



March 9, 2021

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the members and officers of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of H.R. 842, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, when it comes to a vote on the House floor this week.

The ability of working people to join together to collectively bargain for fair pay and working conditions is a fundamental right. But it is extremely difficult for private sector workers covered by the NLRA to organize if their employer opposes them doing so. Companies can intimidate workers relentlessly, misclassify workers, gerrymander election units, dodge accountability for violating worker rights by hiding behind subcontractors, and more -- all completely legally. And even if they do violate the law and illegally terminate or punish workers for union activity, the existing NLRA is toothless and its penalties barely amount to a slap on the wrist. Companies who illegally fire workers are only required to pay them back pay, minus any income they've had elsewhere in the interim.

Once workers do come together and organize, the existing NLRA is also inadequate to protect worker rights. Companies can easily stall indefinitely to prevent workers from getting a first contract for years after they organize. If and when workers are forced to go on strike to protect their livelihoods, employers can permanently replace strikers without consequence.

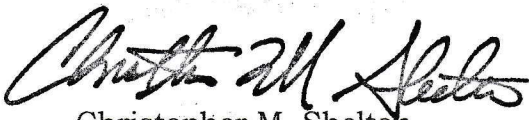
The huge surge in economic inequality over the past quarter-century is related directly to many workers' lack of a strong voice on the job. Over that time, wages have stagnated for workers across the economy, while income has skyrocketed for CEOs and the wealthiest 1%. By 2012, the wealthiest 1% made 22.5% of national income, while the bottom 90% of families made less than half of national income—just 49.6%.

Workers who form unions have stronger protections against discrimination and retaliation, enhanced job security, better retirement benefits, and more effective ways of combating practices that jeopardize their health and safety on the job. These problems have all been magnified by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

New research confirms that workers without union representation are less likely to have paid leave, to have access to proper PPE at work, or to have protections against unnecessary layoffs. The PRO Act would fix these problems and re-establish workers' right to organize in this country. In doing so, it helps combat skyrocketing economic inequality and strengthens the middle class. Therefore, I strongly urge you to vote in favor of the PRO Act and oppose any amendments that would weaken the bill. **CWA will include votes on this bill in our Congressional Scorecard.**

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher M. Shelton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Christopher M. Shelton

President

Communications Workers of America (CWA)