Op-Ed Summary

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NATIONAL

[Why Would Any Republican Support Forced Unionism?]
Steve Moore | June 8, 2026

You might have thought Republicans winning Congress would put a full stop on the Democrats' infamous PRO Act to ban right to work and force workers into unions, whether they like it or not.

Yet here we are, with the so-called **Faster Labor Contracts Act**. The bill would revive key parts of the PRO Act to empower unelected bureaucrats to override the decisions of employers and employees, mandating binding contracts on a government-imposed timeline.

Under the Faster Labor Contracts Act, government regulations would force employers to begin collective bargaining within 10 days of receiving a union request. They would then have 90 days to reach a deal. If no agreement is reached, either side can drag the dispute to the **Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service** for a 30-day mediation window. If that fails, a three-person arbitration panel issues a binding decision that locks both parties in for two years.

In practice, this means employers would have four months to negotiate a labor contract before critical business decisions are left to government arbitrators, whose decisions are binding and final.

That should be anathema to a Republican Party that professes belief in free-market capitalism, so how is it slated for a floor vote in a House controlled by Republicans? The act is being forced onto the House floor by a coalition of House Democrats and seven Republicans who have signed a discharge petition to force Speaker Mike Johnson's hand.

The seven Republicans taking this action effectively turned control of the House over to Hakeem Jeffries. They are: Mike Lawyer and Nick LaLota of New York, Rob Bresnahan and Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, Max Miller of Ohio, Don Bacon of Nebraska, and Riley Moore of West Virginia. In the Senate, the lead sponsor is Republican Josh Hawley of Missouri, and two of his 15 co-sponsors are Republicans: Bernie Moreno of Ohio and Roger Marshall of Kansas.

What makes this even more shocking is that President Trump has **proposed completely eliminating** the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, which the bill would supercharge. The president understands that contracts imposed by government

bureaucrats are more likely to be based on political than economic logic, and that negotiations are better left to the private parties.
Ironically, government-imposed contracts are likely to harm the workers whose union bosses are pushing this idea. Because when economics don't add up, it's the workers who pay in layoffs, reduced hours and the diversion of capital investments that would have raised productivity.

This risks broader economic disruption by creating a threat perception that, at any time, a single union request could trigger a government-enforced contract clock. That perception would tend to chill hiring and investing, especially by smaller businesses that can't afford to fight out an arbitration battle.

The bill also raises serious constitutional questions. We don't lose our due-process rights when we go into business. Binding arbitration is not a freely entered contractual arrangement but a government taking.

There are good reasons Republicans in Congress have overwhelmingly **rejected** the PRO Act. They have largely rejected unions because they have seen them undermine the competitiveness of many once-great American industries. The best, most productive employees would rather negotiate for themselves than trust union leaders and pay dues (often used to fund political donations) for the privilege. The Faster Labor Contracts Act is the PRO Act's mandatory arbitration provision.

Voters expect Republicans to behave like Republicans, or else what's the point of showing up on Election Day?

Washington Examiner

Faster Labor Contracts Act would silence workers' voices and empower bureaucrats
Rachel Greszler | May 28, 2026

Having secured seven Republican signatures on their discharge petition, Democratic lawmakers just secured an imminent vote on the Faster Labor Contracts Act — a union leaders' pipedream that was considered too radical to pass Congress even under the Obama-era Democratic supermajority.

This legislation would allow unelected, uninformed federal bureaucrats to set the terms of union contracts if the parties can't reach an agreement within 90

days of negotiations and 30 days of mediation. The result could be lost jobs, failed businesses, and a dictatorial union contract process.

For all labor unions' posturing about democracy in the workplace, they're lobbying hard for a bill that would give individual workers even less of a voice.

Nearly all union constitutions and bylaws require a majority of union members to vote in favor of a collective bargaining agreement before it's ratified. But under the Faster Labor Contracts Act, any negotiations that result in forced arbitration would leave workers without a vote on their binding employment terms.

This would come on top of unions already preventing individual workers from dealing directly with employers on their own terms because, even if workers don't want union representation, the union has a monopoly on worker representation.

Since the Faster Labor Contracts Act would enable forced arbitration after just 120 days of negotiations and fewer than 10% of first contracts are achieved within 120 days, according to a Bloomberg Law Analysis, that could leave a majority of workers without a vote on their new terms of employment.

The result in both cases — rushed contracts seeking to avoid arbitration or contracts determined by federal arbitrators who lack knowledge and experience about the workplace and industry they will determine binding contract terms over — will be inferior contracts that risk costing workers' jobs and ruining entire businesses.

While it's understandable that workers who have been overpromised by union organizers expect big changes and fast results, the 120-day limit to reaching a first contract is arbitrary and rushed. Consider the newly unionized workers at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, who just voted in February

2026 to ratify their first contract 22 months after voting to approve union representation.

That contract is 249 pages long and contains 19 separate articles and 7 memoranda of understanding. Without sufficient time to consider the many facets of the business and workers' rights and compensation, a rushed contract decided by a federal arbitrator after 120 days of negotiations would not possibly have been as comprehensive and could have jeopardized Volkswagen's success, along with VW workers' compensation and jobs.

In healthcare, the workplace is particularly complex, and the stakes are incredibly high. Not surprisingly, first contracts take especially long in healthcare settings. Do we really want federal bureaucrats dictating the terms of employment and workplace operations when lives are on the line?

While forced arbitration for union contracts would be new in the private sector, there is a corollary in the public sector called "interest arbitration" that some states most frequently apply to police and firefighter labor disputes. It's not entirely analogous because a government that imposes forced arbitration is also the employer and thus part of the contract negotiations. Moreover, governments aren't subject to the same bottom line as private sector companies because, unlike businesses, states generally can't go bankrupt.

Nevertheless, interest arbitration contracts have burdened state and local governments, arguably contributing to rising property tax rates in New Jersey, unfunded pensions in Chicago, and even municipal bankruptcy in Detroit.

In addition to inferior outcomes, it's not clear that the Faster Labor Contracts Act is even lawful.

Since mutual assent is a requirement of legally enforceable contracts and the Act could result in labor terms being imposed on parties without one or both or their assent, the Faster Labor Contracts Act would almost certainly face serious constitutional challenges.

Replacing private collaboration with government coercion might produce faster labor contracts, but conservatives should remember that every expansion of government power ultimately comes at the cost of personal freedom, market distortions, and unintended consequences. Imposing binding terms on private employers and workers without either of them approving of the terms governing livelihoods is centralized control masquerading as "worker empowerment."

Conservatives who value the freedom to contract, free enterprise, and a thriving marketplace should reject the temptation to side with union leaders' political priorities over the workers and businesses that would ultimately bear the consequences.

Rachel Greszler is a senior research fellow at the Plymouth Institute for Free Enterprise at Advancing American Freedom Foundation.

THE HILL

The Faster Labor Contracts Act disempowers workers
Thomas Beck | May 28, 2026

The Faster Labor Contracts Act, will soon get a vote in the House of Representatives, thanks to a discharge petition filed by Rep. Donald Norcross (D-N.J.). This proposal enjoys almost universal support from Democrats and from several Republicans. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) promised the Teamsters union the bill would pass in the House, "That is a guarantee."

That would be unfortunate for working people, because the bill would deprive them of the ability to negotiate their terms and conditions of employment, substituting instead edicts from government-mandated arbitrators.

For more than 90 years, federal law has required that when employees form a labor union, their employer must negotiate in good faith about their wages and other terms and conditions of employment. When negotiations are concluded, the result is a contract called a “collective bargaining agreement.” Over the last several decades, this process has led to contracts between the Teamsters and UPS, between the United Auto Workers and the Big Three automakers — and countless other contracts between labor unions and employers.

But labor unions are claiming the system is rigged against the workers they represent. Proponents of the Faster Labor Contracts Act assert that too many workers who choose union representation wait too long for a first contract. The bill’s solution is alluringly simple: If negotiations don’t result in a collective bargaining agreement within an artificially compressed timeframe of 120 days, employers and unions would be forced into binding arbitration, where government-mandated arbitrators dictate wages, benefits, scheduling, work rules, disciplinary systems, staffing, and other terms and conditions of employment.

Supporters present this proposal as a modest procedural reform. That’s not true. The Faster Labor Contracts Act would fundamentally transform labor-management relations by replacing worker choice with government coercion.

The bill’s most obvious defect is its egregious misnaming. Whatever is produced by statutorily compelled arbitration cannot be correctly characterized as a contract at all. A contract results from parties negotiating, compromising, and voluntarily agreeing to terms each can accept. That process is precisely what gives contracts legitimacy and durability.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act abandons that principle. Under its framework, if the parties fail to reach agreement within the prescribed period, federal arbitrators impose terms neither side may actually want. This is not a contract; it is coercive government regulation.

Put aside the misleading nomenclature, the bill is a solution worse than the supposed problem it claims to solve. Its advocates portray lengthy first-contract negotiations as evidence of employer obstruction. But there are

legitimate reasons initial collective bargaining agreements take time to negotiate.

The parties may not be merely haggling over wages. Their negotiations are supposed to build a comprehensive workplace governance system — medical benefits, scheduling and overtime systems, subcontracting limitations, job classifications, layoff procedures, discipline standards, management-rights clauses, no-strike obligations, grievance and arbitration procedures, and dozens of other topics that are critical to workers and the business that employs them.

Those negotiations can be time-consuming precisely because the results matter so much to the parties involved.

Ironically, the Faster Labor Contracts Act undermines the very worker empowerment its supporters claim to champion. Under its compulsory arbitration, decisions are made by outsiders who know little about the preferences of employees and certainly don't stand in their shoes. Workers could find themselves bound by compensation systems, scheduling arrangements, and other workplace conditions they don't support but can't reject.

That's not workplace democracy. It's government disenfranchisement of American workers.

Moreover, the bill's mandated arbitrator would be an agent of the federal government. Consequently, any term the arbitrator imposes is a matter of "state action," meaning government coercion. If the arbitrator grants the union access to the employer's workplace for certain purposes, that's a government infringement on Fifth Amendment property rights and Fourth Amendment warrant requirements. If he requires the parties to show "mutual respect" and refrain from criticizing one another, that is a government infringement on free expression.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act also violates constitutional due process requirements by granting extensive regulatory power to private arbitrators with no oversight from any court or politically accountable government official. Imagine you're negotiating with a dealer for the purchase of a new car, and the federal government steps in to empower someone you don't know to tell you that you must purchase the car, exactly what model and features you will get, and the price you must pay. Also, imagine you have no way to appeal the decision and no one to appeal to. That's how the Faster Labor Contracts Act works.

A collective bargaining agreement negotiated freely often takes time. But achieving mutual agreement is not a bug in the collective bargaining process; it is a core feature. In contrast, the coercive Faster Labor Contracts Act is a bad idea, poorly executed.

Thomas Beck spent more than a decade leading labor relations for the nation's largest healthcare system. Prior to that, he served as chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority and practiced labor law at global law firm Jones Day.

WSJ | OPINION

The New Big Labor GOP

Editorial Board | May 25, 2026

The latest sign of Republican midterm panic is the surrender to Big Labor policies that unions couldn't pass when Democrats ran Congress and Joe Biden was President.

We told you last week about the Railway Safety Act, a classic featherbedding operation to mandate two engineers per freight train when Europe gets by fine with one. This JD Vance gift to the Teamsters passed the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee last week, 54-11, after President Trump endorsed it with a social-media post.

On Wednesday seven House Republicans also crossed the aisle to hand unions the 218 votes they needed in a discharge petition to bypass a committee and send the Faster Labor Contracts Act (FLCA) to the House floor. The GOP Members who confuse the priorities of union bosses with the needs of union workers are West Virginia Rep. Riley Moore, New Yorkers Nick LaLota and Mike Lawler, Nebraska Rep. Don Bacon, Ohio Rep. Max Miller and Pennsylvania's Rob Bresnahan and Brian Fitzpatrick.

The law gives unions a bludgeon against business by mandating government arbitration if companies don't reach agreements on an approved timeline of when unions are first certified. If the employers and the union can't agree on a

contract within 90 days, government would step in for mediation followed by binding arbitration. Individual workers are cut out of the process.

This is an invitation for unions to refuse to compromise on their demands because an employer can oppose a deal and still may have to accept it. Arbitrators often have minimal operating knowledge of a particular company, its constraints or its priorities for growth. Rulings can be based on industry trends and generalities. An arbitration panel decision would be binding on the parties for two years unless amended "by written consent of the parties."

The FLCA is a plank in the Big Labor PRO Act that failed to pass Congress in the Biden years. The bill is now likely to pass the House. The GOP Senate could kill it, but Josh Hawley (R., Mo.) is sponsoring the corresponding legislation there. The pro-union Republicans fancy themselves as tribunes for the common man, but they're really rubber stamps for labor bosses who are allies of the Democratic Party.

Washington Examiner

How the Faster Labor Contracts Act could hurt workers
Rachel Greszler | May 1, 2026

The federal government experienced its longest shutdown ever, 43 days, in 2025. And the Department of Homeland Security is currently on day 72 without funding due to Democrats' support for illegal immigrants and their obstinate refusal to fully fund enforcement of our immigration laws.

It's a difficult impasse, but since Congress has the exclusive "power of the purse," lawmakers have no choice but to negotiate. Consider what would happen if either party in Congress could choose to hand over Congress's authority to set federal spending levels to unelected federal arbitrators anytime the two sides fail to pass timely appropriations.

That's what the Faster Labor Contract Act would do to private companies and labor unions when the two sides fail to reach an initial agreement within an arbitrary and rushed time frame.

Federal law, the National Labor Relations Act, requires employers to bargain in good faith with union officials toward a collective bargaining agreement, but it does not mandate that the parties must reach an agreement.

Contracts can take a long time to negotiate because one or both sides are new to the process, have unreasonable demands, and are negotiating complex terms that will affect all future contracts. It's not uncommon for collective bargaining agreements to address dozens of workplace provisions (well beyond just pay and benefits) and to span hundreds of pages.
A Bloomberg Law analysis of first contracts reached between 2004 and 2021 found an average length of 409 days between election certification and contract ratification.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act would provide a maximum bargaining period of 120 days — 90 days of bargaining followed by 30 days of mediation — before either party could invoke mandatory arbitration. With each side choosing its own arbitrator and, absent agreement on a third neutral arbitrator, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service selecting a supposedly "neutral" arbitrator, an unelected federal arbitrator would make the final determination on labor terms.

It's understandable that workers who've been oversold by union organizers expect big changes and fast results in the form of a first contract. But the 120-day limit is arbitrary and rushed. Fewer than 10% of first contracts were achieved within 120 days, according to the Bloomberg analysis.

Certain industries, such as healthcare, where lives are literally on the line, can be especially complex and require more time. Since most contracts last three years or longer, failure to take the time to get things right can compromise the quality of products and services and increase the risk of future job losses or outright business failure.

Causing job losses and business failures is just one way that the Faster Labor Contracts Act could end up hurting the workers it aims to help.

In addition, there's no guarantee that it will result in faster contracts because, while the bill limits negotiations, the arbitration timeline is unlimited. Bringing uninformed arbitrators up to speed on everything they need to know about the workplace, the employer's risks and finances, and workers' concerns could easily take months, if not a year or longer. Yet decisions made without this crucial information could be disastrous for the business and the union members.

Moreover, a lack of readily available arbitrators at the FMCS could contribute to delays, possibly resulting in slower contracts processed than might have occurred without government intervention.

And arbitration cuts workers from the negotiation and ratification process. Currently, nearly all union constitutions and bylaws require union members' ratification of collective bargaining agreements before they are signed and enforced. Under the Faster Labor Contracts Act, any negotiations that result in forced arbitration would leave workers without a vote on their binding employment terms.

If passed, the Faster Labor Contracts Act would almost certainly face constitutional challenges because mutual assent is a required element of a legally enforceable contract, and the act could result in labor terms being

imposed on either or both parties without their assent. The government imposing terms on private parties could constitute state action, opening the door to free speech and freedom of association challenges to any arbitration-ordered resolution.

History shows that when the government replaces collaboration with compulsion, both workers and employers lose. Instead, policymakers should focus on supporting workers and employers by modernizing labor laws in ways that promote the freedom, dignity, and opportunity that make American work exceptional.

Rachel Greszler is a senior research fellow at the Plymouth Institute for Free Enterprise at Advancing American Freedom Foundation.

Washington Examiner

Republicans must not help Democrats gut workplace democracy
Vincent Vernuccio | April 29, 2026

House Democrats are trying to pull a fast one on Republicans.

On April 20, Democrats joined with union leaders to announce a so-called "discharge petition" on the Faster Labor Contracts Act. With strong Democratic backing for the petition, and if they can convince a handful of Republicans to join them, the House will be forced to vote on a bill that Democrats are calling "pro-worker." Yet, Republican representatives should know: The Faster Labor Contracts Act is a direct attack on workers' rights.

Don’t take it from me. Take it from a union official who was invited by Democrats to testify at a congressional hearing last year. Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) asked the shop steward, who’s with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, about the Faster Labor Contracts Act. The bill is so named because it imposes an expedited deadline for contract negotiations between businesses and unions.

If they can’t reach an agreement in time, the federal bureaucrats would force the creation of an arbitration panel, which would then unilaterally impose a collective bargaining agreement. But workers wouldn’t be allowed to vote for the contract, even though it dictates the terms of their employment. Voting on a contract is standard practice precisely because it lets workers make their voice heard and control their future.

Before Cassidy named the bill, he described what it would do. The shop steward replied that taking away the contract vote would mean “removing democracy from the workplace.” He then said that democracy “is the whole point of the union.” The shop steward may not have known then that the senator was describing a proposal that his own union supports. But he was absolutely right: Forcing a contract on workers without a vote is the opposite of workplace democracy.

That fact alone makes the Faster Labor Contracts Act a bad idea. But the bill wouldn’t just take away workers’ rights. It would also encourage both labor unions and businesses to bargain in bad faith. The calculus is simple: Either party could make impossible demands, knowing that the other party would refuse to meet them. Yet, they could hope that the federal government grants those demands when it unilaterally imposes a contract. As one former senior congressional staffer recently told the media, the Faster Labor Contracts Act could mean that “unions can be unreasonable and win.” The same is true of businesses.

Yet whoever wins, workers could lose. For instance, if the contract leans heavily in favor of the union, it could leave a business unable to compete long-term. Research by labor scholar Liya Palagashvili shows that undue increases in union leverage like this can lead to short-term gains but often long-term harms for worker outcomes and business stability. That's the road to layoffs or bankruptcy, as workers have seen at companies ranging from Yellow trucking to UPS. On the flip side, if the contract leans toward business demands, workers could miss out on wage gains or benefits they otherwise could have gotten through negotiations.

Workers are supposed to vote on their contracts precisely so they can weigh such pros and cons. By taking away that vote, the Faster Labor Contracts Act would prevent them from making their own decision about what's truly in their best interest. They could recognize that the government's contract would hurt them, yet be forced to suffer anyway.

Workers would be better served by Congress focusing on policies that balance the playing field and give workers a voice, encouraging unions to compete for workers' support, and ensuring transparency and fairness in the process. But the Faster Labor Contract Acts would move labor law in the opposite direction, hurting workers in the process.

It remains to be seen if Democrats will succeed in convincing a few Republicans to join them in forcing a vote on this unfortunate bill. Yet, at the end of the day, no one should back this attack on the hardworking men and women who keep America strong and growing. Workplace democracy is a fundamental right, and if Democrats won't protect it, Republicans must hold the line for the sake of workers.

F. Vincent Vernuccio is president of the Institute for the American Worker.

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

A Bipartisan Bill that Would Hurt Employers and Unions

Washington Post Editorial Board | April 8, 2026

Democrats and some Republicans on Capitol Hill keep uniting behind bad ideas that would make workers worse off, and the Faster Labor Contracts Act is the latest example. In this case, however, the union bosses pushing for the law might accidentally reduce their own power.

The bill would mandate that workers sometimes be subjected to labor contracts that they never vote for. The idea is to reduce the amount of time it takes between a union being recognized as the collective bargaining agent in a workplace and the enactment of an agreement.

The National Labor Relations Act requires recognized unions and employers to negotiate in good faith, but it does not say how long that negotiating may last. In some cases, it can last years.

The bill would require negotiations to begin within 10 days of union recognition. That starts a 90-day timer to reach an agreement. Absent a deal, federal mediators step in. If they can't negotiate something in 30 days, then the dispute goes to binding arbitration.

Whatever the arbitrators decide would become the labor contract that all workers in the bargaining unit would be forced to abide by for two years. That means, just over four months after workplace democracy recognizes a union as the bargaining agent, federal bureaucrats would be able to force a contract without workers voting to ratify it.

Employer groups are opposed to the legislation because there would be no recourse if the terms of the mandated contract force companies into bankruptcy. The bill also runs contrary to the fundamental principles, found in the Constitution and labor-relations law, that work contracts must be voluntarily agreed to.

Americans have a right to how to use their own labor. Wars have been fought in support of this principle.

Even though major labor unions support this legislation, it could cause problems for them, too. Last year in a hearing, Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-Louisiana) asked a union shop steward what would happen if workers lost the ability to vote to ratify a labor

contract. The shop steward said, "That would be removing the democracy from the workplace."

It also removes power from unions and employers to negotiate. Federal arbitrators are not as intimately acquainted with the details of a given workplace as the union or the employer. Their job under this legislation would be to quickly split the baby, often based on insufficient information, in ways that could be impractical or harmful to the workplace.

Because of the monopolistic nature of American labor law, all workers in the bargaining unit — union members or not — would be bound by the contract that the arbitrators impose. This is not a power that the federal government should have.

Unions hope that the mere threat of arbitration would force employers to make concessions. It's not exactly a ringing endorsement of their own abilities to negotiate that they think they need this heavy-handed approach to make deals. And rather than being able to hold out indefinitely for better terms, the legislation would force unions to accept provisions from the arbitrators that they vociferously oppose.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act looks like it might have a path to get out of the House. Rep. Donald Norcross (D-New Jersey) is collecting signatures to use a discharge petition to force a vote. His underlying bill already has 17 GOP cosponsors, enough to secure a majority if all Democrats vote to approve it.

A Senate version was introduced by Josh Hawley (R-Missouri) and Cory Booker (D-New Jersey) but remains short of the 60 votes that would be required to pass. Thanks go again to the Senate filibuster for stopping a terrible idea that would erode the principle of free labor.

THE HILL

Even union officials don't support this union demand

Vincent Vernuccio | October 31, 2025

You'd think that union officials would support one of the labor movement's biggest demands. But even they balk when confronted with what it would mean for workers.

This truth was made clear last week in a high-profile Senate hearing. Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) asked a shop steward from the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers about the union demand for government-

imposed arbitration when employers and unions can't quickly agree on a first contract. This policy is the basis of Sen. Josh Hawley's (R-Mo.) Faster Labor Contracts Act. In the same hearing, Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.), said that he's a "strong supporter" of Hawley's bill because it's aligned with Democrats' PRO Act — a wish-list of union leaders' priorities.

Cassidy explained this policy in real-world terms, saying that it would "take workers out of the process by removing the need to ratify a contract." He put a finer point on it by saying that if the government mandated arbitration, workers "cannot reject" the resulting agreement, even though it would be binding on them. "What would happen," he asked, "if workers lost that ability to ratify a contract?"

The union official didn't mince words: "that would be removing the democracy from the workplace." Then he doubled down: Such democracy "is the whole point of the union," he said, because it gives workers "a say." In a few short words, that union official, a Democratic witness, rejected one of the Democrats' and labor's biggest policy priorities.

I was testifying in the same hearing, and I struggled to contain my surprise. True, Cassidy had not mentioned the Faster Labor Contracts Act by name. Nor did he call out the PRO Act. But he didn't have to. By focusing on the actual policy instead of the bill name, he highlighted how unjust both Hawley's proposal and that of the Democrats really is. Each hurts workers in the name of helping them. When you strip away the window dressing, even a shop steward won't accept it.

And this was a shop steward from Hawley's home state of Missouri, brought in by Democrats to support their agenda, including Hawley's bill. If he can't support that anti-democratic reform, who can?

The timing couldn't have been more awkward. Just a few weeks earlier, the Senate had held another hearing that prominently featured a union president endorsing Hawley's bill. Yet awkward or not, the shop steward is right on the money. There's nothing fair or democratic about taking away workers' right to vote on contracts that dictate their jobs. There is nothing fair or democratic in letting government impose its will regardless of workers' wishes.

And a union shop steward isn't the only one who knows it — Americans do, too. New polling from the Chamber of Commerce shows that 90 percent of voters oppose government-mandated union contracts that workers don't

approve. It makes sense: It's hard to support the gutting of workplace democracy.

That's not to say that workers don't need stronger protection of their rights. They most certainly do. But a real reform wouldn't put government in control at the back end of a union election. The better path is to put workers in control at the front end.

Workers really need the Employee Rights Act, which protects them in numerous ways. To start, it guarantees that unionization elections use the secret ballot, preventing the public "card check" voting system that encourages intimidation and harassment. It also lets workers decide what contact information union organizers receive, protecting their privacy and that of their families.

These are just a few of the pro-worker reforms in the Employee Rights Act, which Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) introduced in the Senate in mid-October. This bill will ensure that workers' voices are truly heard.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act and the PRO Act would do the opposite, stifling workers' voices at the hands of the federal government. This isn't the pro-worker reform it's chalked up to be. But don't take it from me. Take it from the union official who admitted the truth — this union demand is anti-worker and undemocratic.

F. Vincent Vernuccio is president of the Institute for the American Worker.

WSJ | OPINION

U.S. Labor Law Needs a 21st-Century Update
Rachel Greszler | October 17, 2025

Mark Mix is right that empowering bureaucrats to impose labor contracts is the wrong way to help workers ("Josh Hawley Chooses Unions Over Workers," op-ed, Oct. 8). The Faster Labor Contracts Act would require federal arbitrators to dictate private contracts if employers and unions can't reach agreement within an arbitrary and unrealistic timeframe. The old adage to "measure twice, cut once" is especially relevant for multiyear labor contracts

that can cover hundreds of bargaining provisions. Failure to assess the consequences properly ahead of time could result in lost jobs and failed businesses.

I was a witness at the Oct. 8 congressional testimony for the act. It wasn't lost on any of us that we were meeting during a government shutdown—the result of Congress's being unable to reach a budgetary agreement by deadline. Yet no one suggested that unelected bureaucrats be given power over the people's elected representatives to determine taxpayer spending. Why should it be any different for private-sector agreements?

American workers need labor law to reflect today's dynamic economy. Most of the relevant statues were written 75 years ago for a male-, union- and manufacturing-dominated workforce that no longer exists. The labor force now values flexibility and independence, not one-size-fits-all contracts or Washington control.

Instead of sanctioning compulsion in the form of Sen. Hawley's bill, Congress might look to such pro-worker modernizations as the National Right to Work Act and Employee Rights Act—both of which would help preserve the freedom, dignity and opportunity that make American work exceptional.

Rachel Greszler

Washington

Ms. Greszler is a fellow at the Heritage Foundation and Economic Policy Innovation Center.

WSJ | OPINION

Josh Hawley Chooses Unions Over Workers
Mark Mix | October 7, 2025

On Oct. 8, Teamsters Union President Sean O'Brien will again testify before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, where he nearly came to blows with a Republican senator in 2023. This time, Mr. O'Brien will be on his best behavior—he is now a Republican invitee testifying to promote the Faster Labor Contracts Act, sponsored by Sen. Josh

Hawley (R., Mo.). Messrs. O'Brien and Hawley want to speed up contract negotiation by allowing federal bureaucrats to dictate terms.

The real injustice in union bargaining has nothing to do with the time it takes. The deeper problem is that union contracts apply to every unionized worker, even though many have legitimate reasons to want to reach agreements with their employers directly.

Some workers have enough merit to be paid more than their one-size-fits-all union contract allows. Others may object to the union's politics or feel the union doesn't adequately represent them.

Forced unionization harms these independent-minded employees, a problem that passing statewide right-to-work laws outlawing compulsory union payments addresses. Real national labor reform should ensure that union representation and paying union dues are voluntary for every American worker.

Messrs. Hawley and O'Brien would prefer to supercharge the coercive status quo. Under the Faster Labor Contracts Act, if a union contract isn't reached after 90 days of negotiation and 30 days of mediation, an arbitration panel overseen by federal bureaucrats would have the authority to draw up its own agreement and impose it on all parties for two years.

Does anyone think those bureaucrats would do a good job? They'd be required not only to understand a business's present needs, but also to anticipate future challenges. Putting businesses into a two-year bind crafted by uninformed arbitrators risks destroying companies and leaving employees jobless.

Eager to cozy up to union bosses, Mr. Hawley and other supporters of the bill take their cues from American Compass, a think tank that accepts money from the left-wing Hewlett Foundation given to "move conservative thinking in a more worker-friendly direction." American Compass brought Mr. O'Brien on a podcast to promote Mr. Hawley's bill, while Daniel Kishi, an American Compass adviser, praised the bill as "an important step in the right direction."

The group pretends to be conservative, but its support for Mr. Hawley's bill represents a lack of ideological grounding. In 2020 American Compass defended organized labor as a means for combating big government, writing: "We prefer the private ordering of bargains between workers and management to overbearing dictates from Washington."

Yet now the organization backs Mr. Hawley's bill that would empower Washington bureaucrats to dictate overbearing "contracts" that could destroy

businesses and jobs. Despite their claims, the bill's supporters aren't remotely interested in shifting power from Washington bureaucrats.

Their real goal is to give union officials more power, even over workers' objections and on federal bureaucrats' terms. There is nothing conservative or pro-worker about that.

Mr. Mix is president of the National Right to Work Committee.

ALASKA

A place government doesn't need to stick its nose
Dennis DeWitt | October 24, 2025

I've spent much of my career advocating on behalf of Alaska's small and independent business owners at all levels of government. While this sometimes meant championing specific policy proposals to help Alaskan businesses and their employees, I found that, frequently, the best thing government can do is step out of the way. Unfortunately, there is a new proposal in Washington that would do just the opposite; the Faster Labor Contracts Act would subject private workplace negotiations to tight, arbitrary deadlines and could force workers and employers into contracts they never agreed to.

As its title suggests, the Faster Labor Contracts Act is intended to artificially "speed up" contract negotiations between employers and unions. It would force employers to begin bargaining with a new union in just ten days. If no agreement is reached in 90 days, the government steps in and forces mediation. And then, after another 30 days, the dispute goes to binding arbitration. That last part is especially unsettling, because it means an outside arbitrator would dictate wages, benefits, and workplace rules, and that workers could find themselves bound by contracts they never voted on. That would hurt employees and businesses alike.

Under current law — which has been in place for almost a century — employers and unions are required to bargain in good faith, but neither side is forced to make concessions or agree to proposals. That's the way it should be. Labor negotiations are incredibly complicated and require time and attention to detail. Rushing the process can have disastrous consequences for workers and their employers.

Americans from all walks of life oppose this kind of heavy-handed government intervention into labor contract negotiations. A recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey found that a vast majority of voters oppose government-mandated union contracts without worker approval. Who can blame them? No outside arbitrator will ever understand the needs of workers and employers better than the people directly involved.

Perhaps nowhere is this more true than in Alaska. Our businesses operate in unique conditions,

often involving remote worksites, seasonal challenges, and high transportation costs. When Washington steps in to rush the negotiation process and dictate labor contract terms, these important nuances can easily be overlooked. Small and medium-sized employers don't have teams of lawyers or federal lobbyists to navigate new rules that they might never have agreed to in the first place. Alaskans engaged in labor negotiations need ample time and flexibility, not Washington micromanagement.

Alaska's workers and businesses deserve the right to make their own choices. This bill could force both sides to agree to unfavorable terms. That's just wrong. The parties involved should have the chance to negotiate in good faith, on their own terms, without government deadlines or arbitration hovering over them. To me, that is common sense.

"Faster labor contracts" is just another way of saying "rushed labor contracts"; nobody wants that, and yet some in D.C. want to make it the law of the land.

I hope that our Alaskan Congressional Delegation in Washington, D.C. will oppose this misguided legislation. Whatever its sponsors' intentions might be, its consequences would be disastrous. The Faster Labor Contracts Act is bad for workers, bad for businesses, and bad for Alaska.

Dennis DeWitt is a former Alaska State Director for the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) and served in the administrations of Governors Hickel, Murkowski, and Palin and President Reagan.

JUNEAU EMPIRE

A place government doesn't need to stick its nose

Dennis DeWitt | October 18, 2025

I've spent much of my career advocating on behalf of Alaska's small and independent business owners at all levels of government. While this sometimes meant championing specific policy proposals to help Alaskan businesses and their employees, I found that, frequently, the best thing government can do is step out of the way. Unfortunately, there is a new proposal in Washington that would do just the opposite; the Faster Labor Contracts Act would subject private workplace negotiations to tight, arbitrary deadlines and could force workers and employers into contracts they never agreed to.

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KANSAS

The Wichita Eagle

Marshall-backed bill threatens employer-employee relations

Brent Bowers | June 8, 2026

As a small business owner, I cherish the relationship I have with my employees.

I can't imagine having a panel of government bureaucrats step between us and dictate new workplace rules that neither I, nor my employees, ever agreed to.

That's why I'm deeply troubled by legislation that is currently under consideration in Washington: The Faster Labor Contracts Act.

If a newly unionized workplace fails to reach a first contract within roughly 100 days, the FLCA hands that process over to a panel of government-appointed arbitrators.

Those arbitrators are not required to have any expertise in the relevant industry.

They bear no liability if the terms they impose drive a business into the ground. And once they have issued a ruling, it remains in effect for two years.

Workers don't get to vote on it, and the employer has no recourse.

But the part of this bill that should alarm every Kansas business owner is what can end up in these contracts.

Unions across the country have been using contract negotiations to advance a political agenda that has nothing to do with wages or working conditions.

Under the FLCA, a panel of unaccountable government arbitrators could lock those demands into binding agreements that neither employers nor workers asked for.

Consider what unions have put on the table in recent years.

The union at Trader Joe's demanded that the company designate all its unionized locations as "sanctuary stores" — something the company rejected as illegal.

Multiple union locals have demanded contract language requiring employers to bar federal immigration agents from entering company property without a judge-signed warrant, effectively conscripting private businesses into resistance against federal law enforcement.

Here in Kansas, the Wichita Federation of Teachers — AFT Local 725 — has demanded that teacher orientation include mandatory diversity training components, with all teachers required to attend additional diversity sessions throughout the school year.

Under the FLCA, demands like this could be imposed on Kansas employers by arbitrators with no stake in the outcome and no accountability to Kansas workers.

Sen. Roger Marshall has always been a champion for Kansas families and small businesses.

He is a co-sponsor of this bill, which I can only assume is because he wants to show support for working people.

But I'd ask him to look carefully at what this bill actually does.

It certainly does not empower the average working men and women of this country.

In reality, it could hand union leaders — and through them, far-left activists — the power to embed their political agenda into workplace contracts through a government process that answers to no one.

Small business owners are not anti-worker. My employees are my neighbors. I want them fairly compensated and genuinely heard.

A contract handed down by government arbitrators who have never stepped inside the doors of a given workplace — and who face zero consequences if their ruling forces it out of business — is not a voice for workers.

Sen. Marshall has spent his career fighting for Kansas values against Washington overreach. I hope he will take a closer look at this bill and reconsider his support.

— Brent Bowers owns Let's Roll Bowling, which operates locations in Derby, Olathe and Wichita.

THE TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL

Kansas businesses and workers don't need DC intervention

Jake King | October 18, 2025

As a small business owner in Topeka, I know the importance of treating my employees well and fairly. I also know that when the government involves itself in how my business operates, it nearly always makes things worse, not better, for both me and my employees.

Unfortunately, Washington has a new proposal — the Faster Labor Contracts Act — which would do just that for businesses like mine across the nation.

This legislation is probably well-intentioned, but like so many past government interventions in the private sector, it would have massive and detrimental unintended consequences.

To speed up labor negotiations, it would force employers to begin bargaining with a new union in just 10 days. If no agreement is reached within 90 days, the process moves to mediation. If 30 more days pass without a finalized contract, the case is pushed into binding arbitration, where an outside arbitrator imposes a contract on the business and workers before it.

In other words, the most important parts of the employer-employee relationship — wages, benefits, workplace rules — would be dictated by a third party. Since labor contracts last for years, businesses and workers could be locked into terms that neither of them ever approved.

Thus, binding arbitration takes power away from businesses and workers and gives it to an entity with no connection to the company and employees that are in conflict. The process forces an agreement where there otherwise might not have been one and virtually guarantees that both sides will walk away feeling shortchanged.

As a business owner who cares deeply about his employees, I think this is wrong. The Faster Labor Contracts Act would make changes to the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which has been the law of the land for nearly a century. Under current law, employers and unions are required to negotiate in good faith but are never forced to make concessions or agree to proposals. That's common sense.

A labor contract that treats employers and employees fairly takes time to get right. That's because workplace agreements are immensely complex. Every detail matters and rushing the process to meet arbitrary deadlines set by Washington is not the answer.

I'm not alone in thinking that this kind of heavy-handed government intervention is a bad idea. A national survey released in September by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce found that 90% of voters oppose government-mandated union contracts that lack worker approval. Unfortunately, in many cases, this legislation would override workers' preferences.

Sen. Roger Marshall has long been a champion for working families and businesses here in Kansas. I hope that he will oppose this legislation and encourage his colleagues to do the same. Whatever its intentions, the Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408 and S. 844) would be bad for both employers and their workers.

Labor contracts that both parties can accept take a lot of time and detailed negotiations — and no amount of legislation handed down from Washington can change that.

Jake King is the owner of the Tee Box in Topeka.

LOUISIANA

THE HAYRIDE
SOUTHERN POLITICS & CULTURE

[An Example Of A Big Government Overreach We Seriously Do Not Need]
Charlie Davis | April 30, 2026

I've watched Speaker Mike Johnson build a career rooted in exactly the kind of limited government principles that made Louisiana Republicans competitive in the first place. He knows what it looks like when Washington overreaches and the havoc it inevitably causes. Congress is now considering a bill—the Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408)—that is a prime example of such overreach, and I urge him to lead the way in defeating it.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act is being sold as a commonsense fix for a real problem: workers sometimes wait too long for a first union contract after an election. The FLCA would set a federal clock on those negotiations—bargaining must begin within ten days, a mediator steps in if there is no agreement within 90 days, and if mediation fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel takes over and writes the contract. Employers and workers are bound to whatever that panel decides. You heard that right; a panel of unelected bureaucrats could decide the terms of a union contract without workers ever having the chance to vote on it. That's wrong. Such agreements would govern their wages and working conditions for the next two years. And if the workers didn't like what the panel came up with? Well, they'd be stuck with it.

As a small business owner, I can tell you that negotiating your own agreements, on your own terms, is something you can take for granted until someone starts threatening to take it away. The FLCA would give an obscure federal agency—the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service—unprecedented new authority over private-sector labor relations. That expansion of federal bureaucracy runs counter to everything the Trump administration has been working toward since taking office. In fact, the President has now formally proposed eliminating it entirely; the newly released FY2027 budget proposal explicitly calls for the closure of the FMCS. The administration wants this agency gone—yet the FLCA would require a massive expansion of it.

The economic research backs up the concerns I have. A Mercatus Center analysis of 147 studies over three decades found that when union contracts are driven by outside pressure rather than mutual agreement, the result is slower job growth, reduced business investment, and a higher likelihood of layoffs down the road. Big wins at the bargaining table, secured by outsized union leverage rather than cooperation, have a way of costing workers more than they gained.

The FLCA also isn't a new proposal. It is a single provision pulled from the PRO Act, the Democrats' broad rewriting of labor law. That legislation has failed to make it into law for good reason—it would hurt the very workers it claims to protect.

I know Speaker Johnson understands what's at stake when Washington inserts itself into private agreements and starts writing the terms. A discharge petition (H.Res. 1140) is now circulating to force a floor vote in the House and members are being asked to sign. I urge him to send a strong message to the Republican caucus that the Faster Labor Contracts Act will hurt American workers and should be rejected.

Charlie Davis is the Secretary of the Republican Party of Louisiana and a Louisiana entrepreneur and small business owner.

MINNESOTA

Monticello Times

Process matters in labor law debate

Kip Christianson | April 30, 2026

Good governance does not happen by accident. City Council decisions that hold up over time are the ones that went through the process the right way — reviewed carefully and honestly, scored for cost, debated publicly, and made with a full understanding of the potential consequences. Shortcuts almost always cost more than they save.

This is just as true when it comes to federal law, which is why the Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408) concerns me.

The bill is designed to speed up first-contract labor negotiations after a union election. Under its structure, bargaining must begin within 10 days. If no agreement is reached within 90 days, a federal mediator steps in. If mediation fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel would then impose a binding contract.

That is a significant change to how labor relations work in this country, and it is happening on a very compressed timeline. Speed may sound appealing, but it comes at a cost. Deadlines like these can create incentives to delay meaningful negotiation and push both sides toward arbitration rather than resolution. When the final outcome can be decided by a third party, the incentive to reach agreement at the table is diminished.

Equally concerning is how the bill is being advanced.

There has been no full committee process, no meaningful public vetting, and no independent cost analysis released to date. Instead, the bill's backers are pursuing a discharge petition — a procedural maneuver designed to bypass committee review and force a vote on the House floor. That may be allowed under House rules, but it avoids the kind of scrutiny major policy changes deserve.

That is not how good governance works — at the federal level, the local level, or any level.

From a local perspective, what troubles me most is what this approach would mean in practice. Collective bargaining works best when it reflects the actual conditions of a workplace: the industry, the regional economy, and the workforce.

A government-appointed arbitration panel operating on a deadline does not have that context. The likely result is more standardized outcomes for situations that are anything but standard.

The businesses and workers in central Minnesota deserve better than that.

Here in Minnesota, we pride ourselves on a strong work ethic and our ability to solve our own problems through due diligence and common sense. When Washington imposes a one-size-fits-all timeline and hands over final decisions to unelected arbitrators, it undermines that approach.

Beginning with his service on his own City Council, Rep. Tom Emmer has spent his career in public service emphasizing the importance of doing governance the right way. As House Majority Whip, he has consistently opposed the use of discharge petitions to advance legislation that lacks broad support within the conference.

He understands the value of building consensus and allowing the legislative process to work as intended. Members should follow Rep. Emmer's lead and allow the regular order process to play out.

As a Minnesotan from northern Wright County, I'm proud to be represented by Rep. Emmer. I am confident he will stand up for working Americans now, just as he has in the past.

Kip Christianson is a member of the Monticello City Council and a longtime Republican activist in Minnesota. He served as Trump deputy state director in 2024.

MISSOURI

The Missouri Times

[Missouri businesses and workers need flexibility in negotiating labor contracts]
Vinnie Clubb | October 15, 2025

As someone who works closely with Missouri farmers, ranchers, and community leaders, I know how important local businesses are to keeping our rural economy strong. From manufacturers to service providers, these employers provide good jobs and stability in towns like mine. That's why I'm concerned about the Faster Labor Contracts Act now being debated in Washington. While it is framed as a way to streamline workplace negotiations, it would, in practice, tie up Missouri businesses in red tape and hand control of critical decisions to Washington bureaucrats.

Supporters claim that this bill would speed up the negotiation process between employers and unions. In reality, the proposal would force an employer to begin bargaining with a new union in just ten days. If no agreement is reached within 90 days, the process automatically moves to mediation. And if 30 more days pass without a deal, the case gets sent to binding arbitration, where an outside arbitrator imposes a contract on the business and its workers.

This means that Missouri businesses could see wages, benefits, and working conditions dictated by Washington bureaucrats and arbitrators who have little understanding of our industries or communities. Once imposed, these contracts would last for years, locking employers and workers into terms they never agreed to and cannot change.

This is not how negotiations should work. For nearly 90 years, the National Labor Relations Act has

required employers and unions to bargain in good faith, but it has never forced either side to make concessions or agree to proposals. This balance respects the rights of both workers and employers. It also ensures that contracts reflect real-world conditions—not the arbitrary deadlines of politicians in Washington.

There is a reason why the average first contract currently takes over a year to negotiate: wages and workplace conditions are complicated issues. Rushing the process, as this bill demands, can lead to bad outcomes for both businesses and workers.

Here in Missouri, small businesses are already struggling with inflation and manpower shortages.

The last thing we need is a new federal law that strips away our flexibility and hands decision-making power to third parties.

Most importantly, average citizens don't want this type of heavy-handed government intervention. A recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey found that 90% of voters oppose government-mandated union contracts without worker approval. Americans across the country believe that workers should have a say in their futures—not be forced into agreements written by someone else.

Senator Josh Hawley—whom I respect a great deal—is the sponsor of this bill. I can only assume that he has workers' best interests at heart. But this bill, if it becomes law, would have disastrous unintended consequences for those workers. Employers and employees should be free to sit down together in good faith, at their own pace, and hammer out agreements that fit their unique circumstances.

Missourians don't need Washington bureaucrats telling us how to run our businesses or our workplaces. I urge Senator Hawley to reconsider his proposed legislation and stand with Missouri employers and workers.

We don't need faster labor contracts. We need better ones. Complex union negotiations take time, but getting a fair deal for everyone is worth the wait.

Vinnie Clubb is the Wayne County Farm Bureau President, serves on the regional Ozark Foothills Cattlemen's Association Board of Directors, and is active in state and local agricultural organizations.

NEW YORK

Mid Hudson NEWS
Serving the Hudson Valley / Catskill Region for Over 25 Years

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Op Ed: Workers deserve a vote
Robert Pape | April 26, 2026

I spent 47 years in the school transportation industry—first inside a school district transportation department, then running my own school bus contracting company. I have worked with unions throughout my career and respect what they do for workers in this industry.

My experience working with unions tells me that the Faster Labor Contracts Act—currently making its way through Congress—is a bad idea.

The bill's premise is that first-contract negotiations take too long, so the federal government should impose a timeline: under the proposal, bargaining must begin within ten days of a union election, mediation kicks in at day 100, and if that fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel takes over at day 130 and writes the contract. Workers and employers are legally bound to the result for two years, with no ratification vote.

That last part is what really troubles me. The vast majority of union contracts in the country stipulate that workers vote to ratify or reject what their negotiators bring back to them. That vote is the check on the whole system. It gives workers real power—not just the power to be represented, but the power to say no. The FLCA hands that decision to a government panel and takes it away from workers entirely.

I also know from experience that no two labor contracts in school transportation look alike and nor should they. Every school district on Long Island has a different budget, different student population, different routes—no two contracts end up looking the same because no two districts are the same. Private contractors have their own cost structures and workforce realities that vary enormously even within a single county. Collective bargaining in this industry works because both sides have to live with what they negotiate. An arbitrator on a federal deadline doesn't have to live with anything. They write the contract and move on. But the district and the workers are stuck with it for two years.

That's the bill's core flaw: it assumes labor negotiations only ever go slowly because of bad faith, but really, they often just take time to get right. Rushing that process and handing the outcome to an outside panel doesn't produce better contracts.

The FLCA is a provision lifted right from the PRO Act. That legislation has failed many times to make it into law and for good reason. Government-appointed arbitrators setting private-sector wages and working conditions, with no meaningful check, is government overreach, plain and simple.

Congresswoman Malliotakis, Congressman LaLota, Congressman Lawler have all earned a reputations for listening to the people who actually do the work in their districts. I'm asking them to support workers and businesses and reconsider their support for the Faster Labor Contracts Act.

by Robert Pape, former President of the New York School Bus Contractors Association and the New York Association for Pupil Transportation, and former owner of a school transportation company serving Long Island school districts.

NORTH CAROLINA

NEUSE NEWS.com

Faster Labor Contracts Act (FLCA) bill

Brent Heath | June 3, 2026

Lenoir County currently has a 3.5% unemployment rate, and the median income is just over $45,000. Legislation is moving through Congress that would hand Washington bureaucrats sweeping new authority over workplace contracts in eastern North Carolina and across the nation. As a conservative, I see this as

disastrous, but this bill should gravely concern you regardless of your political affiliation. It will empower union bosses and unaccountable government arbitrators at the expense of workers and businesses alike.

Under the Faster Labor Contracts Act (FLCA) bill, when workers vote to unionize, the new union and the employer have 100 days to negotiate a first contract. If negotiations fail, a federal mediator is appointed to resolve disagreements. If mediation fails, the dispute goes to a panel of three government-appointed arbitrators.

Here is the concerning part: these government arbitrators would not be required to have any relevant industry experience. They also would not be liable if their decisions cost workers jobs. This alone should be enough for legislators to dismiss this bill. Unfortunately, the proposal has gained troubling momentum in recent weeks: Representative Don Davis (D-01-NC) signed a discharge petition that risks breathing new life into this ill-conceived legislation.

Additionally, the FLCA would empower a radical fringe in the labor movement, which is notorious for injecting far-left ideology into the bargaining process. There are several examples of unions turning contract negotiations into a vehicle for radical left politics.
At Columbia University, the Student Workers union made demands so extreme that even its parent union, the United Auto Workers, urged them to reconsider. These demands included prohibiting Columbia from contacting the New York Police Department under any circumstances, requiring the university to dismantle

its security cameras, establishing an open campus where no one has to show identification, and even requiring Columbia to divest from Israel and end its academic partnerships with Israeli universities. Last year the Trader Joe's union formally demanded the company designate all its stores as sanctuary stores, while privately strategizing how to provoke the company into objecting so that the union could score political points with the public.

There is no shortage of these troubling examples, but the point is clear: labor unions all too often prioritize partisan politics ahead of the real needs of their workers. By instituting an arbitrary and unrealistically tight timeline, the FLCA would force arbitration early in the process. If that happens, radical ideology risks being imposed on workers and businesses alike without it ever being voted on.

Representative Davis has positioned himself as a moderate who puts North Carolina first. However, signing a discharge petition to force a vote on such radical legislation is not what a moderate prioritizing North Carolinians would do. It is the act of someone who has decided to prioritize union bosses in Washington over the workers and employers he was sent to represent. Partisan political agendas, from open borders to defunding the police, do not belong in labor contracts. To represent North Carolina first as he promised, Representative Davis should withdraw his support for this bill and clearly tell his constituents that he will vote against it when it reaches the floor.

Brent Heath is a NC GOP District Chairman

OHIO

The Ohio Star
STATE AND LOCAL NEWS THAT MATTERS

[Another Washington Overreach into the Workplace]
Tom Zawistowski | April 18, 2026

Ohio businesses are getting squeezed from every direction right now. Tariff uncertainty is disrupting supply chains. Input costs are up. The labor market hasn't fully stabilized. Many of the business owners I know are just trying to keep their people employed and their doors open. That context matters when you look at what Congress is considering doing to them next.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408) would impose a federal timeline on first-contract collective bargaining negotiations. Bargaining must start within 10 days of a union election. If there is no agreement within 90 days, a government mediator steps in. If mediation fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel takes over and writes the contract—wages, benefits, working conditions, all of it. The employer has no further say. Neither do the workers.

Here's what the bill's supporters won't tell you: it actually makes the negotiating process worse, not better. Under the FLCA, unions have every incentive to drag their feet. Why make concessions at the table when a government arbitrator is waiting at the end of the process? The bill rewards bad-faith bargaining by guaranteeing a backstop for the side that refuses to move.
It also directly contradicts the agenda Ohio workers and employers voted for. President Trump has already tagged the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service—the obscure agency that would gain sweeping new authority under the FLCA—for elimination. He signed an executive order that called for reducing the agency, and the latest FY2027 budget proposal goes even further, explicitly calling for "the orderly closure of FMCS." The FLCA would require a massive investment in that same bureaucracy at the exact moment the administration is trying to eliminate it.

And make no mistake about who loses when an arbitrator shows up. Workers lose the right to vote on their own contract. Union constitutions across the country require member ratification—workers get to approve or reject what their representatives negotiate. Under the FLCA, that vote could disappear. A government panel hands down a binding two-year agreement and workers are stuck with it.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act is practically copy-and-pasted from a section of the PRO Act, the unions' sweeping labor reform bill. The PRO Act has never been able to pass Congress, because Americans understood what government-written labor contracts meant.

Representatives Rulli, Miller, and Carey represent Ohio workers and Ohio employers. This state's economy does not need Washington adding new layers of uncertainty and government interference to the already complicated business of running a company and keeping people working. I'm calling on our representatives to reject this bad deal for workers and businesses and you should too: Rulli 202-225-5705, Miller 202-225-3876, and Carey 202-225-2015.

Tom Zawistowski is the President of the We the People Convention and Executive Director of the Portage County Tea Party. He is also the founder of TRZ Communications, a technology company based in Akron, Ohio.

How Organized Labor Hurts Company Performance

Aaron Flatter | April 14, 2026

Every day, I work with businesses large and small across Darke County. Each one faces its own unique set of opportunities and challenges. Unfortunately, Congress is now considering legislation

that would impose a one-size-fits-all framework on labor negotiations, and I am deeply concerned about the negative impact this could have.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408) is the kind of legislation that sounds reasonable from a distance and causes real problems up close.

As its name implies, the proposed law is intended to speed up contract negotiations, but it does so by imposing unworkably fast timelines and inserting bureaucracy into the process. Under the bill, bargaining must begin within ten days of a new union being formed, a mediator steps in if there is no agreement within 90 days, and if mediation fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel takes over and writes the contract themselves. Employers and workers are then stuck with whatever the mediator decides the contract should say.

For the businesses I work with, this would be unthinkable. A government-appointed panel setting wages and working conditions for a business it knows nothing about, in a county it has never visited, against a timeline designed in Washington, is not going to produce better agreements. I am concerned that, when carried out in the real world, the end result would be layoffs, cutbacks, and in some cases, closures.

That's not a hypothetical concern, either. A Mercatus Center analysis of 147 studies spanning three decades found that when union contracts are driven by outside pressure rather than genuine

negotiation, the results are slower job growth, reduced investment, and higher rates of layoffs. When businesses are backed into a corner and forced to accept terms they cannot realistically meet, workers end up paying the price. What looks like a win at the bargaining table can hollow out a workplace within a few years.

Businesses here in Darke County operate on tight margins. Their labor arrangements are built around local conditions and local costs. A federal arbitrator has no real way to account for any of that. The FLCA treats every workplace in America as interchangeable, and they are not.

It's important to where this bill comes from. The FLCA is not a new idea. It is a provision pulled directly from the PRO Act, the sweeping labor overhaul that could not pass Congress for years because it could not attract genuine bipartisan support. This new bill is just an attempt to resurrect a piece of that larger, failed legislation.

Congressman Mike Carey represents communities like Darke County. I am asking him to look hard at whether this bill actually serves those communities, or whether it puts them at risk.

Aaron Flatter is a Darke County Commissioner and works for an electric contracting company serving businesses throughout western Ohio.

Versailles Policy

Protecting Businesses from Washington
Bill Coomer | October 15, 2025

Letter to the Editor:

Protecting Businesses from Washington

As a proud business owner, I know firsthand what it takes to build and sustain a successful company. For decades, we've grown by relying on direct relationships, open communication, and a merit-based culture where hard work is rewarded. That approach has helped us attract and retain talented workers while building a strong, resilient business.

Now, Congress is considering legislation that would undermine that proven model and weaken workers' freedom. The "Faster Labor Contracts Act" would require employers and unions to begin negotiating collective bargaining agreements within 10 days of a union being certified and finalize those agreements in a matter of months. On its face, that may sound reasonable. In practice, it's an unprecedented federal intrusion into how businesses and workers in Ohio operate.

Collective bargaining takes time to get right. It is a complex process that should be guided by the needs of employees and employers, not artificial deadlines imposed by politicians. Rushing that process leaves little room for employees to ensure every detail of a contract works for them.

Even worse, the bill lays out a rigid process that outsources control to Washington. Under the Faster Labor Contracts Act, employers would have just 10 days after a union wins an election to begin negotiations. If no agreement is reached within 90 days, the dispute would be sent to mediation. If mediation fails within 30 days, the matter would go to binding arbitration, where a government-appointed arbitrator would impose the first contract. That means wages, benefits, and workplace rules could be dictated not by employees and employers, but by Washington bureaucrats. Workers could find themselves locked into multi-year contracts they never approved, with little recourse.

For Ohio businesses already navigating inflation, rising energy costs, and workforce challenges, this bill would add yet another layer of bureaucracy. Instead of empowering Ohio workers, it could diminish their bargaining power. That is not the direction our state, or our country, should be moving, and voters agree—a recent national survey of registered voters found that 90% oppose government-mandated union contracts that are not approved by workers.

Our own Sen. Bernie Moreno (R-OH) has signed on as a co-sponsor of this misguided bill. I urge him to reconsider. Ohioans know that government mandates rarely solve problems; they usually create new ones. This proposal is no exception.

Our years of growth prove that strong employee relations require less federal oversight, not more. When employers and workers sit down together—without the pressure of forced arbitrary deadlines—they can build lasting solutions. That's how we've built our business, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

I urge Senator Jon Husted (R-OH) to stand with Ohio workers and businesses by opposing the Faster Labor Contracts Act.

Bill Coomer

Bill Coomer has successful businesses in both Darke and Miami Counties.

OKLAHOMA

Stop D.C.'s Push to One-Size Agreements

Jessica Garvin | September 29, 2025

For nearly two decades, I have dedicated my career to caring for Oklahoma's seniors and supporting the professionals who make their long-term care possible. As co-owner of Bison Health Management, Executive Director of West Wind Assisted Living, and owner and COO of Refuge Care, I see firsthand the challenges of building strong teams and running businesses in a heavily regulated field. Add to that my experience as a small business owner and former Oklahoma state senator, and I have learned one thing above all: when government oversteps, workers and businesses both suffer.

That's why I am deeply concerned about the so-called Faster Labor Contracts Act recently introduced in Washington. On its face, the bill claims to streamline negotiations between employers and newly certified unions. In reality, it hands unprecedented power to government bureaucrats at the expense of Oklahoma workers and businesses.

If this bill becomes law, employers would be required to start bargaining with a new union in just ten days. If both sides can't reach an agreement in 90 days, they are forced into mediation. Finally, if the details aren't worked out 30 days after that, the dispute is sent to binding arbitration. In other words, an outside arbitrator would decide the contract rather than Oklahoma employees and business owners. That first contract could dictate wages, benefits, and working conditions for years to come, regardless of whether workers approved of the terms.

This heavy-handed approach upends the balance Congress established nearly 90 years ago with the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Under current law, employers and unions must bargain in good faith but are not forced to make concessions or agree to a proposal. That balance respects the rights of both sides and ensures that contracts are the product of free, uncoerced negotiation. According to *Bloomberg Law*, it currently takes an average of 458 days to reach a first contract. This reflects the reality that deciding wages, hours, and workplace conditions is complicated and should not be rushed.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act ignores those realities. By setting rigid deadlines and threatening government intervention, it all but guarantees that workers and businesses will be pressured into agreements that don't fit their needs. Oklahoma workers could find themselves locked into multi-year contracts imposed by Washington bureaucrats without ever having had a real say.

American voters agree this is wrong: a September 2025 survey from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce found that 90% of voters oppose government-mandated union contracts without worker approval.

The best solutions come from empowering people, not government meddling. Oklahomans know how to negotiate, compromise, and solve problems without Washington looking over our shoulders. Our federal lawmakers should therefore reject the Faster Labor Contracts Act and stand up for the principles of freedom, fairness, and local control. I urge Senator Markwayne Mullin to vote against this misguided bill and tell his colleagues to do the same.

Union contracts take time to get right. The last thing workers and business owners need is Washington rushing the process.

About the author: *Jessica Garvin is co-owner of Bison Health Management, Executive Director of West Wind Assisted Living, owner and COO of Refuge Care, and a former Oklahoma state senator who represented District 43 from 2020 to 2024.*

PENNSYLVANIA

BROAD + LIBERTY

Don't let the FCLA fool you
Josephine Ferro | April 22, 2026

Why is it that supposedly "pro-labor" legislation usually ends up hurting workers instead of helping them? Too often, proposals that claim to champion the cause of working people actually end up doing the exact opposite. The Faster Labor Contracts Act, currently under consideration in Congress, falls squarely into that category.

According to this bill's proponents, when workers vote to form a union, they often wait too long for a first contract. The FLCA would impose deadlines on that process in an effort to force a speedy resolution. As is often the case, it's a compelling pitch, but one that proves unworkable when you look closer at the details.

Under this bill, if contract negotiations stall and the process reaches arbitration, a government-appointed panel steps in and writes the contract. Wages, benefits, workplace safety standards — all of it would be decided by people who have never set foot in the workplace and whose decision the workers themselves have no right to reject. No ratification vote. No say. A two-year binding agreement handed down from government bureaucrats.

At a Senate hearing last October, a Boeing shop steward was asked directly about this scenario. His answer was unambiguous: if workers lost the right to vote on their own contract through arbitration, **he said**, "that would be removing the democracy from the workplace, which is the whole point of the union, giving the workers a say." A union man, testifying for the pro-union side, identified the FLCA's central flaw before a Senate committee.

The right to ratify a contract is a core protection in ensuring workers have a direct voice in their agreements. It is the moment when workers, as a group, decide whether the deal on the table is worth accepting. The FLCA would deprive workers of that moment and hand it to a panel of arbitrators. Whatever else you call that, you cannot call it pro-worker.

It is also worth knowing where this bill actually comes from. The FLCA is not a new idea — it is a provision pulled directly from the PRO Act, the sweeping labor law overhaul that spent years going

nowhere in Congress because it could not attract bipartisan support. The Teamsters' own spokeswoman **described** the PRO Act as something "trotted out in election years for scorecards, not results." The FLCA is a piece of that failed legislation wrapped up in different packaging.

There are real ways to address the problem of stalled first-contract negotiations. The National Labor Relations Board already has authority to go after employers who genuinely refuse to bargain in good faith. Strengthening enforcement, increasing transparency, making bad-faith tactics more costly — these approaches keep workers at the center of the process. The FLCA replaces the process with government fiat.

Congressman Rob Bresnahan has spent his career demonstrating what genuine commitment to working people looks like — employing union labor at his family's electrical contracting business, serving as a trustee for IBEW 163's Health, Wellness, and Annuity Funds, fighting for the workers in our communities who show up every day and deserve to be treated fairly. His record on labor is not a political calculation. It reflects who he is.

That is exactly why I hope he will take a second look at the FLCA. The bill he has cosponsored would take away from workers the very thing he has spent years defending: their voice. Urging him to reconsider is not a criticism. It is a recognition that he knows better than most what real labor protections are supposed to do.

The FLCA should be measured by what it actually delivers, not what it promises. Workers deserve a seat at the table. This bill pulls the chair out from under them.

Josephine Ferro is former Monroe County Register of Wills and Recorder of Deeds.

WEST VIRGINIA

Legal Newsline

FLCA is a bad deal for both workers, employers

Bill Bissett | May 4, 2026

Regardless of size, running a business is always a challenge, but these days, it seems harder than ever. Too often, Washington, D.C. fails to consider how their decisions could impact businesses like those that the WV Manufacturers Association represents. One example would be House Resolution 5408 (link), which is also known as the Faster Labor Contracts Act or FLCA. This federal legislation is not only a threat to West Virginia's manufacturers, but to all businesses large and small across the Mountain State.

The FLCA is designed to speed up first-contract negotiations between newly organized workers and their employers. Under its structure, bargaining must begin within ten days of a union election. After that, a mediator steps in if there is no agreement within 90 days. If mediation fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel takes over and writes the contract with no further vote by the workers or employers who will be bound by it for the next two years.

Supporters describe this as leveling the playing field. For West Virginia's manufacturers —and the workers they employ — it does the opposite.

This bill presumes that employers are acting in bad faith, but the National Labor Relations Board already has the authority to prosecute employers who genuinely refuse to bargain. This legislation goes far beyond existing law and creates an entirely new and unnecessary federal apparatus. For an employer who shows up to negotiate in good faith, that presumption is both unfair and costly. West Virginia is a right-to-work state — one that believes government should stay out of private-sector negotiations. The FLCA moves us in exactly the opposite direction.

The real-world track record of government-imposed contracts in this industry should give everyone pause. In one example, when an arbitrator in Canada imposed a 33 percent wage increase on a Walmart tire shop, the shop closed shortly after. The external arbitrator set terms the business could not absorb and moved on. That is what often happens when someone with no stake in the outcome writes the contract: the workers who were supposed to benefit end up without jobs.

It is worth noting that opposition to forced arbitration is not a partisan issue. The late AFL-CIO president George Meany called compulsory arbitration "an abrogation of freedom," and the Airline Pilots Association described a similar proposal as "anathema to free collective bargaining." It is important to remember that these are union voices expressing concern. These labor leaders understood that collective bargaining only works when both sides have genuine "skin in the game" and that handing the outcome to a government panel destroys the entire premise.

There is also a well-documented pattern in jurisdictions that have tried mandatory arbitration systems. Once arbitration becomes available as an option, it stops being treated as a last resort. Labor economists call it the "narcotic effect"—parties grow dependent on the government stepping in, good-faith bargaining atrophies, and the arbitration pipeline gets clogged. Even New Jersey's reformed fast-track arbitration system, specifically redesigned for speed, takes a minimum of six months under optimal conditions. The FLCA promises five. No real-world system has ever delivered that. What is promised on paper and what happens are often two very different things.

While Congressman Riley Moore currently supports FLCA, we understand that he has genuine ties to labor in this state and we appreciate the great work that he has done on behalf of all his constituents. I hope he will take a hard look at what the FLCA bill actually does to the workers and employers of West Virginia and reconsider his support of it.

Bill Bissett is the President of the West Virginia Manufacturers Association, a statewide advocacy group that represents manufacturers as well as companies dependent on manufacturing for their livelihoods.

The Intelligencer.
Wheeling News-Register

The FCLA is a Bad Deal for Both Workers and Employers
Bill Bissett | May 3, 2026

Sunday, May 3, 2026 COMMENTARY SUNDAY NEWS REGISTER – Wheeling, W.Va. – B3

Local Representation Is at Risk in West Virginia

Andrea Oxley

Self-reliance, resilience, and a healthy skepticism of authority have long shaped West Virginians – over time instilling a deep-rooted commitment to independence that defines the state's character.

And as a state where independence is synonymous with our culture, most West Virginians don't like outsiders telling us how to live, how to work – or how to vote. But in this election cycle, there's a growing question voters should be asking:

Are West Virginia voters choosing their own candidates or are candidates being pre-selected and funded from the top down?

This election cycle has those paying attention concerned that local representation is at risk. When candidates are selected by funding networks rather than their communities, power shifts away from voters. When that happens, local priorities risk becoming dominated - or replaced entirely- by external agendas.

New funding channels are shining a light on a troubling pattern in West Virginia politics- one that voters deserve to understand before they head to the ballot box.

Official reports indicate large donations from a small number of sources and connections between PACs and political networks tied to efforts by leaders of our state. This should prompt questions from all West Virginia voters: Why are out of state billionaires so invested in the outcome of West Virginia elections?

Even more concerning is what we are beginning to see across primary races statewide. Too many primary challengers appear less community oriented and more strategically engineered. Most West Virginians would agree that those we elect should be chosen by- and accountable to- the people they represent. Yet, curiously, candidates seem to be elevated not by their communities, but by coordinated funding networks, backed by undisclosed donors and aligned with priorities voters themselves have never approved.

This raises another uncomfortable question: are outside interests attempting to shape outcomes from afar, assuming West Virginians won't notice- or won't question- the forces at work behind the scenes?

This issue isn't about parties, it's about control. When large amounts of money move through opaque channels, candidates can be promoted or targeted with little transparency, elections can be influenced by networks outside the communities they affect, and it opens the door for out-of-state interests to write West Virginia's future.

Before casting your ballot this primary, look beyond the political rhetoric. Follow the money. Ask who is funding these messages and why. Preserving the independence that defines us requires more than tradition, it demands vigilance. West Virginians must realize the risks of losing local representation and whose interests are at stake. West Virginia's future belongs to West Virginians - and West Virginians alone.

Andrea Oxley is the Business Development, Policy and Strategic Initiatives Lead at the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

The FCLA Is a Bad Deal for Both Workers and Employers

Bill Bissett

Regardless of size, running a business is always a challenge, but these days, it seems harder than ever. Too often, Washington, D.C. fails to consider how their decisions could impact businesses like those that the WV Manufacturers Association represents. One example would be House Resolution 5408 (link), which is also known as the Faster Labor Contracts Act or FLCA. This federal legislation is not only a threat to West Virginia's manufacturers, but to all businesses large and small across the Mountain State.

The FLCA is designed to speed up first-contract negotiations between newly organized workers and their employers. Under its structure, bargaining must begin within ten days of a union election. After that, a mediator steps in if there is no agreement within 90 days. If mediation fails, a government-appointed arbitration panel takes over and writes the contract with no further vote by the workers or employers who will be bound by it for the next two years.

Supporters describe this as leveling the playing field. For West Virginia's manufacturers —and the workers they employ — it does the opposite.

This bill presumes that employers are acting in bad faith, but the National Labor Relations Board already has the authority to prosecute employers who genuinely refuse to bargain. This legislation goes far beyond existing law and creates an entirely new and unnecessary federal apparatus. For an employer who shows up to negotiate in good faith, that presumption is both unfair and costly. West Virginia is a right-to-work state — one that believes government should stay out of private-sector negotiations. The FLCA moves us in exactly the opposite direction.

The real-world track record of government-imposed contracts in this industry should give everyone pause. In one example, when an arbitrator in Canada imposed a 33 percent wage increase on a Walmart tire shop, the shop closed shortly after. The external arbitrator set terms the business could not absorb and moved on. That is what often happens when someone with no stake in the outcome writes the contract: the workers who were supposed to benefit end up without jobs.

It is worth noting that opposition to forced arbitration is not a partisan issue. The late AFL-CIO president George Meany called compulsory arbitration "an abrogation of freedom," and the Airline Pilots Association described a similar proposal as "anathema to free collective bargaining." It is important to remember that these are union voices expressing concern. These labor leaders understood that collective bargaining only works when both sides have genuine "skin in the game" and that handing the outcome to a government panel destroys the entire premise.

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[The FCLA is a Bad Deal for Both Workers and Employers]

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The Exponent Telegram

Government should stay out of contract negotiations
Joe Eddy | October 18, 2025

For decades, I had the privilege of serving as President and CEO of Eagle Manufacturing, a company based right here in West Virginia. Over those years, I understood the importance of sitting downtogether with my employees, talking through challenges, and building trust over time. That approach worked for us, and it works for countless businesses across our state.

That's why I'm concerned about a new proposal in Washington called the Faster Labor Contracts Act. While its name makes it sound like common sense, the reality is that this legislation is unnecessary and could make things worse for both workers and businesses.

The legislation would force employers to begin bargaining with a new union in just ten days. If no agreement is reached within 90 days, the parties are pushed into mediation. And if 30 more days pass without a deal, the case is sent to binding arbitration—meaning an outside arbitrator, not the workers or the employer, decides the terms of the contract. Those contracts would then be locked in for years, regardless of whether employees ever voted to approve them.

This type of government overreach is unwarranted and counterproductive. The National Labor Relations Act, which has guided labor relations for nearly 90 years, already requires employers and unions to bargain in good faith. What it does not do—and what it should not do—is impose artificial deadlines or force either side to accept proposals. That's because effective, healthy bargaining takes time.

Our goal should be better labor contracts, not necessarily faster ones. But Washington stepping into the middle of private negotiations will not result in better labor contracts. More often than not, government interference adds uncertainty, red tape, and unintended consequences. Businesses like the one I led succeed when they can be flexible and responsive—not when they are bound by contracts imposed by bureaucrats or outside arbitrators.

The American people share this skepticism. A recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey found that 90% of voters oppose government-mandated union contracts without worker approval. That is a clear message: people want workers to have freedom and choice, not contracts decided for them without their consent.

West Virginia's economy has always been powered by hard work, independence, and resilience. We don't need federal lawmakers to tell us how to run our workplaces. What we need are policies that give workers and employers the room to negotiate fairly, at their own pace, and on their own terms.

The Faster Labor Contracts Act (H.R. 5408 and S. 844) is a solution in search of a problem. I urge our West Virginia congressional delegation to oppose this misguided legislation.

Joe Eddy is the former president and CEO of Eagle Manufacturing Co. in Wellsburg, WV.

The Weirton Daily Times

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