



## **HB 235 Opponent Testimony to the Ohio House Commerce & Labor Committee, March 8, 2022**

Chairman Stein, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to provide testimony.

My name is Jeff Dillon, and I am the Ohio Legislative Director for Americans for Prosperity (AFP). As one of the largest grassroots organizations in the country, AFP is driving long-term solutions to some of the country's biggest problems. Our organization, and its thousands of activists across Ohio, are dedicated to breaking barriers that stand in the way of people realizing their full potential. Removing or reducing these barriers, in whatever forms they take, helps move our society toward one of mutual benefit, where people succeed by helping others improve their lives and by transforming their communities. Accordingly, AFP opposes House Bill 235.

Ohio's economy is being increasingly guided by cronyism rather than by contribution and competition. When proposed laws that would profoundly affect private businesses' hiring and employment practices ignore facts in favor of anti-competitive practices, needless barriers to innovation and free-market solutions arise.

HB 235 is not mutually beneficial legislation – the benefit is one-sided, aimed solely at enriching the labor unions who would operate the apprenticeship training programs contemplated under the bill, who coercively collect dues from members as a condition of employment and then utilize those dues to curry legislative favor.

On January 26<sup>th</sup> of this year, this committee heard and received a litany of opponent testimony from individuals, companies, and organizations well-positioned to understand the economic impact this legislation would have if enacted. Without rehashing the entirety of previous testimony, AFP is in agreement with nearly everything those opponents said, but in a nutshell, my organization's opposition comes down to this fundamental point: the government has no business dictating who private employers choose to hire. That is the business of those private employers. The government certainly has the authority to impose the heavy-handed labor mandates contained in HB 235, but that doesn't make it a good idea, *especially* when proponents of this legislation failed to make any cogent arguments with respect to their concerns about the alleged need for improvements to safety.

Cronyism is the biggest problem plaguing the Ohio General Assembly. The saga and fallout from House Bill 6 of the 133<sup>rd</sup> GA seems to have changed the culture in the capitol very little, if at all. There is growing consensus among those attuned to Ohio politics and government affairs that many in this chamber are beholden to the dictates of organized labor because many of those organizations are cash cows for legislative candidates. Advancing HB 235 would only further that narrative, which seems truer and truer as the weeks and months roll by.

HB 235 is a bad bill: bad for business, bad for workers, bad for consumers. AFP – Ohio urges this committee to hold no additional hearings on HB 235, let the bill die a quiet death, and not to create a slippery slope where the new normal becomes the government setting internal hiring policies for companies and businesses that are already highly regulated, whether that is in this bill, or other equally poorly conceived legislation yet to come.

Thank you, Chairman Stein, for the opportunity to submit this opposition testimony.

Jeff Dillon  
Ohio Legislative Director  
Americans for Prosperity

*Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. AFP has more than 3.2 million activists across the nation, a local infrastructure that includes 36 state chapters, and has received financial support from more than 100,000 Americans in all 50 states. For more information, visit [www.AmericansForProsperity.org](http://www.AmericansForProsperity.org).*