



January 26, 2022

To: Chairman Stein, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and Members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee

From: Beth Lear, ABC of Ohio, Vice President of Government Affairs

Re: Opposition to HB 235

Once again the serious issue of “safety” is being used as a red herring to convince legislators to expand government intrusion into private businesses. The real reason for this legislation is because special interests want to limit who is permitted to work construction at refineries in Ohio.

Why this bill is NOT needed:

1. **Safety is *not* the issue:** Are there real safety concerns at refineries? Of course, because they process highly volatile fuel, which is why *these facilities are already highly regulated* at the federal, state and local levels. There has been no proven safety issue that will be resolved by this bill.
2. **Quality employees can *not* be mandated by Government:** Refineries already have the ability to hire the best and do. This bill will actually force refineries to comply with an imperfect government regulatory one-size-fits-all scheme that will take away the ability of each refinery to hire the very best workforce for their specific needs.
3. **Gasoline prices *will* go up:** When government intervenes and limits competition, costs go up. The cost for compliance will be steep and that cost will be passed onto consumers at the gas pump at a time when inflation and energy costs are both rising at an astronomical rate. Legislators who support this bill will be responsible for those who cannot afford the drive to work or the grocery or the doctor’s office.

This legislation is not in response to any safety failure, but is a concerted effort by special interests nationally to lockdown more construction jobs for their friends and is anti-free market. The same bill has been pushed in California, Washington, Illinois and Minnesota, where no Republican super majorities exist. Ohio would be the first Republican-dominated state to mandate an exclusionary superclass of government-created journeymen.

For these reasons, ABC of Ohio asks you to oppose HB 235.



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