



TESTIMONY FOR HB0037

Declaration of Rights – Right to Organize

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Vogel

Committee: Appropriations

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0037 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The rights of workers to organize and to bargain collectively with employers ensures that both workers and management come to the table as equals. Workers have organized in many different industries and have been able to ensure that they have good working conditions, health care, and reasonable wages. It does cost employers more. There is absolutely no argument about that. Employers will always say that they can't afford to have workers organize because it eats into their profits, and often they prevail.

Our members would respectfully ask you to look at this from the side of the workers. Is it right for an employer to pay sub-standard wages, or provide poor working conditions so that THEY can make more profit, at the expense of their workers? A business should be able to pay a decent wage and provide decent working conditions or they don't deserve to be in business. Every employee should be able to organize to collectively bargain to ensure that they are making a good wage and have reasonable benefits.

This bill proposes a Constitutional Amendment that would give every person employed in the state the fundamental right to organize and bargain collectively concerning compensation, hours, or other terms of employment. This would be a right that the state may not directly or indirectly deny unless it is justified by a compelling state interest.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee