

HOUSE BILL NO. 4455

May 06, 2025, Introduced by Reps. Mentzer, Weiss, Brixie, Andrews, Martus, Rogers, Xiong, Rheingans, Neeley, Hope, Tsernoglou, MacDonell, B. Carter, Conlin, Steckloff, Foreman, Arbit, Skaggs, Wegela, Young, Pohutsky, McKinney, Longjohn, Dievendorf, McFall, Wilson, Byrnes, Myers-Phillips, Paiz, Price, T. Carter, Snyder, Breen, Wooden and Tate and referred to Committee on Economic Competitiveness.

A bill to establish the right of an employee to pursue employment free from religious or political indoctrination; to limit employment actions based on attendance at, or receptivity to, employer-selected religious or political programs or communications; to prohibit retaliation for reporting or pursuing a remedy for a suspected violation of this act; and to provide remedies.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

- 1** Sec. 1. This act may be cited as the "worker freedom act".
- 2** Sec. 3. As used in this act:

1 (a) "Employee" means an individual engaged in service to and
2 in the business of an employer for wages or other remuneration.
3 Employee includes, but is not limited to, a research assistant,
4 research fellow, teaching assistant, teaching fellow, postdoctoral
5 associate, postdoctoral fellow, and medical intern or medical
6 resident.

7 (b) "Employer" means a person that employs 1 or more
8 employees. Employer includes an agent, designee, or representative
9 of the employer, this state, or a political subdivision of this
10 state.

11 (c) "Labor organization" means an organization that exists, in
12 whole or in part, for the purpose of doing any of the following:

13 (i) Collective bargaining.

14 (ii) Dealing with employers concerning grievances or terms or
15 conditions of employment.

16 (iii) Mutual aid or protection in connection with employment.

17 (d) "Political matters" means matters that relate to elections
18 for political office, political parties, proposals to change
19 legislation, proposals to change regulations, proposals to change
20 public policy, or the decision to join or support any political
21 party or political, civic, community, fraternal, or labor
22 organization.

23 (e) "Religious matters" means matters that relate to religious
24 belief, affiliation, or practice, or the decision to join or
25 support any religious organization or association.

26 Sec. 5. An employer shall not take any adverse employment
27 action against an employee; discharge, discipline, or otherwise
28 penalize an employee; or threaten to discharge, discipline, or
29 otherwise penalize an employee for any of the following reasons:

1 (a) Because the employee declines to attend or participate in
2 an employer-sponsored meeting or declines to receive or listen to a
3 communication from the employer if the purpose of the meeting or
4 communication is to communicate the opinion of the employer about
5 religious or political matters.

6 (b) To induce the employee into attending or participating in
7 an employer-sponsored meeting or into receiving or listening to
8 communications from the employer that communicate the opinion of
9 the employer about religious or political matters.

10 (c) Because the employee, or a person acting on behalf of the
11 employee, makes a good-faith report, orally or in writing, of a
12 violation or a suspected violation of this act.

13 Sec. 7. (1) An employee aggrieved by a violation of this act
14 may bring a civil action to enforce this act not later than 90 days
15 after the date of the alleged violation in the circuit court of the
16 county where the alleged violation occurred or where the principal
17 office of the employee's employer is located. The court may award a
18 prevailing employee all appropriate relief, which may include, but
19 is not limited to, injunctive relief, reinstatement to the
20 employee's former job position or an equivalent job position, back
21 pay, and reestablishment of any employee benefits, including
22 seniority, to which the employee would otherwise have been eligible
23 if the violation did not occur. The court shall award a prevailing
24 employee reasonable attorney fees and costs.

25 (2) Not more than 30 days after the effective date of this
26 act, an employer shall post and keep posted in a place where
27 employee notices are customarily posted by the employer a notice of
28 an employee's rights under this section.

29 Sec. 9. This act does not do any of the following:

1 (a) Prohibit the communication of information that the
2 employer is required by law to communicate, but only to the extent
3 that is required by law.

4 (b) Limit the rights of an employer to conduct a meeting or
5 engage in a communication that involves religious or political
6 matters if attendance at the meeting or receipt of or listening to
7 the communication is voluntary.

8 (c) Limit the rights of an employer to communicate to the
9 employer's employees any information that is necessary for the
10 employees to perform the employees' job duties.

11 Sec. 11. This act provides an alternative cause of action to
12 any remedy that may exist under law. This act does not limit an
13 employee's right to bring a common law cause of action for wrongful
14 termination or diminish or impair the rights under a collective
15 bargaining agreement.