



**Leo W. Gerard**  
International President

May 6, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: The United Steelworkers (USW) urge co-sponsorship and passage of H.R. 2474: The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act**

Dear Representative:

If you believe in reducing poverty, fighting pay disparity between men and women, increasing access to healthcare, combatting income inequality, and increasing social mobility for American workers, the 850,00 members of the United Steelworkers invite you to join our union and support H.R. 2474, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act.

The PRO Act will empower workers to realize their economic potential with some of the most significant labor reforms in seventy-two years. The ability to form a union is one of the surest ways to improving economic outcomes. According to the Department of Labor, among full-time wage and salary workers, union members had median usual weekly earnings of \$1,051 in 2018, while those who were not union members had median weekly earnings of \$860.<sup>1</sup> African-American workers in a union make approximately 23 percent more than their non-union counterparts. Women organized by a union make approximately 24 percent more than their non-union counterparts.

In order to unlock the potential benefits of unionization, workers need Congress to address the ability of employers to flaunt current labor laws. The PRO Act tears down barriers that unscrupulous employers deploy to keep workers from realizing their economic potential. This has become essential as 92 percent of companies force employees to attend mandatory anti-union presentations.<sup>2</sup> Workers are routinely threatened with plant closure, job displacement, or economic harm. Workers cannot withhold their labor for economic reasons without threat of permanent replacement. States and corporate entities currently push down workers' wages with misnamed right

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>

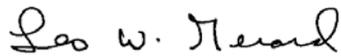
<sup>2</sup> [https://www.goiam.org/publications/Legislative\\_Issues/TheFreedomtoFormAUnion/Employers\\_Interfere\\_with\\_Workers.pdf](https://www.goiam.org/publications/Legislative_Issues/TheFreedomtoFormAUnion/Employers_Interfere_with_Workers.pdf)

to work laws developed to disempower people of all colors and creeds from working together.<sup>3</sup>

The PRO Act would dismantle many of these injustices. The legislation increases penalties on employers who break the law and gives workers a private right of action if they've been terminated for union activity. It removes prohibitions on workers acting in solidarity with workers at other companies, it protects workers who engage in peaceful protest actions with their fellow workers, and it safeguards the right to strike, a tool workers rarely wish to use but are often left with no other option to protect their rights at work.

The PRO Act is a counterweight that will revolutionize labor relations and empower future generations of workers to act collectively. Recent statistics indicate that workers' desire to join a union is at a four-decade high.<sup>4</sup> Now is the time for Congress to act and provide millions of America's workers with the tools they need to secure a better future for themselves and their families. **I strongly urge you to co-sponsor and pass the H.R. 2474 the PRO Act.**

Sincerely,



Leo W. Gerard  
International President

LWG/rdb

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.afscme.org/now/the-racist-roots-of-right-to-work>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.wfae.org/post/conversation-who-wants-join-union-growing-number-americans#stream/0>