

HB 582 -- LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND CONSTRUCTION

SPONSOR: Curtis

COMMITTEE ACTIONS: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Workforce Standards and Development by a vote of 8 to 4. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations by a vote of 6 to 2.

This bill specifies that, except in instances when these provisions conflict with or are preempted by federal law, a person employed in the construction industry as a condition or continuation of employment cannot be required to:

- (1) Become or refrain from becoming a member of a labor organization;
- (2) Pay dues, fees, assessments, or other charges to a labor organization; or
- (3) Pay to any charity or third party any equivalent amount in lieu of dues, fees, assessments, or other charges required of a member of a labor organization.

Any agreement, understanding, or practice between a labor organization and an employer in the construction industry that violates the rights of employees as guaranteed under these provisions is declared to be unlawful, null and void, and of no legal effect.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill is about equality and removing barriers to entry into the building trades, especially given that a college degree does not guarantee anyone a job anymore. It often appears that entry into apprenticeship programs is about who you know or to whom you are related. Many building trades benefit from the perception that all trades are diversified, when only a few actually are diversified.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Curtis; National Federation of Independent Business; Associated Industries of Missouri; Missourians for Right to Work, Inc.; Jay Atkins, Missouri Chamber of Commerce; Missouri Alliance for Freedom; and Americans for Prosperity.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that "right to work" is a false phrase to lull persons away from their civil rights. Although the bill touts itself as applying to or affecting the construction industry and building trades only, that is not true. It will affect other unions as well. Right to work will bring in

large out-of-state contractors that pay low wages and provide poor working conditions. Right to work will destroy the middle class.

Testifying against the bill were Claude Cummins, Communication Workers of American; Leslie Williams, Jr., Laborer Union #264 of Kansas City MO; Dave Holmes; Plumbers and Pipefitters Local #562; Ronny Griffin, Laborers' Local 110; Mark Esters, Coalition of Black Trade Unions; Rev. Rudy Pulido; Marvin Sanders, Carpenters District Council; Henry Johnson, Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Program; Frankie D. Edwards; Ronaldo Ward; Demetrius Johnson, Demetrius Johnson Charitable Foundation; Michael Ringo, I.A.M. #1345; Tim Green, National Electrical Contractors Association; Mechanical Contractors Association-Eastern Missouri; Mechanical Contractors Association of Kansas City; AFT Missouri; United Steelworkers District 11; Missouri AFL-CIO; International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council #3; and International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council #58.