



American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act

According to a 2021 report from the Economic Policy Institute, as union membership declines, the share of income going to the top 10% skyrockets. In spite of this, during the pandemic, union workers had more job stability compared to non-union workers. Recognizing the importance of union membership and the security it provides, members of Congress introduced legislation increasing the access to unions in both the private and public sectors.

The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act

was introduced in the House by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA-03) as **H.R. 842**. On March 9, 2021, the bill passed in the House with a vote of 225-206. The bill is now pending before the Senate. If the bill is passed by the Senate, it would vastly improve workers' rights across the country, make it easier to join unions, and increase penalties on employers who knowingly violate workers' rights.

The PRO Act strengthens current federal laws allowing private-sector workers to organize and join a union, and allowing them to bargain for better wages and benefits. Not only does the bill empower workers to form a union, it also aids in completing the initial collective bargaining agreement.

America's lack of labor protections and decline in union density has resulted in soaring inequality--which has only been exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic. Outrageously, U.S. billionaires increased their wealth by 1.1 trillion dollars since the start of the COVID-19 crisis. At the same time, millions of workers lost their jobs and currently face food insecurity and eviction.

The bill also clarifies the right to strike and prohibits employers from permanently replacing striking employees and penalizes employers that violate workers' rights.

If passed, this bill would eliminate current "Right-to-Work" laws, and guarantee the right to union organizing and collective bargaining. Today, even in non-right-to-work states, union organizing campaigns are often met with severe push-back from employers and even illegal retaliation.

Regardless of skill level, race, gender, or political affiliation, access to a union increases workers' pay, secures benefits and creates safer worker conditions. The PRO Act will strengthen the rights of workers, increase the financial growth of the middle class, and create an avenue for better working environments.

The PRO Act has already passed the House but is still pending before the Senate. APWU is continuing to press the senators who have not yet cosponsored the bill, particularly in Virginia and Arizona, to join. To date, the bill has 47 cosponsors.



A Chicago rally in favor of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in the Janus v. AFSCME case. Scott Olson/Getty Images

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