

Testimony before House Commerce & Economic Development
House Bill- 2023 Paycheck Protection
Presented by Eric Stafford, Senior Director of Government Affairs



Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Senior Director of Government Affairs with the Kansas Chamber of Commerce. The Kansas Chamber is pleased to support House Bill 2023 which prohibits public sector unions from using dues income for political purposes.

Paycheck protection laws simply give workers a choice whether or not to contribute their money toward union political activity. If public sector unions in Kansas are actually pursuing an agenda desired by their membership, they should have nothing to fear. Under HB 2023, if an employee wants to support the political activity of their organization, they can simply write a check.

There's growing data which supports the claim that public sector unions are not pursuing an agenda their members support. A poll conducted in 2005 showed 50% of NEA members viewed themselves as conservative or tended conservative. The cover letter to this testimony showed 93% of union contributions went to democrats while 42% of union households vote republican.

The exponential growth of public sector unions is putting taxpayers at risk. Private sector unions bargain over profits while public sector unions bargain over tax dollars. There is no competition in the public sector to control wages like competing businesses in the private sector. This has led to unsustainable agreements between municipalities, counties and states which have been exposed after the 2008 downturn. Government unions typically enjoy above-market compensation through better health benefits, pensions, job security and earlier retirement than private sector workers.

Private sector unionization levels peaked at 37% in 1952, compared to roughly 6% today. Unions saw government employees as potential dues-paying members, something unions once rejected. Since they realized the potential, public sector unionization rates have remained high- around 43% for local-level workers and 33% for state employees. Public sector membership now makes up the majority of all union membership nationwide.

In conclusion, it's time Kansas expands on its right to work status by allowing workers the right to choose whether or not they want to finance political activity of public sector unions. I urge your support of HB 2023.



The Kansas Chamber, with headquarters in Topeka, is the leading statewide pro-business advocacy group moving Kansas towards becoming the best state in America to do business. The Chamber represents small, medium and large employers all across Kansas.

93%

OF UNION POLITICAL
DONATIONS WENT TO
DEMOCRATS

BUT...

42%

OF UNION
HOUSEHOLDS VOTED
REPUBLICAN

MONEY IS BEING TAKEN FROM WORKERS
AND GIVEN TO POLITICIANS.



THIS NEEDS TO STOP. SUPPORT THE ERA.

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