

TO: Chairman Ron Young and Members of the Economic Development, Commerce and Labor Committee
RE: HB 2 – Memo in opposition
DATE: March 6, 2017
FROM: Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, ACTION OHIO Coalition for Battered Women, Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council, Access Center for Independent Living, Equality Ohio, Policy Matters Ohio, Protecting Ohio's Employees, Ohio Employment Lawyers Association, The Center for Disability Empowerment, CAIR-Ohio, Ohio Association for Justice, Ohio AFL-CIO, ACLU, Cleveland Teachers Union, Ohio Conference NAACP, National MS Society

- HB 2 severely weakens the anti-discrimination laws we have in Ohio. It would allow managers and supervisors to discriminate and harass religious employees, veterans, Individuals with disabilities, women, minorities, and older workers in the workplace.
- There is no evidence or research that there is a problem in Ohio or that these changes would be beneficial to business. In fact, many employers support the individual rights of their employees and encourage an environment where law abiding citizens are protected and lawbreakers are brought to justice. They support employees being able to pursue their own goals and beliefs without retribution.
- HB 2 does not simply have state law mirror federal law. There was lengthy testimony provided in committee which illustrated how HB 2 does not mirror federal law, but instead picks and chooses provisions from the six civil rights statutes and uses them to limit employee's rights.
- Ironically, the same proponents that argue they want state law to mirror federal law in this case, often argue that the states should decide what is best for their constituents and reject federalism. The goal of HB 2 would have the federal government dictate how the state of Ohio would treat employees who have been discriminated against.
- Proposals to change the anti-discrimination laws have been considered in Ohio for over 16 years, yet they have never passed. We are hopeful that this legislature will not turn back the clock on the civil rights laws in Ohio and reject HB 2.

HB 2 is not good for Ohioans or Ohio businesses. It eliminates protections for religious employees, veterans, individuals with disabilities, women, minorities and older workers in the workplace. If you have any questions, please contact Connie Nolder, legislative representative for Protecting Ohio's Employees and the Ohio Employment Lawyers Association.

Connie@crnconsulting.org 614-329-6100.