



CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM

TO: All Legislators

FROM: Representative Christine Sinicki and Senator Mark Spreitzer

DATE: Thursday September 7, 2023

RE: Co-sponsorship of LRB-4147/1 – relating to: repealing Wisconsin's "Right-to-Work" Law

DEADLINE: Friday, September 22, 2023

*We are introducing the **Workers First** package to ensure every worker has access to fair wages, good benefits, workplace protections, and a high quality of life. For too long, the Legislature has ignored the needs of working people, from rolling back workers' rights to undermining local control and diminishing the economic well-being of the men and women who work hard for a living. As our state continues to experience a worker shortage, it is past time to put Wisconsin workers first.*

In 2015, Wisconsin [became the 25th state](#) to pass a “right-to-work” law. Such laws [allow](#) private sector workers to decide whether to pay union dues. Since, [under federal law](#), unions must represent all employees in a workplace, “right-to-work” laws allow non-dues paying employees to receive the benefits of belonging to a union, such as negotiated contracts and union representation in employment disputes, without paying union dues. (*Please see attached Leg Council Memo for more details*).

Instead of benefiting union workers and the causes that union members support, [“right-to-work” undermined private sector unions and led to lower rates of union participation](#) in Wisconsin. It is well past time to return to the requirement that all union-represented workers pay dues for that privilege, just like everyone else in their union.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please reply to this email or contact Representative Sinicki’s office at 9120 or Senator Spreitzer’s office at 6-2253 by **Friday**,

September 22, 2023 at 5:00 PM. Co-sponsors will be added to both the Assembly and Senate versions of the proposal unless specified otherwise.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

The current right-to-work law prohibits a person from requiring, as a condition of obtaining or continuing employment, an individual to refrain or resign from membership in a labor organization, to become or remain a member of a labor organization, to pay dues or other charges to a labor organization, or to pay any other person an amount that is in place of dues or charges required of members of a labor organization.

This bill repeals these prohibitions and the associated misdemeanor offense for violating the right-to-work law. The bill explicitly provides that, when an all-union agreement is in effect, it is not an unfair labor practice to encourage or discourage membership in a labor organization or to deduct labor organization dues or assessments from an employee's earnings. The bill sets conditions under which an employer may enter into an all-union agreement.

The bill also sets conditions for the continuation or termination of all-union agreements, including that, if the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission determines there is reasonable ground to believe employees in an all-union agreement have changed their attitude about the agreement, then WERC is required to conduct a referendum to determine whether the employees wish to continue the agreement. WERC is required to terminate an all-union agreement if it finds the union unreasonably refused to admit an employee into the union.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.