

February 24, 2017



## Legislative Update

Sadly, but not surprisingly, the Republican legislative leadership has completed another week of the 2017 regular legislative session without initiating a single significant conversation about job creation – for example, there was no discussion of Gov. Justice’s infrastructure expansion proposal, which has the potential to create tens of thousands of jobs.

Instead, Senate President Mitch Carmichael took the lead in the ongoing attack on working families, rapidly moving several anti-union pieces of legislation forward:

- \* The full Senate passed Senate Bill 222, which would deny unemployment benefits for striking workers in all instances and locked out workers in some instances, by a 22-11 vote along party lines. The bill, which creates an unequal playing field for union workers and is an intrusion into the collective bargaining process, now goes to the House of Delegates.
- \* The Senate Workforce Committee approved and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee Senate Bill 239, the “paycheck deception” bill to prevent withholding from an employee’s paycheck for political activities, and Senate Bill 224, which would repeal the requirement that new companies post a bond for wages and benefits.
- \* The Senate Government Organization Committee passed Senate Bill 221, which would change the requirements for members of the Public Employees Insurance Agency Finance Board, resulting in the disqualification two organized labor representatives currently serving on the board.

Although Judge Bailey is expected to rule any day now on our lawsuit challenging Senate Bill 1, the “Right to Work” law adopted by the Legislature in 2016, the Senate is moving forward with Senate Bill 330, which is an apparent attempt to correct some of the technical problems with the Right to Work law that we pointed out in our lawsuit. However, the bill, which is up for a vote by the full Senate Monday, does not address our biggest concern, which is that the law violates the West Virginia Constitution.

We will be following these and all other issues affecting West Virginia working families during the coming weeks and will report back on any developments.