



General Assembly

February Session, 2018

***Raised Bill No. 5473***

LCO No. 2075



Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY

Introduced by:  
(JUD)

***AN ACT CONCERNING CAPTIVE AUDIENCE MEETINGS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2018*) (a) As used in this  
2 section:

3 (1) "Employer" means a person engaged in business who has more  
4 than one employee, including the state and any political subdivision of  
5 the state;

6 (2) "Employee" means any person engaged in service to an employer  
7 in a business of such employer;

8 (3) "Political matters" means matters relating to: Elections for  
9 political office, political parties, legislation, regulation and the decision  
10 to join or support any political party or political, civic, community,  
11 fraternal or labor organization; and

12 (4) "Religious matters" means matters relating to religious affiliation  
13 and practice and the decision to join or support any religious  
14 organization or association.

15 (b) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, no employer,  
16 or agent, representative or designee of such employer, shall require an  
17 employee to attend an employer-sponsored meeting with the  
18 employer or its agent, representative or designee, the primary purpose  
19 of which is to communicate the employer's opinion concerning  
20 political or religious matters, except that an employer or its agent,  
21 representative or designee may communicate to an employee any  
22 information concerning political or religious matters that the employer  
23 is required by law to communicate, but only to the extent of such legal  
24 requirement.

25 (c) No employer, or agent, representative or designee of such  
26 employer, shall discharge, discipline or penalize, or threaten to  
27 discharge, discipline or penalize, any employee because the employee,  
28 or a person acting on behalf of the employee, makes a good-faith  
29 report, orally or in writing, of a violation or a suspected violation of  
30 the provisions of this section. The provisions of this subsection shall  
31 not apply when the employee knows that such report is false.

32 (d) Any employee who is discharged, disciplined or penalized in  
33 violation of the provisions of this section may bring a civil action, not  
34 later than ninety days after the date of the alleged violation, in the  
35 superior court for the judicial district where the violation is alleged to  
36 have occurred or where the employer has its principal office. The court  
37 may award a prevailing employee all appropriate relief, including  
38 rehiring or reinstatement of the employee to the employee's former  
39 position, back pay and reestablishment of any employee benefits to  
40 which the employee would otherwise have been eligible if such  
41 violation had not occurred. The court shall award a prevailing  
42 employee treble damages, together with reasonable attorney's fees and  
43 costs.

44 (e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit an employee's  
45 right to bring a common law cause of action against an employer for  
46 wrongful termination or to diminish or impair the rights of a person  
47 under any collective bargaining agreement.

48 (f) Nothing in this section shall prohibit: (1) A religious organization  
49 from requiring its employees to attend a meeting sponsored by such  
50 religious organization or to participate in any communications with  
51 such religious organization or its agent, representative or designee, the  
52 primary purpose of which is to communicate such religious  
53 organization's religious beliefs, practices or tenets; (2) a political  
54 organization from requiring its employees to attend a meeting  
55 sponsored by such political organization or to participate in any  
56 communications with such political organization or its agent,  
57 representative or designee, the primary purpose of which is to  
58 communicate such political organization's political tenets or purposes;  
59 (3) an institution of higher education, or any agent, representative or  
60 designee of such institution, from meeting with or participating in any  
61 communications with its employees concerning political or religious  
62 matters that are part of the regular coursework or any symposia or  
63 academic program at such institution; (4) casual conversations  
64 between employees, between an employee and an employer or  
65 between an employee and an agent, representative or designee of an  
66 employer, provided participation in such conversations is not required  
67 and such conversations occur in the normal course of the employee's  
68 duties; or (5) a requirement limited to the employer's managerial and  
69 supervisory employees.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2018</i>	New section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To prohibit an employer from coercing employees into attending or participating in meetings sponsored by the employer concerning the employer's views on political or religious matters.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*