



Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

Strength in Numbers 95,000

Pennsylvania – Delaware – Maryland – New Jersey – West Virginia



LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

William Hamilton, President & Eastern PA Legislative Coordinator – Carl Bailey, Secretary-Treasurer & Western PA Legislative Coordinator - Tim O'Neill, Consultant – Dan Grace, Trustee & Legislative Advisor - Tom Kohn, Esq. Legal Advisor - Thomas Felice, Staff



“Maryland Joins New Jersey in Banning Captive-Audience Meetings”

A clear precedent for Pennsylvania, Delaware, and West Virginia

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore signed SB 417/HB 45 into law on April 28, 2026, enacting landmark protections that prohibit employers from forcing workers to attend “captive audience” meetings. The law takes effect October 1, 2026.

What SB 417 / HB 45 Does

- **Bans mandatory captive-audience meetings** where employers pressure workers on politics, religion, or union membership.
- **Protects employees and job applicants** from discipline, discharge, or retaliation for refusing to attend such meetings.
- Defines “**political matters**” broadly, including elections, legislation, public policy, and decisions about joining or supporting a union.
- Requires employers to **post a notice** informing workers of their rights and to provide notice to new hires.
- Complaints will be handled by the **Maryland Commissioner of Labor and Industry**.
- Penalties include **\$10,000 for a first violation** and **\$25,000 for subsequent violations**, along with potential **injunctive relief, reinstatement, backpay, compensatory damages, and attorney’s fees**.

Captive-audience meetings have long been used to intimidate workers during organizing drives and contract campaigns. Maryland’s action places it among a growing number of states moving to protect workers’ rights to hear—and speak—without fear of employer retaliation.

With SB 417/HB 45 now signed, **Maryland becomes a regional benchmark** within the PA Conference of Teamsters’ legislative focus. This development strengthens worker-protection momentum across the Mid-Atlantic and reinforces our coordinated strategy on captive-audience legislation. It provides a **clear model for similar protections in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and West Virginia**, where parallel efforts continue to advance.