

**From:** [Quan Tran](#)  
**To:** [Maxford Nelsen](#)  
**Subject:** Re: State leg. considering good union reforms  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 1, 2017 1:43:32 PM

---

Thank you for your email, Maxford!

Let me study the bills and let you know what I can do about them. From what you wrote, i.e. transparent, responsible and accountable, I am all for them!

This is a dirty secret of the Union operations, which smart guys like you probably already knew (I guess the secret is probably universal in any organizations): The Union staff are running the Unions, not the elected Executive Board members as they always touted "democracy" as the number one virtue. E-board members are volunteer and do not have the time nor the expertise to decide any thing, they form committees to assist staff in various areas of the operation. The staff manipulate these committees members in making virtually all decisions.

Currently I am fighting racism within the WFSE Council 28.

Quan Tran  
-----

On Wed, 2/1/17, Maxford Nelsen <MNelsen@myfreedomfoundation.com> wrote:

Subject: State leg. considering good union reforms  
To: "tranquan19426@yahoo.com" <tranquan19426@yahoo.com>  
Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2017, 1:05 PM

Hi Quan,

I hope this email finds you well. As you may know, the Freedom Foundation is working on a number of efforts to increase the rights of union-represented employees in Washington and to make sure unions are transparent, responsible and accountable to their members.

As part of this effort, we regularly work with the state legislature on union reform proposals, and we're continuing those efforts this year.

I just learned that four of the bills we're working on are going to be heard before the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee on Monday, February 6. A listing of the bills and their descriptions is included at the bottom of this email.

So far, we've been able to get several of these reforms to pass out of committee, but have had a difficult time getting them off the Senate floor. However, recent turnover in the legislature means that we have an opportunity this year to hopefully get the Senate to pass several of these bills.

If any of these are bills you can get behind, we need your help. In past years, the voices of real union workers affected by these policies has been incredibly powerful.

Here are three things you can do:

1. Join me in Olympia on Monday and testify in support. Testifying is not difficult. Usually speakers are only permitted about two minutes, sometimes three, to comment. Reading from a prepared statement or referring to notes is permitted and common.
2. If you want to show your support but don't want to speak, you can still show up and sign up in support of the bill(s) without testifying. The more, the merrier.
3. For some folks, taking the time to get to Olympia simply isn't possible. You can still show your support, though, by submitting a comment supporting the bill online. The links to do so for each bill are included with the descriptions below.

Here are the details on the hearing:

Date: Monday, February 6

Time: 1:30pm

Location: Senate Hearing Rm 4, J.A. Cherberg Building,  
Olympia, WA 98504

Committee: Commerce, Labor and Sports

A map of the capitol campus is available here<<http://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/campus-map.pdf>>.

If you plan to attend in person, please let me know so I can work out the logistical details.

Some of these lawmakers are taking political risks by doing the right thing and supporting this legislation, and it

means a lot to them when real people who have been or are being affected by these issues turn out to back them up. I hope we can count on your support!

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any thoughts or questions you may have.

Best,

Maxford Nelsen  
Director of Labor Policy | Freedom Foundation  
MNelsen@FreedomFoundation.com<<mailto:MNelsen@FreedomFoundation.com>>  
360.956.3482 | PO Box 552 Olympia, WA 98507  
FreedomFoundation.com<<http://www.myfreedomfoundation.com/>>

SB 5174<<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5174&Year=2017>>:  
The state Consumer Protection Act (CPA) provides important legal protections for consumers against the financial interests of commercial ventures. Currently, labor unions are entirely exempt from the CPA. Unions are fundamentally a financial enterprise in the business of selling workplace representation services. We've heard from many employees who have been lied to or deceived about their rights regarding union membership and dues payment. In order to protect consumers of workplace representation services, this bill would apply the CPA's prohibitions against "unfair or deceptive acts or practices" to labor unions. Comment on the bill here.<<https://app.leg.wa.gov/pbc/bill/5174>>

SB 5339<<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5339&Year=2017>>:  
Employees are often required to pay union dues and/or fees as a condition of employment. These requirements sometimes violate employee' religious beliefs and civil rights. While federal and state law provide certain accommodations for employees who object to union membership on religious grounds, state laws on the subject are inconsistent, out-of-date, and unduly burden employees. SB 5339 would: (1) update the state's religious objector laws to reflect court rulings recognizing that employees may object to union membership on the basis of their personal religious views and need not belong to a faith with a formal teaching against union membership in order to qualify for an exemption; (2) allow an objecting employee complete discretion to donate their dues to any charity on the state's combined fund drive list, without having to get the union to agree on their choice of charity; and (3) establish that religious objectors to union membership need only pay

the agency fee rate to a charity, like other nonmembers, instead of full dues. Comment on the bill here.<<https://app.leg.wa.gov/psc/bill/5339>>

SB 5371<<http://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary?BillNumber=5371&Year=2017>>:

Since the 1950s, federal law has required private-sector unions to annually report certain financial information to the Department of Labor, including the compensation of union officials, revenue, membership composition, dues amounts, political activity and grants, and more. However, unions representing only public employees in Washington fall under state law and are not required to provide any financial information to members, even though employees can be forced to fund the union's activity. This bill would require public-sector unions in Washington to annually report to the state Public Employment Relations Commission the same information required of private-sector unions by federal law. Comment on the bill here.<<https://app.leg.wa.gov/psc/bill/5371>>

SB 5551<<http://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary?BillNumber=5551&Year=2017>>:

Under current law, it is extremely difficult for employees to change or get rid of their union. Although unions claim to function democratically, many unions were certified so long ago that no one currently employed in the bargaining unit has ever had the opportunity to vote on their union representation. This bill would require the state Public Employment Relations Commission to conduct automatic, secret-ballot union elections every four years in which employees can vote to keep their current union, change to a different union, or decertify the union. Allowing employees to regularly vote on their union representation would give them greater control over their workplace representation and allow them to keep their unions accountable. It may also increase competition in the provision of workplace representation services. Comment on the bill here.<<https://app.leg.wa.gov/psc/bill/5551>>