



February 4, 2021

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 2 million members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), we write to endorse the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act of 2021. This important bill would strengthen working Americans' rights to join together in unions and bargain for higher wages and better working conditions to help create balanced, inclusive growth, and build our economy back better than it was before.

We are nearly one year into the worst public health and economic crisis we have faced in a generation, with underpaid frontline workers literally risking their lives for poverty wages. While many have rightly called these essential workers heroes, our country has failed to truly respect them with a promise to protect them and adequately pay them throughout the crisis. Too many essential workers continue to lack basic work protections like proper PPE, paid sick and family leave, or health care, and far too few have a voice in the workplace and access to a union. This is most true for the Black and brown workers who have kept us safe and fed throughout this crisis.

Unions are the best solution to leveling the playing field and safeguarding the health and safety of working people. In fact, during this crisis, where workers that have been able to act collectively and through their union, they have been able to secure enhanced safety measures, additional hazard pay, paid sick time, and other protections. But because of a concerted effort to undermine unions in America over the past forty years, just 10% of working people have a say in the decisions that affect them at work, in their communities and in our economy. Too many unscrupulous employers—even amidst a pandemic—take advantage of America's outdated labor laws to stifle the ability of working people to join together in unions to stay safe on the job and build a better future for their families.

The PRO Act would reinvigorate labor law to help build an economy that works better for the millions of people who work for a living – not just those at the top. We applaud the bill's joint employer provision, which would ensure that workers can meaningfully bargain with all companies that actually control their employment. We also endorse the bill's new standard to stop employers from misclassifying their workers as independent contractors or supervisors to escape their responsibilities. These changes would make it harder for companies to circumvent basic worker protections through subcontracting arrangements or other evasions.

We also strongly support the PRO Act's reforms banning anti-worker state laws that supersede collective bargaining agreements. These so-called Right-to-Work laws weaken workers' voice at the workplace, drive down wages, and threaten the economic security of all workers—union and nonunion alike. Furthermore, working people subject to these laws earn [\\$1,558 less per year](#) than those who are not. The PRO Act permits companies and workers to

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decide for themselves whether to negotiate fair share agreements in collective bargaining. In addition, we are pleased to see PRO Act provisions that would deter employer misconduct by making remedies meaningful, penalizing the most egregious violations, limiting interference in union elections, and facilitating first contracts with newly formed unions. The bill rightfully removes restraints on workers' solidarity actions across different workplaces.

In this time of crisis, working people around the country urgently need the PRO Act's much needed reforms to make it easier for people to join unions and hold companies accountable. A voice on the job has never been more important for safeguarding the health, safety, and economic security of the working people we have relied on to get us through this pandemic.

SEIU members are proud to support the PRO Act. We will add any future votes on this legislation to our legislative scorecard. For more information, please contact SEIU Legislative Director John Gray at john.gray@seiu.org or (202)-730-7669.

Sincerely,



Mary Kay Henry
International President

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