



TO: The Honorable Members of the PA House Labor and Industry Committee  
FROM: Alex Halper, Vice President, Government Affairs  
DATE: May 1, 2023  
RE: Oppose H.B. 950 – Constitutional amendment

On behalf of the PA Chamber, I urge you to oppose H.B. 950, which would amend the state constitution with ambiguous language regarding labor relations. The committee is scheduled to consider this bill today.

H.B. 950 includes language enshrining existing law guaranteeing the right of individuals to organize and negotiate terms of employment. While this piece seems fairly noncontroversial, the bill unfortunately continues with additional provisions that are unnecessarily divisive and unacceptably ambiguous.

H.B. 950 appears focused on prohibiting future lawmakers from enacting “Right to Work” legislation, which provides that individuals cannot be forced to join a union as a condition of employment. As Pennsylvania has never seriously considered Right to Work, it seems all this constitutional amendment would accomplish is sowing divisiveness. With so many bipartisan initiatives to work on, it’s a shame to unnecessarily highlight areas of disagreement, and project to Pennsylvanians and the rest of the country an image of acrimony and hyper-partisanship.

This legislation also includes broad, ambiguous language that prompts concerns of unintended consequences. H.B. 950 states that “No law shall be passed that interferes with, negates or diminishes the right of employees to organize...”

Could this language be interpreted to prohibit, for example, measures passed at the state or local level intended to promote transparency in public sector contract negotiations? How about legislation to provide parity and fair treatment between union and non-union workplaces?

Several sessions ago, the legislature passed and then-Gov. Tom Wolf signed Act 59 of 2015, which removed language from Pennsylvania’s criminal code that had exempted parties engaged in a labor dispute from laws against harassment, stalking, and bomb threats. Some opponents at the time argued erroneously that removing these exemptions would allow law enforcement to interfere with organizing campaigns. Would Act 59 be unconstitutional under this new proposed standard?

This proposed constitutional amendment is unnecessary at best and potentially dangerous at worst. We urge you to oppose this bill or at least hold off consideration until these concerns are addressed.

Thank you for considering our views on this matter. Please contact Alex Halper at [ahalper@pachamber.org](mailto:ahalper@pachamber.org) or 717-645-8730 with questions or to discuss.