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## **Letter: Right-to-work isn't a silver bullet for WV's economy**

Editor:

Regarding the Workplace Freedom Act, commonly called right-to-work:

I watched as dozens of West Virginia citizens, employers, clergymen and a host of other groups testified in opposition to this bill, while significant support came from outside of our area. People like Terry Bowman, a former United Auto Worker from Michigan who enjoys the benefits of the UAW, while refusing to pay his share. He apparently travels the country at the request of state legislatures attempting to dismantle labor.

Delegate Scott Cadle, R-Mason, suggests that the Workplace Freedom Act simply gives workers "freedom to choose to partake in the benefit" of unions. The truth is, the National Labor Relations Act has provided that "freedom" since 1947. In reality, Workplace Freedom, like every other right-to-work law, is aimed at destroying labor unions and any collective bargaining strength of state workers. The Workplace Freedom Act requires labor organizations to spend resources on people like Bowman who refuse to pay for their representation. With the passage of this legislation, the government is actually interfering with good faith agreements between private companies and their employees.

As for the claim that workplace freedom will make our economy better, eight of the 10 worst economies are currently in right-to-work states. We've become accustomed to the phrase "Thank God for Mississippi," when discussing poverty among states. Mississippi has been a right-to-work state for 60 years. RTW hasn't been an economic silver bullet there or in any other state that has passed it.

RTW will guarantee lower wages for all workers, less workforce training and more workplace fatalities.

I struggle to understand how West Virginia can experience growth by jeopardizing things like worker wages, health plans, pension plans and training programs.

Workplace freedom passed over the objections of West Virginia's citizens, churches, businesses and our workers. It passed the Legislature based on the testimony of Washington lawyers and a disgruntled former union member.

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