

Testimony in Support of HB 037

Declaration of Right – Right to Organize

January 24, 2025

To: Honorable Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Mark Chang, and members of the House Appropriations Committee

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

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

We strongly support HB 037, the Right to Organize.

The National Workrights Institute identifies the right to organize as the most fundamental workplace human right, serving as the foundation for achieving many other workplace rights and encouraging broader productivity to establish greater economic development in the states.

We couldn't agree more.

Every working person deserves access to be able to organize and collectively bargain.

Union workers on average make 27% more than non-union workers. Union workers are more likely to have access to employee sponsored healthcare and can afford that healthcare. Union workers are also more likely to have access to employee retirement and paid time off. Union workplaces also tend to have less turnover which leads to more stable workforce. When workers organize and collectively bargain, workers benefit, communities benefit, and generations of families benefit.

Every worker should have the right to organize.

For all of these reasons, on behalf of our members and all of Maryland working people, we urge a favorable report on HB 037.