Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

Strength in Numbers 95,000

William Hamilton, President & Eastern PA Legislative Coordinator – Joseph Molinero, Sec.-Treasurer & Western PA Legislative Coordinator – Tim O'Neill, Consultant – Dan Grace, Trustee & Legislative Advisor – Robert Baptiste, Esq. Legal Advisor

LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

Stop the sell-off of our public wine & spirits system- tell your State Rep to oppose HB 438 and HB 991

(Philadelphia AFL-CIO Report) Publicly owned Wine & Spirits Shops provide $500 million a year in revenue to our State budget, while offering low prices to consumers, controlling alcohol sales to minors better than any other system in the nation, and employing over 5,000 union members in good, family-sustaining jobs.

Still, right wing interests in Harrisburg would like nothing more than to privatize this system, which would raise prices for consumers, put a half billion dollar hole in our state budget, and destroy nearly all of those 5,000 jobs. On Monday, lawmakers in Harrisburg will vote on two bills designed to weaken our publicly-owned Wine and Spirits shops, while handing over more benefits to privatizers and profiteers.

HB 438 would allow 12,000 current on-site consumption licensees to sell liquor to-go, while HB 991 would allow some retailers to open a "franchise shop," essentially a private liquor store within their retail location. Both bills would harm our state budget, bring more alcohol with fewer controls into our communities, and weaken the system that employs our union brothers and sisters.

HB991 COULD COST TEAMSTER JOBS IN LOCAL 107, LOCAL 929 and LOCAL 636

Call your State Representative and urge him or her to vote NO on HB 438 and HB 991

Congress could kill state retirement plans

by Katie Lobosco March 30, 2017 CNN©

Dozens of states are trying to make it easier for workers to save for Retirement, but Congress could throw a wrench in their plans.

Highlights of an article from CNN© - Read Entire Article from CNN©
http://money.cnn.com/2017/03/09/retirement/average-401k-returns/index.html?iid=EL

New state-sponsored IRA plans would aim to help small business employees who don't already have access to a retirement savings plan at work -- like a 401(k). But new legislation could stop them before they even begin.

The House of Representatives voted along party lines last month to roll back an Obama-era rule that paved the way for these plans. On Thursday, the Senate narrowly passed legislation that takes another step toward finalizing the repeal.

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Republicans say that under President Obama, the Department of Labor created a "loophole" that allows the plans to bypass a consumer protection law. "This resolution, once passed and signed, will roll back a last-second Department of Labor regulation that eliminated long-standing federal protections for the retirement savings of private-sector workers," said Republican Senator Orrin Hatch on the Senate floor Wednesday.

The Labor Department rule exempts state-sponsored plans from having to comply with the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), which sets minimum standards for retirement plan providers regarding consumer protections. At the time, the Obama Administration said uncertainty about complying with ERISA was a "roadblock" to a broader adoption of state plans. "Ultimately, I have to wonder why states and municipalities want to do away with these protections in the first place," Hatch said.

Other opponents, like the Chamber of Commerce, say that state-sponsored plans would lead to a patchwork of laws across the country. This could make it difficult for small businesses to keep up, especially for those who might have workers who live in a different state. Related: One in four workers have less than $1,000 saved for retirement
But advocates of the existing law say the plans are meant to ease the cost and burden on the business, and that there will be sufficient protection for consumers without having to comply with ERISA.

The IRA plans themselves are offered and run by private firms that are already regulated. And the plans are carefully vetted by a board looking for low-fee investment options. The employer isn't charged anything when their worker enrolls.

Half of workers, estimated to be about 55 million Americans, don't currently have a retirement plan through their employer. AARP, which supports the state plans, says people are 15 times more likely to save if they have access to a plan that deducts money straight from their paycheck.

But the uncertainty over the DOL rule has already had a "chilling effect" on the conversations Washington is having with companies that would provide the plans, McKinnon said. Senator Hatch favors a different approach to helping workers save for retirement. He's sponsored legislation that that would allow businesses to voluntarily pool assets and participate in "multiple employer plans."

Republicans are using the Congressional Review Act to repeal the Obama-era rules with a simple majority. They need to approve two resolutions to do so because one concerns cities that want to create IRA plans and the other paves the way for states. The Senate voted to approve the city-related resolution by a vote of 50 to 49 on Thursday. They have not yet voted on the second resolution. If approved, both will be sent to the desk of President Trump.

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