



TESTIMONY – RIGHT TO WORK
Michigan Chamber
March 14, 2023
Senate Labor Committee

Good morning, Mr. Chair and Member of the Committee. My name is Wendy Block, and I am the Senior Vice President of Business Advocacy and Member Engagement for the MI Chamber.

The MI Chamber is a statewide business organization representing approx. 5,000 businesses, local chambers, and trade associations across our state. Our members are in all 83 counties and are of all sizes and types. Over 80% of our members are classified as small businesses, and the largest industry segment we represent is manufacturing.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to voice our strong opposition to HB 4005 & SB 34, legislation to repeal Michigan's Right to Work (RTW) law.

Right to Work is good for hardworking Michiganders and our job providers, communities, and economy. It's about freedom and personal choice. It's about the ability of employees to decide whether to pay dues or other equivalent fees to labor unions as a condition of employment and in how to spend their wages. It's about our economic competitiveness and retaining current jobs and attracting next generation jobs for our state. We oppose turning back the clock on this law.

Today, 28 other states have Right to Work laws. Being a Right to Work state makes Michigan more competitive nationally and especially with neighboring states. It helps Michigan compete for desperately needed economic development projects and new jobs — and is a tool to keep companies headquartered in Michigan. If a company is choosing between a site in a Right to Work state and another in a state without a law in place, Right to Work *can* positively influence the decision...and, as you've heard, it's a big factor... it puts your state in the game. And these wide swings in public policy, this whip-lash effect, isn't helpful for a stable economic climate...or for growing jobs in Michigan.

Consider the evidence: According to Bureau of Labor Statistics data, non-RTW states lost 800k jobs in the last 9 years, while RTW states gained 1.6 million jobs. The unemployment rate in non-RTW states is 3.9% while the unemployment rate in RTW states is 0.5% lower. And Harvard data shows that the share of jobs in manufacturing is 28% higher in RTW states than non-RTW states.

Finally, I'd like to point out that this law is overwhelmingly supported by voters. There are numerous polls to point to, and they all tell the same story: The vast majority of Michigan registered voters oppose repeal – even in union households and Democratic and Independent households.

Repealing Right to Work is bad for workers, it's bad for businesses and it's bad for Michigan's economic competitiveness.

We urge you to vote "NO" on HB 4005.