

Alan B Tarrant

P.O. Box 792
2139 McPherson Ave. North Bend Oregon 97459

House Bill 2016

Chair Barker and members of the House Committee on Business and Labor, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I have several concerns with House Bill 2016 and why the state legislature would even entertain such a bill. First and foremost, I would like an explanation as to why a legislative branch of the state government which should be representing the interest of the people of this state is instead willingly giving all sorts of concessions and advantages to a labor organization that in turn gives financial support to one specific group of individuals. Could it be that there is a type of symbiotic relationship taking place?

Up until June of 2018 when The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Janus v. AFSCME that public employees could no longer be forced to make payments to a union was I able to stop my union membership. Even with that ruling, the union continued to take union dues out of my check until November of 2018. It would seem obvious that once the court decision was reached, it would be in immediate effect. Why did my employer ignore the court decision and continue to deduct monthly dues from my check?

My concern with public employee unions is that they are political organizations and use the revenue they receive to forward a specific agenda. I have never had to join a union until I became employed by the Oregon Department of Corrections. I do believe that a union should represent the best interests of its members period. It should not be involved in politics in anyway.

It is obvious that public employee unions are up to their necks in politics; just look at where their money goes. It has been made public knowledge that a vast amount of money collected from dues paying members goes to funding political groups as well as politician's re-election funds.

It's bad enough that AFSCME donates employees' monthly dues to political causes but that they donate to specific groups and individuals whose views, opinions and agendas are in direct opposition to a vast number of its membership. This is not representing members but rather their own interests.

I will now address my specific concerns pertaining to HB 2016:

First, the bill would require my employer to turn over my personal identifiable information, as well as all my co-worker's personal information, over to the union on a regular basis. This will result in the union contacting me outside of work attempting to solicit membership since I have opted out. I do not wish to be a part of the union nor do I want them to have my contact information.

Second, the bill would allow the union to determine what is "reasonable conduct" for all attendees at union related work meetings. Meaning if I decided to attend one of these meetings and share with my co-workers that they do not have to be a part of the union, I would most likely be told to stop talking or asked to leave.

Third, the bill allows the union to authorize dues payments to the union via telephone call. Since the union would already have my phone number, because the bill requires my employer to give it to them, they will call me when I am not at work and attempt to persuade or coerce me back into membership. Once again, I do not wish to receive these calls.

Finally, the bill protects the union from being liable for damages if they unrightfully take dues from someone. For example, if the union decided to once again deduct dues from me without my consent and I pursued action against them, they would only be liable for damages which do not exceed the amount they took from me. This means if the union were to steal from me or any other public employee and were caught, all they would have to do is simply give it back. They would not be liable for any further damages even though they would have committed theft. It is baffling that this part of the bill could be argued to “strengthen collective bargaining”.

On behalf of myself and all those who share my concerns, I respectfully urge the committee to oppose HB 2016.

Thank you,

Alan B. Tarrant