



# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 434 COURTS-STRATEGIC LAWSUITS AGAINST PUBLIC PARTICIPATION February 12, 2025

**To: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, Members of the House Judiciary Committee**  
**From: Tom Clark, Political Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 26**

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, members of the Committee, IBEW Local 26 is in full **support of HB 434**, a bill that centered around the First amendment of the US Constitution and vital to organized labor as well as any group that protects the working class. SLAPP or Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation are used to deter unions from exercising their right to organize and advocate for workers.

Even if a labor organization is “in the right” and has a strong legal defense, the entire process can be expensive and time consuming. Those anti-worker groups use SLAPP lawsuits not to win, but to drain the resources from Unions and those that support the middle class. It reminds me of the Maryland General Assembly bringing up “Right to Work” legislation each session. A Right to Work bill will never pass in Maryland, but the idea of bringing up for a vote each year is just a way of wasting time and resources for those that represent workers. Many jurisdictions have enacted anti-SLAPP laws, like HB 434, that allow defendants to quickly dismiss frivolous lawsuits and the threat of costly litigation. I encourage Maryland to do the same.

Now that the new Federal Administration has taken office and set its sights on the working people of this country, we need leaders to stick up for the middle-class and it starts right here in the Maryland House of Delegates, Judiciary Committee. Please defend Mr. and Mrs. Marylander and those that represent them. Let’s rid the system of lawsuits that have lack of merit and designed to “muddy” the legal systems and the reputation of those who support a safer and more productive workplace.

I ask for a **favorably report on HB 434**. Thank you.

