



# Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

## Strength in Numbers 95,000

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# LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

- >**PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE (PRO) ACT**
- >**THE TAX FAIRNESS FOR WORKERS ACT**
- >**THE BUTCH LEWIS ACT H.R. 397**

U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. was in Harrisburg, PA on August 7, 2019 meeting with the Central PA Labor Leaders at the AFSCME Conference Center. Brother Felice was in attendance representing the Teamsters. Many labor issues were discussed including the PRO Act, Tax Fairness for Workers Act and the “Butch Lewis Act” (that Brother Felice brought up in discussion.)

### Butch Lewis Act

Now that is before the US Senate, we must reach out to our U.S. Senators in all our Conference States, especially working towards getting Republican Senators to support this bill. Without Republican support it will be virtually impossible to pass this bill.

### **Republican Senators throughout the Conference States:**

<u>Pennsylvania</u> Senator Pat Toomey 248 Russell Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510 Phone: (202) 224-4254 Fax: (202) 228-0284	<u>West Virginia</u> Shelley Moore Capito 172 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: 202-224-6472
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### Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act

This is a comprehensive bill that will strengthen labors rights. See *the attached summary from US Senator Casey*. We need to contact our US Senators’ and ask them to support this important legislation.

### The Tax Fairness for Workers Act

Previously, the Tax Code allowed workers to take numerous deductions when filing their taxes such as union dues, uniforms, tools, and travel. The 2017 Republican Tax Bill suspended deductions for union dues and other common employee expenses. This bill, sponsored by US Senator Casey, will reinstate the deduction for unreimbursed expenses such as union dues, uniforms, tools for the job and travel. See *attached summary from US Senator Casey*. We need to contact our US Senators’ and ask them to support this important legislation.

# U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



FIGHTING for a FAIR SHOT for FAMILIES, KIDS and SENIORS

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## The Tax Fairness for Workers Act

A number of provisions included in the 2017 Republican tax bill undermine working families and make it harder for Pennsylvanians to make ends meet. Among these provisions was the suspension of tax deductions for union dues and other common employee expenses. In response to the GOP tax scheme's deliberate attack on working Americans and union members, U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), introduced the *Tax Fairness for Workers Act*, S.1026. This legislation will not only reinstate the deduction for unreimbursed employee expenses, but will make the deduction for union dues above-the-line, making it available to everyone, not just those who itemize.

**Background:** Before 2018, the tax code allowed workers to take numerous deductions related to unreimbursed expenses attributable to the trade or business of being an employee. The list of permissible deductions included unions dues and expenses, as well as out of pocket costs for tools, travel, uniforms, and job search expenses. The 2017 tax bill "suspended" these deductions. Meaning members of unions will no longer be allowed to take a deduction for union dues, and other unreimbursed business expenses. Senator Casey's legislation will not only reinstate the deduction for unreimbursed expenses, but makes the deduction for union dues "above-the-line" so it is available to everyone, not just those who itemize.

**This legislation is endorsed by:** USW, AFL-CIO, NABTU, Teamsters, APFA, Boilermakers, IAM, CWA, UAW, AFGE, NEA, AFT, UFCW, UMWA, AFSCME, National Association of Police Organizations,.

**Cosponsors:** U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Sherrod Brown (D-OH) Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Patty Murray (D-WA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Michael Bennet (D-CO).

**Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act:** The PRO Act is a comprehensive bill that strengthens labor rights by punishing labor law violations, strengthening workers' ability to collectively bargain and closing legal loopholes employers exploit to deny workers rights. The bill is a top priority of organized labor. Senator Murray introduced the PRO Act on May 2, 2019. You are an original cosponsor and the bill has 40 Democratic and Independent cosponsors.

Among the most important changes the bill would make are:

- Authorizing a private right of action for violations of worker's rights so workers can seek justice in court.
- Authorizing the NLRB to assess monetary penalties and permitting the NLRB to impose liability on corporate directors and officers that participate in or allow violations.
- Prohibiting employers from requiring employees to attend meetings meant to dissuade them from organizing.
- Ensuring unions can collect fair share fees.
- Preventing employers from waiving workers' rights to class-action litigation.
- Facilitating first contracts between companies and newly certified unions by requiring mediation and arbitration to settle disputes.
- Addressing employee misclassification by clarifying when a worker is an independent contractor and narrowing the definition of 'supervisor.'

**Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act:** This bill would guarantee in statute that all public-sector workers at the local, state and federal levels have a right to form a union, have their union recognized by their public employer and collectively bargain. It would also authorize the deduction of fair-share fees from public workers' paychecks to support the union. The bill is a priority of unions representing public-sector workers like AFSCME and AFGE. Senator Hirono introduced the bill on July 25, 2019. You are an original cosponsor and the bill has 35 Democratic and Independent cosponsors.