

Legislation Text

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Urging the members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly to oppose all efforts by anonymously funded groups to attack the collective bargaining rights of public sector union workers through House Bill 1507 and Senate Bill 1034.

WHEREAS, House Bill 1507 and Senate Bill 1034, spuriously known in Harrisburg as “Paycheck Protection” legislation, aim to take away the ability of public sector unions to collectively bargain for the employer to make automatic deductions of union dues and other fees from the worker’s paycheck; and

WHEREAS, These payroll deductions have been in place for years, and are often one of the first agreements made by the parties in collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS, Proponents of the legislation continue to mislead the public and members of the General Assembly by not differentiating “fair share” deductions and political deductions. The union is tasked with representing all workers whether they pay dues or not, and this money can only be used for union activities such as contract negotiation and providing legal representation in the grievance process; and

WHEREAS, Supporters of this legislation claim government money is being used to help fund union political activities, which is highly farcical. First, all union political deductions are voluntary, so if the worker chooses they do not have to contribute. Second, the payroll system is nearly completely automated and with the number of deductions already being made for medical insurance, retirement accounts and other things at the request of the employee or employer, the added costs for the deductions of political contributions is miniscule; and

WHEREAS, One of the groups behind this attack on collective bargaining rights is the Commonwealth Foundation. Commonwealth bills itself as a “free-market think-tank”, but in reality is just a right-wing group trying to undermine worker rights; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth Foundation refuses to release its funding sources, but the group has been linked with David and Charles Koch and their foundations. The Koch brothers led the attack on worker’s rights in Wisconsin and they apparently see Pennsylvania as their next battleground; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly are urged to oppose all efforts by anonymously funded groups to attack the collective bargaining rights of public sector union workers through House Bill 1507 and Senate Bill 1034.