House Bill 494, which would make Maryland a "Right to Work" state.

I serve as the Business Agent of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local #19 in Baltimore, Maryland. It is my job to make sure that concerts, shows and events at the Baltimore Convention Center, Merriweather Post Pavilion, the Hippodrome Theater, and other venues throughout Maryland are staffed by professional, reliable and well-trained stagehands, who are covered by IATSE's collective bargaining agreement and are paid fair wages. House Bill 494 would undermine Local #19's ability to effectively serve its members.

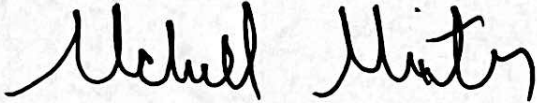
So-called "Right to Work" laws do not create the right to a job, nor do they prevent employees from being fired without cause. Proponents of Right to Work laws say that their intention is to protect workers from being forced to join a union, but the fact is that federal law already makes it illegal to force a worker to join a union. Instead, these laws confuse and divide workers, while forcing unions to work for free. Under Right to Work laws, unions are required to provide costly, time-consuming services to employees who refuse to pay for their share of the union's work.

The so-called Right to Work movement is funded and directed by corporations and billionaires, for the purpose of weakening unions, and by extension to weaken the leverage workers have to improve their wages and working conditions. Despite the effort to confuse the issue, workers understand that Right to Work laws are

anti-union laws that undermine collective bargaining. It is well established that Right to Work laws drive down wages for all workers, whether represented by a union or not, and that Right to Work states have lower average wages and higher rates of poverty, as compared to states that support collective bargaining.

For all of these reasons, IATSE Local #19 strongly opposes House Bill 494 and asks you to vote unfavorably on this bill.

Michael Mixer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Mixer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

**Business Agent
Union Steward
I.A.T.S.E. Local #19**

Mid Atlantic Studio Mechanics and Broadcast Technicians

I.A.T.S.E. Local 487

OFFICE LOCATION: 2301 Russell St., Baltimore, MD 21230

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 494
Labor and Employment - - Right to Work
February 14, 2023**



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

FROM: David O’Ferrall, Business Agent

STRONGLY OPPOSE

Paul Thomas
President

“Right to Work” laws in Maryland would only give employers the “right to pay less”! Unions fight for the rights of workers, not only to earn fair wages but also to be treated fairly. A “Right to Work” law would undermine those efforts and allow employers to exploit workers’ fears of reprisals and pay them less and treat them with less than the respect they deserve.

Justin Unger
*Vice President
Southern Region*

“Right to Work” does not guarantee jobs and it does nothing to protect jobs. “Right to Work” weakens every individual's opportunity to earn a living wage. The average worker—unionized or not—working in a right-to-work state earns approximately \$1,500 less per year than a similar worker in a state without such a law, according to a study by the Economic Policy Institute. The Economic Policy Institute report also comes to the conclusion that “ The wage penalty for non-unionized workers is 3.0%, and the benefit penalty is 2.8 percentage points and 5.3 percentage points for health and pension benefits, respectively. Our results suggest that proposals advance RTW laws likely come at the expense of workers’ wages and benefits, both within and outside of unions.”

Len Applefeld
*Vice President
Northern Region*

Ellen Popiel
Secretary/Treasurer

David M. O’Ferrall
Business Agent

This is about supporting the working men and women of Maryland who rely upon their jobs to support themselves and their families. Thousands of lives will be adversely affected should this bill move forward.

Local 487, I..A.T.S.E. respectfully requests that you vote **unfavorably** on House Bill 494.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

AFFILIATED WITH:

Baltimore-D.C. Metro Building Trades Council — AFL-CIO
Baltimore Port Council
Baltimore Metro Council — AFL-CIO
Central MD Labor Council — AFL-CIO
Del-Mar-Va Labor Council — AFL-CIO
Maryland State - D.C. — AFL-CIO
National Safety Council



BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

C. SAMUEL CURRERI, President
DAVID W. SPRINGHAM, JR., Recording Secretary
JEROME T. MILLER, Financial Secretary
MICHAEL J. McHALE, Business Manager

OFFICE:
2701 W. PATAPSCO AVE
SUITE 200

Phone: 410-247-5511
FAX: 410-536-4338

TESTIMONY IN Opposition OF HB 494

Labor and Employment - Private Sector Employees - Right to Work

February 10, 2023

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

FROM: Rico Albacarys, Assistant Business Agent IBEW Local 24

February 10, 2023

Chairman Wilson and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in **strong opposition** to HB 494.

My name is Rico Albacarys and I am a proud member and employee of IBEW Local 24 in Baltimore. As a dues-paying union member for over a decade, I have experienced the benefits of a good paying job that allows for a middle-class lifestyle. I am writing to express concerns about the proposed Right to Work legislation, HB 494. The purpose of Right to Work laws is clear: to weaken unions and take power away from working families. Statistics from Right to Work states shows lower wages, lower rates of health insurance, and higher rates of poverty.

This is not what Maryland deserves. The "Race to the Bottom" should not be encouraged, and I urge you to give an **unfavorable** recommendation to HB 494. By doing so, you will be supporting the hard-working families in our state who deserve fair wages and benefits.

Thank you,

Rico Albacarys

Assistant Business Manager



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

JOSEPH F. DABBS: Business Manager • THOMAS C. MYERS: President • RICHARD D. WILKINSON: Vice President
CHRISTOPHER M. CASH: Financial Secretary • RICHARD G. MURPHY: Recording Secretary • PAULO C. HENRIQUES: Treasurer



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 494 LABOR & EMPLOYMENT-PRIVATE SECTOR-RIGHT TO WORK February 14, 2023

TO: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Tom Clark, Political Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 26

Chairman Wilson and distinguished members of the Committee, I strongly ask you to **oppose HB 494**. This annual shot at the representation of the working people of Maryland has no place or time in the Maryland General Assembly. The fancy name given to this bill is false and misleading and only serves to take the voice away from the men and women that work hard and pay taxes in our state.

State Delegates and Union Representatives are very similar in scope. Delegates serve their constituents and Union Reps serve their members. We both are compensated for the work we do: Delegates are paid thru taxes and Union Reps are paid thru dues. HB 494 wants to remove the dues paying option. However, IBEW Local 26 does not require someone that takes a job from us to be a member. Below is a section of our contract that legally binds us to this practice:

Section 3.04 NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE. The Union shall select and refer applicants for employment without discrimination against such applicants by reason of membership or non-membership in the Union and such selection and referral shall not be affected in any way by rules, regulations, by-laws, constitutional provisions or any other aspect or obligation of Union membership policies or requirements.

I would ask any member of the General Assembly that supports Right to Work, to include a bill that says: Maryland Citizens need not pay taxes for the work that Maryland Senators and Delegates do to represent them. It is absurd, as is HB 494. The truth is membership and paying dues in Local 26 is much more than getting a job and family sustaining benefits. Our members get continued training (for free), scholarships for their children, clubs like soccer, bowling, softball, retired members club and motorcycle club. We have free first-class Christmas parties and family picnics. Dues are a small price to pay for this continued education and comradery.

I respectfully ask this committee to do their work for free and give Marylanders and option not to pay taxes before you ask Unions members not to pay dues. Until then I ask you to **oppose HB 494**. Thank you





International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

JOSEPH F. DABBS: Business Manager • THOMAS C. MYERS: President • RICHARD D. WILKINSON: Vice President
CHRISTOPHER M. CASH: Financial Secretary • RICHARD G. MURPHY: Recording Secretary • PAULO C. HENRIQUES: Treasurer





International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
JOSEPH F. DABBS: Business Manager • THOMAS C. MYERS: President • RICHARD D. WILKINSON: Vice President
CHRISTOPHER M. CASH: Financial Secretary • RICHARD G. MURPHY: Recording Secretary • PAULO C. HENRIQUES: Treasurer



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 494 LABOR & EMPLOYMENT RIGHT TO WORK FEBRUARY 14, 2023

To: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee
From: Joe Dabbs, Business Manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 26

Chairman Wilson and distinguished members of the Committee, I am asking you to oppose the anti-worker bill, **HB 494**. As a leader of over 5000 Maryland electricians, I implore you to vote against this legislation that will take away the rights of not only these 5000 constituents, but thousands more Marylanders. I urge you to stand up for the working men and women of our state and oppose this harmful legislation.

Any bill that uses the term “right to work” is an anti-employee bill in disguise. Seeking to take away representation of the sons and daughters of this proud state. This was the origin of “right to work” some 80 years ago when it was proposed by segregationist Vance Muse. Today, some legislators are seeking to divide and conquer through a bill specifically designed to separate workers and those that negotiate for them. If passed, such a bill will eat away at Marylanders pay, benefits and retirement. This point is proven by those current “right to work” states that are all on the bottom of the list when it comes to employee rights.

Today’s headlines are full with states trying to rescind these laws. I ask that you do not lead Maryland toward such a dark place, where our citizens work for dismal pay and minimal or no health benefits. As a fellow leader, I ask that you strive for what is best for the Maryland worker. Here at Local 26, we cultivate an atmosphere where our signatory contractors are extremely profitable and our members have decent wages, benefits and a pension that allows them to retire With peace of mind and dignity. I respectfully ask you to do the same: Make Maryland succeed for business and labor.

As a lifelong citizen of Maryland and leader of one of its largest labor unions, I ask you once again to **oppose HB 494**. I thank you for your continued support for those men and women that make Maryland a great place to live and work. Thank you





International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

A.F.L. – C.I.O. – C.F.L.

Local Union No. 307

401 Decatur Street - Cumberland, MD 21502

301-724-3403 Fax 301-724-2722



Rodney E. Rice – Business Manager

www.ibew307.org

George A. Koontz -

February 8, 2023

To; Economics Matters Committee

From: International Brothers of the Electrical Union Local 307

Subject; HB 494 Labor and Employment Private sector employers Right to work

Position: unfavorable

Dear, Honorable Chair Brian M. Crosby

I am the Business Manager of the IBEW 307. The IBEW is in strong opposition of HB 494 the dues of a union worker are the same as the dues from any other organization such as the Chamber of Commerce, political organizations, Maryland State Farm Bureau, just to name a few that charge a fee to be a member of in order to have the privilege of certain benefits. Labor unions are no different for their members. It is a proven fact that right to work states have more poverty, Bankruptcies less pay and poor health care do to the right to work provisions that hamper the power of a Collective Bargained Agreement.

The local IBEW 307 ask for a unfavorable vote for HB 494 thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Rodney Rice
IBEW L.U. 307
Business Manager



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

LOCAL 37

AFFILIATED WITH THE AFL-CIO
Chartered May 1, 1900

February 8, 2023

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

Mark F. McQuay
*President and Business
Representative*

Thomas M. Boschi
Vice President

Michael B. Funk
*Recording Secretary
and Training Director*

Daniel S. Humbertson
*Treasurer and Business
Representative*

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.
Phillip E. Grothe
Michael V. McKew
Robert J. Pucci
Thomas I. Judge

Trustees

Vasilis Peros
Stephen
VanBoeschoten
Thomas W. Costanzi

Auditors

Walter L. Wagner
Bruce J. Clark
Raymond Keil

Conductor

Michael C. Wines

Guard

Jason R. Lewis

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

Strong Opposition to HB 494

Labor and Employment-Private-Sector Employers- Right to Work

February 14th, 2023

From: Robert A. Holsey Jr., Business Manager

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

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 494.

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.

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.

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

Best regards,

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



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PAINTERS AND ALLIED TRADES, AFL-CIO DISTRICT COUNCIL NO. 51

February 8, 2023

District Council No. 51
4700 Boston Way
Lanham, MD 20706
(301) 918-0182
(301) 918-3177 Fax

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

ONE VOICE

Dear Honorable Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

Representing:
Protective and Decorative
Coatings Applicators
Painters
Decorators
Wall Coverers
Drywall Finishers
Glaziers
Architectural Metal Workers
Glass Workers
Civil Service Workers
Shipyard Workers
Maintenance Workers
Metal Polishers
Metalizers
Bridge Painters
Riggers
Tank Painters
Marine Painters
Containment Workers
Lead Abatement Workers
Sand Blasters
Water Blasters
Sign Painters
Paint Makers

I am Roxana Mejia Director of Government and Community Affairs at the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 51 covering the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia jurisdictions. I represent over 1,500 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 494 Labor and Employment- Private-Sector Employers- Right to Work.

I write to you today to urge you to vote against HB 494. 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.

ONE AGENDA

Please vote unfavorable on HB 494.

Affiliated Local Unions
Local Union 1
Local Union 368
Local Union 474
Local Union 890
Local Union 963
Local Union 1100
Local Union 1846
Local Union 1937
Local Union 1997

Thank you


Roxana Mejia
Director of Government & Community Affairs
IUPAT DC 51

Over 100 Years Serving
Maryland
Virginia
Washington, DC



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.

OPPOSE HB 494 – Labor and Employment – Private Sector Employers - 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 494**.

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 494**.

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



Workers United.
MID-ATLANTIC
REGIONAL JOINT BOARD

PATRICK JONES SR.
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
PJAYSR@MARJB.ORG
TEL (410) 659-2191
FAX (410) 659-1790

5735 INDUSTRY LANE, BLDG C, STE 101, FREDERICK, MD 21704

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 494
Right to Work
February 14, 2023

TO: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee
FROM: Patrick Jones Sr., Regional Director

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Joint Board strongly opposes House Bill 494 – Right to Work. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Joint Board of Workers United represents thousands of workers in Maryland and across eight states, including the “right to work” states of Virginia and West Virginia. Our members work in laundry, food service, auto parts and auto supply, hospitality, gaming, food service, bag and packaging, apparel, textile, manufacturing and distribution, retail and related industries. We have seen how right to work laws impact working families and their communities.

House Bill 494 seeks to eliminate collective bargaining protections for workers, including educators and police officers by repealing provisions of State law that authorize an employer to negotiate or collect dues, contributions, or service fees from employees for representation by a labor organization. In effect, this bill would make it illegal for a group of unionized workers to negotiate a contract that requires each employee who enjoys the benefit of the contract to pay his or her share of the costs of negotiating and overseeing it. Further, this bill seeks to pre-empt local ordinances that authorize municipal and county governments to negotiate with their workers.

Proponents of this law falsely claim that it will ensure that no one is forced to be a member of a union or pay to advocate political causes they do not support. *But those things are already illegal under federal law.* Under federal law, unions are required to represent every employee covered by a union contract, even those who aren’t members. If a non-dues-paying employee has a problem at work, the union is required to represent them—including providing an attorney at no charge if one is needed—in exactly the same way it would represent a dues-paying member. Providing the same range of benefits to dues-paying members and nonmembers who don’t pay fees starves the union and diminishes the ability of unions to negotiate higher wages and benefits for workers.

Supporters have also promoted it as a strategy for attracting new business to Maryland and allowing existing businesses to grow, however our first-hand experience as well as evidence from the states that have enacted similar right-to-work laws shows that the actual impact on the economy is just the opposite. A 2015 study by the Economic Policy Institute shows that RTW laws like HB 494 do not have any positive impact on job growth. ⁱ

Statistics show states that have enacted RTW have seen a greater than 3% drop in wages at nearly every level and across all sectorsⁱⁱ. Additionally, the 12 of the fifteen states that have passed “right to work” laws, have the greatest wage gap between men and womenⁱⁱⁱ. By contrast, Maryland has one of the smallest wage gaps in the nation, thanks in part to strong support for collective bargaining and strong laws passed by the General Assembly.

By hamstringing workers’ ability to bargain collectively, to share the costs of legal representation, or pool their money for legislative remedies to unaddressed grievances, RTW laws weaken workplace protections, and decrease the likelihood that employers will be required to negotiate with their employees. States with laws like those proposed by HB 494 have 36% more EEOC claims than states that allow collective bargaining.^{iv} OSHA statistics show that these states also have significantly higher rates of reported injuries and deaths on the job.

Our state is a state that is moving in the right direction, as is evidenced by our top-rated schools, highly rated quality of life, best-trained workforce and strong protections for workers' rights. HB 494 is a threat to the policies the Maryland General Assembly has passed by overwhelming majorities to keep Maryland moving forward.

We urge you to render an UNFAVORABLE Report on HB 494.

ⁱ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (BLS-CPS), 2017. Public data series aggregated from basic monthly CPS microdata.

ⁱⁱ Elise Gould and Will Kimball, “*Right-to-Work*” States Still Have Lower Wages, Economic Policy Institute, April 2015.

ⁱⁱⁱ Valerie Wilson and Julia Wolfe, *Black Workers in Right-to-Work (RTW) States Tend to Have Lower Wages Than in Missouri and Other Non-RTW States*, Economic Policy Institute, May 2018.

^{iv} US Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, FY 2009 - 2019 EEOC Charge Receipts by State. https://www1.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/charges_by_state.cfm#centercol



**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB494
Labor and Employment - Right to Work
March 8, 2022**

**TO: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and Members of the House Economic Matters
Committee**
**FROM: Patricia M. O'Donnell, SAG-AFTRA Washington-Mid Atlantic Local
Executive Director**
DATE: February 10, 2023

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 HB494, the “Right to Work” bill that is set for hearing in your Committee on February 10, 2023.

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 HB494.

We strongly urge you to stand with our members in opposition of HB494 by voting unfavorably on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. O'Donnell

PO:RBH

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

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 14, 2023

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-494

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-494**, "*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 due's 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-494 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-494, 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-494!

Sincerely



Lawrence E. Kasecamp

MD State Legislative Director

 SMART Transportation Division



**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

February 8, 2022

We strongly oppose Right to work legislation (HB 494) 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 HB494, as we do, for the betterment of the State of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Thomas Killeen
Legislative Director
SMART Local Union 100



**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 Kumar Barve and Committee Members
House Committee on Environment and Transportation

February 8, 2023

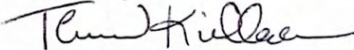
**We strongly support HB 352 for the following reasons and feel the state of
Maryland and its residents would be safer with this bill becoming law.**

- A single person on a train is a recipe for disaster, if the engineer were to become sick, have a heart attack or stroke there would be no one else present to operate the train.
- Without a second crew member to assist the train engineer, an endless number of distractions would create a number of safety issue that the engineer alone may not be able to overcome.
- Backing up a train is impossible with a single person and if an emergency would occur there's no way to do so.
- Without a second crew member on the train valuable mentoring time would be lost therefore creating a safety risk.
- Since the engineer is not allowed to leave the train at any time, per Federal regulation, it would be impossible for the engineer to secure the train, via setting hand brakes on each car if an emergency would occur.
- Since the engineer is not allowed to leave the train at any time, it would be impossible to patrol the entire train looking for suspicious activity as required by National security since 9-11.
- Train crews are on duty all hours of the day and night for up to 12 hours at a time and often multiple miles from a spot to take a break or get a cup of coffee if they find themselves getting sleepy, causing an unsafe situation.
- If an accident would occur at a grade crossing with motor vehicle the engineer would not be able to leave the train to inspect and assess the situation or to call for help if needed.

- If a tanker car, while carrying hazardous materials, were to spring a leak or become inoperable due to some unforeseen issue the engineer would not be able to leave the train to inspect and assess the situation or to call for help if needed.

In order to keep Marylanders safe we ask for a favorable vote on HB 352 for the betterment of the State of Maryland.

Sincerely,



**Thomas Killeen
Bus. Rep/Legislative Director
SMART Local Union 100**



PLUMBERS AND STEAMFITTERS
UA LOCAL UNION 486
8100 Sandpiper Circle, Suite 200
Baltimore, Maryland 21236
Phone: 410-866-4380
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Founded 1889

Maryland House- Economic Matters
Chair: Delegate C.T. Wilson
Vice Chair: Brian M. Crosby

Pasquale D. Petrovia
Business Manager
Gerald W. Jackson
Assistant Business Manager
Gary G. Glab
Financial Secretary/Treasurer
C. Ryan Ambrose
Business Agent
Harry M. Schleicher Jr.
Business Agent
Stephen M. Nitsch
Business Agent
Todd E. Eckley
Recruiter

House Bill 494

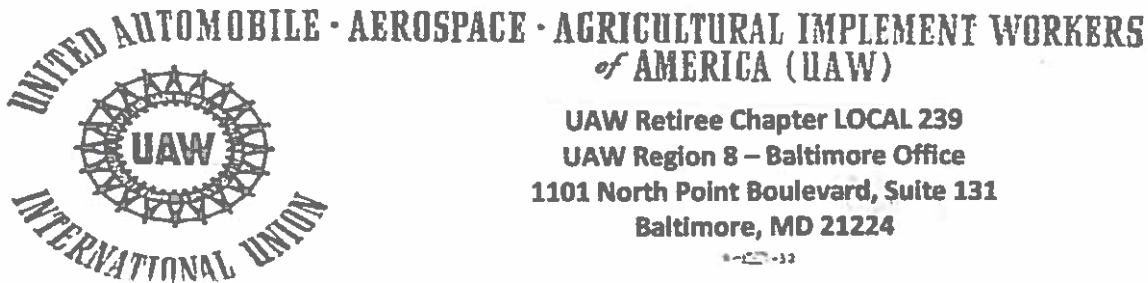
Why were "right to work" laws originally adopted?

The Depression years of the 1930s saw a dramatic upsurge in union organizing, formalized by the passage of the **National Labor Relations Act in 1935**. Threatened by workers' mobilizations, an industry lobbyist named **Vance Muse** promoted the term "right to work" in 1936 to describe restrictions on union activity. An associate of the Ku Klux Klan, Muse saw unionization not only as a threat to employers' high rate of profitability but also to the white supremacist order of the Jim Crow South. As labor organizers sought to bring working people together across racial lines, Muse warned that without "right to work" legislation to impede union organizing, "white women and white men will be forced into organizations with black African apes whom they will have to call 'brother' or lose their jobs. Preying on the ugliest racial enmity, Muse's organization advanced "right to work" aggressively in the segregated South, with Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia among the first states to adopt the anti-worker laws. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. saw the same connection between "right to work" laws and the denial of racial equity continuing to operate in the 1960s. In a successful 1964 campaign against a "right to work" ballot initiative in Oklahoma, he wrote, "In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as "right to work" It provides no rights and no work." It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. It is supported by Southern segregationists who are trying to keep us from achieving our Civil Rights and our right of equal job opportunity... wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer, and there are no Civil Rights. I think that any Bills' whose origins are steeped in Racial Hatred and Segregation has no place in the legislative process of the Maryland General Assembly.

P.S. I am in no way suggesting that the sponsors of this bill are congruent with the ideology of the degenerate political operative **Vance Muse**.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gerald W. Jackson – Assistant Business Manager Plumbers & Steamfitter's UA Local Union No. 486
Secretary- Treasurer, Maryland State & D.C. AFL-CIO



UAW REGION 8 MARYLAND STATE COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS (CAP)

**Testimony in Opposition to HB 494
Right to Work
February 14th, 2023**

**To: The Honorable Chair and members of the
House Economic Matters Committee**

**From: Frederick V. Swanner, Chairman
UAW Local 239 Active & Retiree Council**

Re: HB 494 Right to Work

I am writing the Chair and all members of the House Economic Matters Committee to urge you to oppose the so called “Right-to-Work” HB 494, whereas it is a deceptive, outdated policy that will not help working people and will not prepare the state of Maryland for the economic challenges of the 21st century. This law does not create new employee rights and will not help anyone find a job. Instead of helping working families, Right-to-Work laws cut wages and make our workplaces less safe.

Our elected legislators should focus on fixing the problems that prevent businesses from coming here, like high-energy costs and not enough workers with the right skills. Right-to-Work will not do that.

In closing I would like to state that my friends, family members, co-workers, and neighbors are hardworking just like you and me and I believe that we need more good-paying jobs in every part of the state; but passing a Right-to-Work law will not make that happen. It will force more of our skilled workers to leave Maryland to find better jobs with higher wages. So, I urge this committee to oppose the so-called Right-to-Work HB 494. Thank You

Kind Regards,



Frederick V. Swanner, Chairman
UAW Local 239 Active & Retiree Council



UAW Retiree Chapter LOCAL 239
UAW Region 8 -- Baltimore Office
1101 North Point Boulevard, Suite 131
Baltimore, MD 21224

UAW-12

UAW REGION 8 MARYLAND STATE COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS (CAP)

Testimony in Support to HB 352 Railroad Company-Movement of Freight-Required Crew

February 14, 2023

**To: The Honorable Chair and members of the
Environment and Transportation Committee**
**From: Frederick V. Swanner, Chairman
UAW Local 239 Active & Retiree Council**
Re: HB 352 Railroad Company-Movement of Freight-Required Crew

I am writing the Chair and all members of the Environment and Transportation Committee to urge you to support HB 352. It is a major safety item of concern; HB 352 is designed to take care of the railroad workers and or pedestrians by communicating at all times by radio issues in and around the Train. Examples of why there should be a two-person crew on trains; the engineer is not allowed to leave the engine compartment for any reason other than maybe his/her safety. One reason of many is if one of the two crew members has a heart attack, slips and falls or is rendered unconscious for whatever reason who would know except his co-worker, to take control of the train. All workplaces need to be as safe as humanly possible.

In closing I would like to state that in all our General Motors, Ford and Chrysler plants around the country we have a Buddy System (two-member crew) whereas no one works in confined space or unpopulated work areas by themselves for safety reasons. So, I urge this committee to support HB 352. Worker's and Pedestrian's safety should be top priority and should not be traded for a company's bottom line. The communities of my members and family that live in neighborhoods these trains travel through thank you for their safety as well.

Kind Regards,

**Frederick V. Swanner, Chairman UAW
Local 239 Active & Retiree Council**



WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 494

Labor and Employment – Right to Work

February 10, 2023
House Ways and Means

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

FR: Nelson Hill
VP & Executive Assistant to the President, United Food & Commercial Workers Local 27
21 West Road, Suite 200
Towson, MD 21204

Chair Wilson, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of the 18,000 working men and women represented by United Food & Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 27, I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 494.

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 494 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 494 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 workers' 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 494.

In Solidarity,

Nelson Hill



UFCW Local 27

VP & Executive Assistant to the President

HB 494 - Labor and Employment - Private Sector Workers - Right to Work
OPPOSITION
February 10, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

From: Kayla Mock, Political & Legislative Director,
United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 400

Dear Chair Wilson and the members of the Economic Matters Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to share my testimony on behalf of our over 10,000 members in Maryland, who have worked the frontlines 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.

We oppose HB 494, the Right to Work proposal for private sector employees.

Union members are critical when addressing inequality, and essential to uplifting the middle class. The passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 introduced 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 the RTW policy, many segregationists pushed these policies so that white workers did not belong to the same organizations as black workers.

Right to work simply means that employees of a unionized shop are not required to join the union. This, however, weakens the workers' ability to collectively bargain. Unions are still obligated, under law, to represent and bargain for nonunion workers, causing resources and bargaining power miniscule. Often, this creates tension amongst employees because some are paying membership fees while others are not, while all are benefiting.

Collective bargaining power comes from workers convening to bargain with employers over wages, benefits, and safety. Union members set the standards, addressed inequality, and maintained the middle class for all workers. With weakened collective bargaining, wages are decreased, and inequality goes unchecked. Of the twenty-one states lingering at minimum wage, nineteen have RTW laws; The average workers within these states 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 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 amid facing a dying coal industry, dwindling jobs, and a crumbling infrastructure, passed RTW legislation, branding it as assistance the state would need to get their economy flourishing, and open doors for potential 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 the 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 tactic 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 the standard of living for workers. Right to work is unwarranted for Maryland and Maryland workers.

For these reasons, on behalf of our members and all Marylanders, **we urge an unfavorable report on HB 494.**



Gino Renne, President
Lisa Blackwell-Brown, Secretary-Treasurer
Lisa Titus, Recorder

UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO
600 S. Frederick Avenue, Suite 200
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877
Office (301) 977-2447 • Fax (301) 977-6752

Testimony on House Bill 494 – Labor and Employment – Private-Sector Employers – Right to Work

Good afternoon. My name is Amy Millar, special assistant to the president of UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO. UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO stands in **strong opposition** to HB 424, a so-called “right-to-work” law.

Once again, this bill is rearing its ugly head straight from the American Legislative Exchange Council’s (ALEC) playbook. In fact, its text has been mostly lifted from ALEC’s model legislation.

“Right to work” provides no rights and no work.

A briefing paper published by Economic Policy Institute showed that workplaces with strong unions enjoy better wages, benefits, and bargaining power than their non-union alternatives. In fact, the relative power of a union produces statistically significant benefits for working conditions and worker satisfaction, according to the report.

If passed, this bill would lower the pay and benefits of workers everywhere and drop everyone in the state of Maryland to a lower living standard. Studies by the EPI, the AFL-CIO, and other organizations have shown that Right-to-Work laws generally lead to lower worker wages, less safe working conditions, and reduced employment growth.

In addition, this law, which would allow workers in union shops to opt out of paying union dues, would be an illegal taking of union and union members’ property, since federal labor law requires unions to represent all employees covered by collective bargaining agreements, whether they pay dues or not.

Proponents of RTW often speak of workers being “forced” to join a union as a condition of employment. Union membership is voluntary; it is against federal law to force an employee to join a union as a condition of employment. A union member has the freedom to resign his or her membership at any time.

Unions are member organizations, like private clubs, member social organizations, and even the Chamber of Commerce. Elected officers and an elected Executive Board comprised of rank-and-file members govern my local union and most others.

No state that has passed “right-to-work” has been able to effectively prove that it has attracted jobs and businesses.

UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO represents 8,000 workers in the state of Maryland and we urge you to vote **against** HB 494.

Vice Presidents:

Melba Chavarria • Thomas Coulter • Joseph Dickson • Audra Dugue • Cassandra Harper
Paulette Kee-Dudley • Louis Rosen • James Rowe • Kevin Smith • John Smoak • Michael Trigiani • Gilberto Zelaya



District 8

Larry R. Ray
District Director
Brian P. Wedge
Assistant to the Director

February 9, 2023

Delegate C. T. Wilson
Chair Economic Matter Committee
Maryland House of Delegates

Dear Chairman Wilson,

I am writing today to request the House of Delegates Economics Matter Committee oppose H.B. 494, that would enact right to work in the Commonwealth of Maryland. District 8 includes workers, retirees, and their family members from a wide variety of industries performing jobs in manufacturing, packaging, and newspapers.

Right to work laws can negatively impact union membership numbers, impacting their right to collectively bargain effectively. This also unfairly shifts the burden of paying for collective bargaining to the dues paying members. The non-members are still entitled to all the rights and benefits of Union membership with none of the burden. No other associations are required to provide services to non-members.

Wages and benefits are generally lower in right to work states. According to a 2011 study by the Economic Policy Institute wages in right to work states are lower. States with right to work have lower percentages of workers included in employer provided healthcare plans. Pension participation is 5% lower as well.

Workplaces covered under collective bargaining agreements are also far safer than those not covered by bargaining. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that injuries occur 50% more in states with right to work. One of the chief functions of a Union is to bargain rules that ensure a safe work place.

The citizens of Maryland should be able to continue to rely on strong unions to fight for their rights in the workplace. Please oppose H.B. 494 and keep the right to work for less out of Maryland.

Submitted on behalf of United Steelworkers District 8 Director Larry R. Ray



WESTERN MARYLAND CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

152-154 N. Mechanic Street, Cumberland, MD 21502
PHONE: 301-777-1820 FAX: 301-777-0121
EMAIL: westmdclc@verizon.net

February 14, 2023

President
GEORGE KOONTZ

House Economic Matters Committee

Vice President
LARRY KASECAMP

RE: OPPOSE HB-494

Secretary - Treasurer
IAN REIKIE

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee I want to thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **opposition to HB-494**, the "*Labor and Employment – Labor Organizations – Right to Work Act.*"

Executive Board
RODNEY RICE
SCOTT UPOLE
COLIN BOLLINGER

My name is George Koontz, and I am President of the Western Maryland Central Labor Council of the Maryland State & D.C. AFL-CIO. Our jurisdiction is Allegany and Garrett counties in Western Maryland.

Cope Director

Our affiliates members work in all areas of employment and are represented by dozens of different labor organizations.

The ability for a labor organization to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement with employers that requires membership in the union, or at a minimum, service fees for the services performed on behalf of each employee is paramount to providing proper representation of their members. When this ability is preempted by passage of laws such as the law contained in HB-494 it allows employees to receive a free ride of representation and it places the labor organization at a distinct disadvantage.

Every survey shows that in states where these laws are in place the wages and benefits are demonstrably less. The effect of the laws is a downward pressure on wages due to the diminished resources of the unions.

The very purpose of this legislation is to weaken unions, who the sponsors view as restraints to business profits. They believe unions offer very limited support for their legislative agenda that favors profits over employees.

On behalf of the Western Maryland Central Labor Council and all our affiliates we urge your committee to give an unfavorable report to HB-494.



WESTERN MARYLAND BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

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

Lawrence A. Wolfe, Jr., *President*
Rodney E. Rice, *Vice President*
Robert L. Reckart, *Secretary/Treasurer*

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 494 Labor and Employment – Private-Sector Employers – Right to Work February 14, 2023

To: Hon. C.T. Wilson, Chair, and members of the Senate Finance 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 building and construction trades industry, covering the three western counties in Maryland. I am also Secretary-Treasurer for Teamsters Joint Council 62, representing 10,000 Teamsters members across the state of Maryland. We oppose HB 494 – Labor and Employment – Private-Sector Employers – 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 benefiting big business and crushing workers’ protections and their ability to negotiate with their employers. “Right to Work” allows union objectors to receive all the benefits negotiated by the union, including union healthcare and pension plans, and guarantees union representation, without those objectors paying a dime for it.

“Right to Work” is really the Right to Work for Less. On average, worker’s pay drops more than 3% when “Right to Work” laws are passed. 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 citizen. We oppose this legislation and ask that you give HB 494 an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

Lawrence A. Wolfe, Jr
President

