

Senate Business, Labor, & Technology

01/21/2025 02:00 PM

SB25-005 Worker Protection Collective Bargaining

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Jeany Rush Against themselves</p>	<p>TO: COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS, LABOR, AND TECHNOLOGY RE: SB25-005 – Worker Protection Collective Bargaining From: JEANY RUSH, COLORADO SPRINGS CONCERNED CITIZEN 1-21-25 VOTE: NO ON THIS BILL, NO ON USE OF SAFETY CLAUSE This bill works to destroy decades of relationships with business owners and their employees. By eliminating a second vote for workers, it changes the Labor Peace Act, is yet another area where Denver legislature overreaches in commerce and our communities. Workers deserve this second vote, and they have a right to determine where they spend their wages. Forcing some employees to pay union dues or lose their jobs, is certainly not the American way. Businesses have stood with labor unions in a large way and know this is a wrong way to do business. Workers are also unfairly burdened by this bill, because if they did have any emergencies, or reason to miss a vote, their voices are denied. Many more people will believe they need to turn away from unions altogether, due to the intrusion of this bill. In just a short week and a half, over 200 bills have been introduced. There is no way a rational person can properly review them all, nor respond properly. It is clear you all prepared ahead, and or used your AI bot national programs. What is stunning is you are making us look like an actual GULAG. The Marxist tone is deafening, offensive, and certainly not constitutional. It is in fact an overreach of government. We are asking you to stop! This is not productive to a healthy business climate! Finally, this bill certainly does not serve as an emergency, safety clause need.</p>
<p>Jeany Rush Against</p>	<p>TO: COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS, LABOR, AND TECHNOLOGY RE: SB25-005 – Worker Protection Collective Bargaining</p>

<p>themselves</p>	<p>From: JEANY RUSH, COLORADO SPRINGS CONCERNED CITIZEN</p> <p>1-21-25</p> <p>VOTE: NO ON THIS BILL, NO ON USE OF SAFETY CLAUSE</p> <p>This bill works to destroy decades of relationships with business owners and their employees. By eliminating a second vote for workers, it changes the Labor Peace Act, is yet another area where Denver legislature overreaches in commerce and our communities.</p> <p>Workers deserve this second vote, and they have a right to determine where they spend their wages.</p> <p>Forcing some employees to pay union dues or lose their jobs, is certainly not the American way.</p> <p>Businesses have stood with labor unions in a large way and know this is a wrong way to do business.</p> <p>Workers are also unfairly burdened by this bill, because if they did have any emergencies, or reason to miss a vote, their voices are denied.</p> <p>Many more people will believe they need to turn away from unions altogether, due to the intrusion of this bill.</p> <p>In just a short week and a half, over 200 bills have been introduced.</p> <p>There is no way a rational person can properly review them all, nor respond properly. It is clear you all prepared ahead, and or used your AI bot national programs. What is stunning is you are making us look like an actual GULAG. The Marxist tone is deafening, offensive, and certainly not constitutional. It is in fact an overreach of government.</p> <p>We are asking you to stop! This is not productive to a healthy business climate!</p> <p>Finally, this bill certainly does not serve as an emergency, safety clause need.</p>
<p>Heidi Leathwood</p> <p>For</p> <p>350 Colorado</p>	<p>Dear Chair Danielson and Members of the Committee,</p> <p>This testimony is submitted in support of SB25-005 on behalf of 350 Colorado. Our grassroots organization works on climate change mitigation and environmental justice. We support workers' rights to organize and conduct collective bargaining for fair pay and workplace protections. We should no longer be the only state to require a second supermajority vote, which enables employers to use intimidation tactics.</p> <p>Speaking as a member of the public, my son experienced first-hand the intimidation tactics of employers in two separate workplaces in which he was working to unionize the workplace. These tactics unfortunately were all too effective in silencing workers.</p> <p>Speaking as a representative of 350 Colorado, it is crucial that as Colorado seeks to transition to clean energy and the workforce develops to meet the demand of renewable energy and other emerging industries, that we put in place strong worker</p>

	<p>protections so that workers have the opportunity to negotiate on a level playing field.</p> <p>I urge you in the strongest possible terms to vote yes on SB25-005.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Heidi Leathwood Climate Policy Analyst 350 Colorado</p>
--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



Adam Alemzada <adam.alemzada@coleg.gov>

NFIB Opposition - SB 5

1 message

Smith, Michael <michael.smith@nfib.org>

Tue, Jan 21, 2025 at 3:54 PM

To: "adam.alemzada@coleg.gov" <adam.alemzada@coleg.gov>

Hello Adam,

I am writing to express the National Federation of Business (NFIB) opposition to SB 5 - Worker Protection Collective Bargaining.

The General Assembly website section where testimony can be submitted is not listing this bill so I am sending an email and respectfully ask if you can recognize our opposition to this legislation in the committee record.

Thank you and do not hesitate to contact me if you need additional information.

Michael Smith
State Director

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Sarah Tresedder, MPH/MPP

Senior Climate and Energy Organizer
Sierra Club Colorado Chapter
Progressive Workers Union Member

Testimony in Support of SB25 - 005, “Worker Protection Act”

Good Afternoon Chairwoman Danielson and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a written testimony today. My name is Sarah Tresedder, and I am the Senior Climate and Energy Organizer for the Sierra Club Colorado Chapter. I am also a proud dues-paying member of the Progressive Workers Union. I’m writing to express my and the Sierra Club’s support for SB25-005, colloquially known as the “Worker Protection Act”.

It may not always seem obvious, but climate advocacy and labor rights are deeply interconnected and have been since the beginning of each movement. While our goals may not always overlap, our communities are both focused on creating sustainable, equitable systems that prioritize people and the planet over exploitation and corporate greed.

We at the Sierra Club believe in the fundamental value of fairness at work, including negotiating for equitable pay and safer working conditions. Unfortunately, Colorado’s outdated labor laws continue to create unnecessary hurdles for unions and workers fighting for basic rights, requiring them to endure a duplicative second election process. **It’s time to update Colorado’s labor laws to reflect a vision for the future—one powered by the people and grounded in fairness, safety, and sustainability.**

By eliminating the second election requirement, SB25-005 will:

1. **Expand Worker Freedom:** Workers will have the ability to advocate for themselves without facing duplicative processes that amplify employer intimidation.
2. **Boost Wages and the Economy:** Union workers earn, on average, 10% more than their non-union counterparts, driving economic growth in local communities.
3. **Enhance Workplace Safety:** Empowering workers protects lives—allowing nurses to speak up for patient care, construction workers to report unsafe conditions, and food service employees to address safety threats without fear.

As the climate crisis continues to create harsher working conditions, including extreme heat and worsening air quality, we need to empower labor unions to fight for the health and safety of their workers. The time to act is now. I hope that you will strongly support the passage of SB25-005.

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Garrett Royer and I'm the Acting Chapter Director for the Colorado Sierra Club. I'm submitting this testimony on behalf of our organization's Legislative Committee which represents over 100,000 members and active supporters across the state of Colorado. We urge the Senate Business, Labor and Technology Committee to vote in favor of SB25-005.

The interests of labor organizations and the environmental movement work very much hand in hand and it's critical that this legislation passes which improves worker protections. As a proud dues paying member of Sierra Club's Progressive Workers Union, I whole-heartedly support the protections presented in this bill.

This legislation would implement necessary changes, removing barriers for workers who seek to level the playing field with their employers. Additional necessary protections include:

- Expand Worker Freedom: Workers will be able to stand up & level the playing field with bad-actor corporations and C-suite billionaires
- Improve Wages & Economy: Union workers earn 10% more than non-union workers with similar jobs & qualifications – they spend that money in their pockets, boosting local business & the economy – with no harm to business recruitment or retention
- Increase Safety: A strong union provides protection so nurses can speak up for patients' care, construction workers can identify unsafe conditions and hospitality workers can bring up food safety threats, etc.

With these important protections in mind, we respectfully ask for your "YES" vote on SB25-005 and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss further on this critical legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Garrett Royer
Senior Government Affairs and Political Advocate
Acting Chapter Director
Colorado Sierra Club

Economic Policy Institute

January 21, 2025

Testimony submitted to the Colorado Senate Committee on Business, Technology, and Labor in support of SB25-005, Worker Protection Collective Bargaining, concerning the elimination of the requirement for a second election to negotiate a union security clause in the collective bargaining process.

Chair Danielson and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of SB25-005. My name is Jennifer Sherer, and I'm Deputy Director of State Policy and Research at the Economic Policy Institute (EPI). EPI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank founded in 1986 to research the economic status of working America and propose public policies that protect and improve conditions of low- and middle-wage workers.

It's an honor to be here to share findings from EPI research as Colorado considers a bill to restore workers' collective bargaining rights by repealing provisions of an 82-year-old statute that has limited Colorado workers' freedom to form unions and collectively bargain.

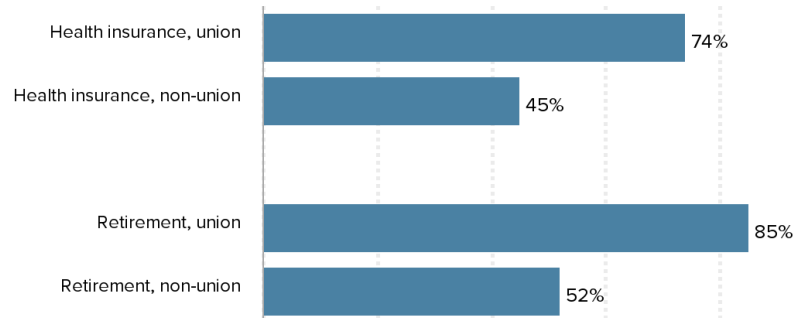
Nationally and in Colorado, the share of workers covered by a union contract declined in the last four decades. Importantly, this decline was not because workers lost interest in having unions. In fact, during the same period, the number of workers saying they would vote to unionize if given the opportunity steadily increased (to around 60 million in our latest estimate), and public approval of labor unions is now at an historic high of 70%.¹

In a period of rising inequality² and record corporate profits,³ it is no surprise workers want unions. When workers are able to collectively bargain, their wages, benefits, and working conditions improve.⁴ On average, a worker covered by a union contract:

- earns 10.2% more than a nonunionized peer in the same sector with similar education, occupation, and experience and has greater access to paid sick and vacation days⁵
- is 64% more likely to have employment-provided health insurance, and
- is 63% more likely to have retirement benefits.⁶

Union workers are far more likely to have employer-provided health and retirement benefits

Share of workers with health insurance and retirement benefits, by union status, 2023



Source: EPI analysis of 2023 National Compensation Survey (NCS) data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Economic Policy Institute

So why can't the millions of U.S. workers who say they want a union get one? Broken, outdated federal and state labor laws bear a large share of the blame. Since 1935, federal law has guaranteed workers the freedom to form and join unions. But the law has been weakened, both by court decisions and major 1947 amendments modeled in part on Colorado's anti-union state law.⁷ Today employers routinely exploit weaknesses in the law, mounting aggressive opposition to worker organizing and violating the law with few to no repercussions.⁸

Many states place additional obstacles in the path of workers who seek a union contract, prohibiting bargaining over union security via so-called "right to work" laws. Where states maintain these anti-union policies, outcomes include lower unionization rates, lower wages (on average, workers in states with anti-union laws earn 3.2% less than their counterparts in states without such laws, translating to \$1,670 less per year per full-time worker),⁹ and less safe workplaces--including a roughly 14% higher rate of occupational fatalities.¹⁰

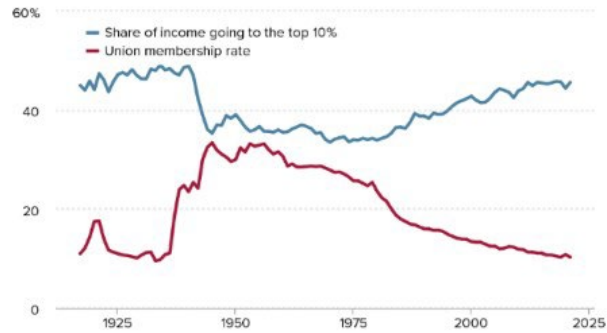
While Colorado's anti-union state law is unique and bears a different label, it's had a similar impact: at 6.9%, Colorado's 2023 union membership rate was 30% lower than the national average of 10%.¹¹

All workers are disadvantaged in states where laws have suppressed unionization, but disparities are especially pronounced for women and workers of color¹² because of the role unions play in counteracting labor market discrimination and ensuring equal pay for equal work.¹³ For example, EPI research has shown that declining unionization rates are a major factor in the persistence and expansion of the Black-white wage gap in recent decades.¹⁴

Meanwhile, blocking workers' access to unions especially benefits the rich and fuels income inequality. Four decades of declining unionization rates have ushered in sharp increases in the share of incomes going to the top 10%, staggering increases in CEO pay, and wage suppression for workers.¹⁵

Attacks on workers' right to unionize benefit the rich

Union membership and share of income going to the top 10%, 1917–2021



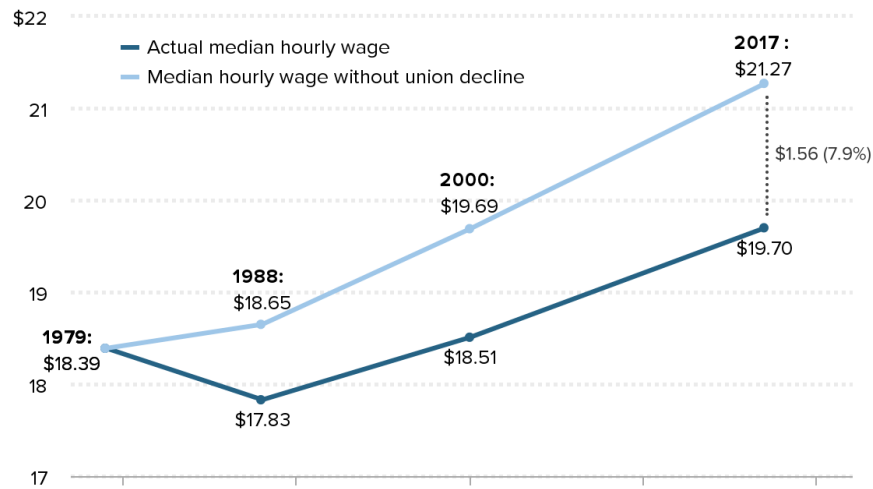
Source: Data on union membership follows the composite series found in Historical Statistics of the United States through 1982, updated through 2021 using Bureau of Labor Statistics, series ID: LUU0204899600. Income inequality (share of income to top 10%) data are from the World Income Database.

Economic Policy Institute

Economic Policy Institute

Nationally, the “typical” or median worker would have earned \$1.56 more per hour (the equivalent of \$3,250/year) in 2017 had unionization rates held steady since 1979.¹⁶

Median hourly wage, actual and without eroded collective bargaining, 1979–2017 (2020\$)

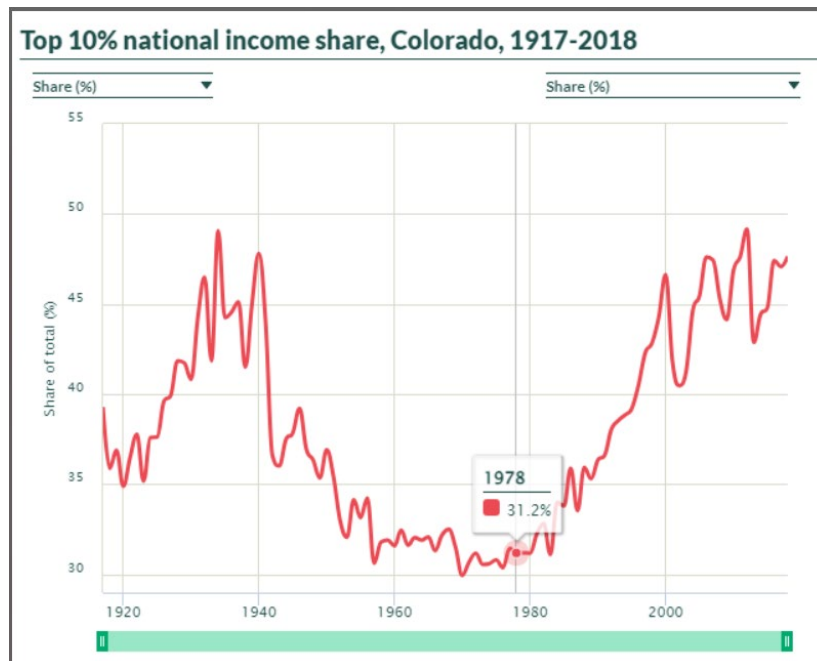


Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Author's analysis of unpublished tabulations from Thomas Lemieux (2021) using model in Fortin, Lemieux, and Lloyd (2021).

Economic Policy Institute

Growth in income inequality was especially extreme in Colorado during the last four decades (1979-2018), with the share of income going to the top 10% growing from 31.2% to 47.6% of all income in the state—a 16.4% increase (compared to 11.8% nationally).¹⁷



It will take fundamental reform of our labor laws to rebalance and rebuild an economy capable of generating shared prosperity. At the state level, this reform must start with eliminating unnecessary hurdles to unionization, so I urge you to pass SB-005. The second-election rule this bill would repeal is a relic of an anti-union era of Colorado's history defined by intense and often violent employer hostility to worker organizing in which state government was frequently an active partner. Now, at a moment when workers are looking to unions as critical vehicles for fixing what's broken in our wildly unequal economy, it's Colorado's turn to play a leading role in helping to restore worker bargaining power after decades of its erosion.

¹ Shierholz et al., [Workers want unions, but the latest data point to obstacles in their path](#), Economic Policy Institute, January 2024; Celine McNicholas and Eve Tahmincioglu, [Union approval hits highest point since 1965: Here's why this isn't surprising](#), Economic Policy Institute, August 2022.

² Elise Gould and Jori Kandra, [Wage inequality fell in 2023 amid a strong labor market, bucking long-term trends: But top 1% wages have skyrocketed 182% since 1979 while bottom 90% wages have seen just 44% growth](#), Economic Policy Institute, December 2024; Bivens et al., [CEO pay declined in 2023: But it has soared 1,085% since 1978 compared with a 24% rise in typical workers' pay](#), Economic Policy Institute, September 2024.

³ Josh Bivens, [Even with today's slowdown, profit growth remains a big driver of inflation: In recent years corporate profits have contributed to more than a third of price growth](#), Economic Policy Institute, March 2023.

⁴ Bivens et al., [How Today's Unions Help Working People: Giving Workers the Power to Improve Their Jobs and Unrig the Economy](#), Economic Policy Institute, August 2017.

⁵ Asha Banerjee et al., [Unions Are Not Only Good for Workers, They're Good for Communities and for Democracy](#), Economic Policy Institute, December 2021.

⁶ Jennifer Sherer and Elise Gould, [Data show anti-union 'right to work' laws damage state economies](#), Economic Policy Institute, February, 2024.

⁷ Harry Seligson, "Legislative Decision-Making in Labor Relations," *Labor Law Journal* 10, (December 1959): 895-911.

⁸ McNicholas et al., [Unlawful: U.S. employers are charged with violating federal law in 41.5% of all union election campaigns](#), Economic Policy Institute, December 2019; McNicholas et al., [Employers spend more than \\$400 million per year on 'union-avoidance' consultants to bolster their union-busting efforts](#), Economic Policy Institute, March 2023.

⁹ Jennifer Sherer and Elise Gould, [Data show anti-union 'right to work' laws damage state economies](#), Economic Policy Institute, February, 2024.

¹⁰ Michael Zoorob, "[Does 'Right to Work' Imperil the Right to Health? The Effect of Labour Unions on Workplace Fatalities](#)," *Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 75, (June 2018): 736-738.

¹¹ [Union Membership Data](#), Economic Policy Institute, accessed January 19, 2025.

¹² Janelle Jones and Heidi Shierholz, [Right-to-work is wrong for Missouri: A breadth of national evidence shows why Missouri voters should reject RTW law](#), Economic Policy Institute, July 2018.

¹³ [Unions help reduce disparities and strengthen our democracy](#), Economic Policy Institute, April 2021.

¹⁴ Valerie Wilson and William M. Rodgers III, [Black-White Wage Gaps Expand with Rising Wage Inequality](#), Economic Policy Institute, September 20, 2016.

¹⁵ [Unions help reduce disparities and strengthen our democracy](#), Economic Policy Institute, April 2021.

¹⁶ Lawrence Mishel, [The Enormous Impact of Eroded Collective Bargaining on Wages](#), Economic Policy Institute, April 2021.

¹⁷ Income inequality, Colorado, 1917-2018, [World Inequality Database](#), accessed January 19, 2025.

Julie Kagy

Executive Director

Exhibition Services & Contractors Association (ESCA)

julie@esca.org

773.418.1955

January 15, 2025

To: Colorado State Legislature

Re: Testimony on Worker Protection Act (SB25-005)

Dear Members of the Colorado State Legislature,

On behalf of the Exhibition Services & Contractors Association (ESCA), I am writing to express our views regarding the Worker Protection Act (SB25-005). ESCA is a national association dedicated to advancing the exhibition industry, which directly supports 69,957 jobs in Colorado and contributes \$11.298 billion in direct spending to the state's economy. We are committed to fostering an equitable, safe, and sustainable workforce while ensuring the growth and vitality of this important economic sector.

The Worker Protection Act presents an important opportunity to bolster workforce rights, safety, and well-being. Our industry values policies that strike a balance between protecting workers and ensuring businesses can thrive in a dynamic economic environment. However, I would like to highlight a few considerations that I believe are vital to achieving this balance:

1. **Clarity and Consistency in Enforcement**

Clear guidelines and consistent enforcement are critical to fostering compliance and trust within the workforce. Businesses must have access to transparent resources and education to effectively meet new standards, ensuring alignment with the Act's goals.

2. **Workforce Training and Support**

As an industry deeply invested in its workforce, we encourage the inclusion of provisions that emphasize worker training and upskilling opportunities. Enabling employees to advance their careers strengthens the workforce and positively impacts Colorado's economy.

3. **Collaboration with Industry Stakeholders**

Collaboration between policymakers, industry leaders, and workers is essential for crafting effective and practical regulations. ESCA is committed to being part of the dialogue to share insights and help address any concerns arising from implementation.

We are aligned with the intent of the Worker Protection Act and its focus on the rights and safety of employees **while balancing the interests of business**. As this legislation progresses, we urge the committee to consider the potential impacts on industries such as ours and engage with organizations like ESCA to create a sustainable framework that benefits all stakeholders.

Thank you for your consideration of these points. ESCA stands ready to collaborate and contribute to advancing workforce protections in Colorado and beyond. Please feel free to contact me directly if further input or clarification is needed.

Sincerely,

Julie Kagy

Executive Director

Exhibition Services & Contractors Association (ESCA)