

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APWU SUPPORTS THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

With union membership at an all-time low of 10.1% of the workforce, the share of income going to the top 1% has skyrocketed. Recognizing the importance of union membership and the security it provides, bipartisan legislation was introduced that would increase access to unions in both the private and public sectors.

THE RICHARD L. TRUMKA PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE (PRO) ACT (H.R. 20, S.567)

*Lead Cosponsors: Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT),
Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA-03), and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01)*

This bill, introduced in both the House and Senate on February 28, 2023, 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 workers to organize and join a union, and laws 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 by mandating arbitration and mediation to resolve conflicts.

The bill also clarifies the right to strike, prohibits employers from permanently replacing striking employees, and penalizes employers that violate workers' rights. Monetary penalties, in conjunction with personal liability, will help ensure employers are held accountable for their injustices.

If passed, this bill would allow workers to 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 pushback from employers and even illegal retaliation.

Additionally, the PRO Act would safeguard union elections by allowing employees to vote at a neutral location and refuse to attend employer-mandated anti-union meetings. Transparency is also a requirement under this bill, as workers must be informed of their rights and employers must disclose their union-busting consultant contracts.

Regardless of skill level, race, gender, or political affiliation, access to a union increases workers' pay, secures benefits, and creates safer working 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.