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The bill would create new language and take a stronger stand against unemployment and workers compensation fraud. It would create new fines and penalties, holding companies that abuse American workers responsible for such illegal actions. In addition, the MRCC is taking a stand against the looming threat of a Right to Work policy in our state. Right to Work is designed to hurt unions, which in turn would impact all workers. Backed by powerful special interests, Right to Work would reduce wages and benefits, outsource jobs and threaten safety conditions. It would harm our already fragile economy, having the most devastating impact on the middleclass. Workers in Right to Work states like Mississippi and Alabama have shown a lower quality of life. Those in Right to Work states earn 17-percent less than workers in non-Right to Work states, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That goes for both union and non-union workers — everyone would make less.

Lower wages and benefits are just the beginning.

Construction unions protect American jobs by requiring proof of citizenship as a condition of employment.

However, Right to Work would make it easier for contractors and corporations to hire untrained and unskilled illegal immigrants, driving down wages and making worksites less safe.

Unions not only protect worker safety and improve the quality of life — they raise the standard of living for everyone in Michigan, regardless of whether workers are in a union or not.

These issues facing labor unions could have a devastating effect on every Michigan citizen.

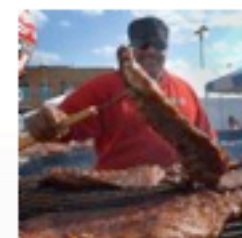
Take a moment to appreciate the working conditions enjoyed by Americans. Labor unions began establishing those standards over a century ago and we continue to fight for the cause and to protect all workers in the years to come.

Mike Jackson is the Executive Secretary/ Treasurer of the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights, based in Detroit.

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Stephen Frye has covered the police beat and courts for The Oakland Press and now serves as online editor for www.theoaklandpress.com.



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