



March 3, 2021

Dear Representative:

The Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) urges the House to reject, H.R. 842, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act). In an attempt to rewrite the laws for organizing in the United States, the PRO Act would not only limit the rights of employers and workers but create substantial economic disruption by eliminating decades long checks on abusive activities by union leaders. RILA strongly opposes this legislation as it would disrupt the economy by undermining the balanced relationship between workers and businesses in favor of organized labor.

RILA is the U.S. trade association for leading retailers. We convene decision-makers, advocate for the industry, and promote operational excellence and innovation. Our aim is to elevate a dynamic industry by transforming the environment in which retailers operate. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs, and more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities, and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

Economic peace and prosperity are created by several factors—strong consumer demand and confidence, robust investment by businesses in labor and capital as well as legal and regulatory certainty. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has strained all industries, leading retailers have been in a strong position because each of these components are working together. However, by repealing decades worth of precedent, the PRO Act would undermine economic stability by codifying previously illegal union tactics to reemerge.

Specifically, H.R. 842 seeks to repeal prohibitions on certain disruptive, and at times violent, union activities that created interstate economic havoc in the 1930's and 1940's – namely secondary boycott activities. In this era, unions sought to impose economic stress on specific companies by picketing neutral suppliers, vendors, and other third-party relationships. For example, this bill would allow union organizers to picket or even block shipments into a company by supplier companies or other business contractors. Over seventy years ago when Congress overwhelmingly passed the Taft-Hartley Act, lawmakers rightly outlawed certain kinds of intimidation involving union "threats," "coercion," and "restraints" against neutral employers. These secondary activities are unduly burdensome not only to the neutral business but also to the broader interstate commerce of the United States.

Congress needs to keep these failed and outdated labor laws in the past because they impede innovation, disrupt communication between employers and employees, and stifle the flow of commerce. The COVID pandemic wreaked havoc on our economy and put millions of hardworking Americans out of work. Proposals such as the PRO Act, if passed, will only prolong the economic disruption. Leading retailers urge members of Congress to reject the PRO Act and instead work

on building a 21st Century Workforce that has forward-thinking proposals that empower workers, promote innovation, and enable retailers to invest in their people and their communities. For more information, contact me at Evan.Armstrong@rila.org or visit <https://myprivateballot.com/issues/pro-act/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evan Armstrong".

Evan Armstrong

Vice President, Workforce Policy

Retail Industry Leaders Association

