



3 March 2026

Testimony in Support of H7440

Dear Chair Arthur J. Corvese and the members of the House Labor Committee,

We are writing today in support of H7440, legislation that would permit workers who are participating in a strike or other industrial controversy related to their employer. This legislation plays an important role in providing workers with the ability to exercise their collective rights without fear of eviction or hunger for themselves and their families. As demonstrated by the Butler strike in 2025, employers often have very deep pockets, and they can afford to bring in out-of-state scab labor at extremely elevated rates while refusing to pay their own Rhode Island workers enough to survive. Fortunately, SEIU was able to support the Butler workers while they were on strike so that both sides could come together and reach a reasonable agreement, but some smaller unions may not have the ability and means to support workers in this way. H7440 levels the playing field for workers and employers and ensures that both sides have equal incentives to bargain collectively.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mikaila".

Mikaila Mariel Lemonik Arthur, Ph.D.  
President, RIC/AFT Local 1819

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read "Vincent Bohlinger".

Vincent Bohlinger, Ph.D.  
Chair, Committee on Political Education, RIC/AFT Local 1819