

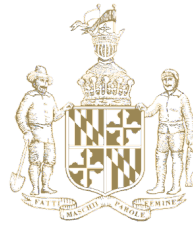
JOE VOGEL
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Education

Revenues



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 224
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3103 · 301-858-3103
800-492-7122 Ext. 3103
Joe.Vogel@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB802: “Protecting Workers From Captive Audience Meetings Act”

House Economic Matters Committee

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 1:00PM

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

Captive Audience meetings are the tool of choice for union busters, in which an employer holds a mandatory meeting during working hours for the purpose of discouraging employees from organizing and participating in a union. Furthermore, employees risk retribution for not attending these meetings. Once disallowed under the National Labor Rights Act of 1935, more recent interpretations have deemed the practice legal, prompting states such as Connecticut, Maine, Minnesota, New York, and more to enact legislation prohibiting captive audience meetings.

HB802 would protect employees from retaliation and threats including discharge, discipline, and other penalties assessed as a result of the employee declining to attend or participate in an employer sponsored meeting during which the employer communicates their opinion regarding religious matters or political matters. Additionally, HB802 would disallow employers from refusing to hire an applicant as a result of the applicant’s refusal to attend or participate in a meeting as defined above. Religious matters prohibited in this context relate to religious belief, affiliation, practice, or the decision to join or support a religion. Political Matters prohibited in this context relate to elections for political office; political parties; proposals to change legislation, regulations, public policy; or the decision to join or support a potential civic, community, fraternal, or labor organization.

In collaboration with our key advocates, we have filed an amendment to incorporate minor technical adjustments, add enforcement language, and clarify additional employer organized meetings that would not be disallowed under this legislation.

I urge the committee to give a favorable report on HB802.