



March 5, 2020

Dear Representative,

The Coalition for Workforce Innovation appreciates the intent of H.R. 842, *the Protecting the Right to Organize Act* to bolster the middle class and champion the rights of workers, but the bill contains damaging changes to workforce law that will constrict and undermine the ability for American workers to choose when, where and how they wish to work. For that reason, CWI opposes H.R. 842.

The Coalition for Workforce Innovation (CWI) was formed to bring together a broad, diverse group of stakeholders like the service sectors, small business start-ups, technology companies as well as worker advocates to modernize federal workforce policy to enhance choice, flexibility, and economic opportunity for all workers.

However, with regards to the PRO Act, CWI is concerned with the new amended definition of employee in Section 101 that would dramatically narrow the opportunities for independent workers. By adopting the restrictive “ABC” test for independent contractors, the legislation would do more harm than good by reducing flexibility for those who prioritize the benefits of creating their own schedule – such as students, parents, small entrepreneurs, and retirees. These new restrictions would unfortunately also increase barriers to work and entrepreneurship for communities that have traditionally struggled in the job market including immigrants, caregivers, veterans, and individuals with criminal backgrounds.

Data continues to show that antagonism to independent work is misguided given the available opportunities for those who find work in this way. In fact, a recent survey from the Coalition for Workforce Innovation (CWI) of over 600 independent contractors showed that 94% of respondents were either somewhat or very satisfied with their independent work style. Further, 89% of respondents agreed that independent style of work made them feel like they are no longer stuck in a bad economic situation — allowing for new opportunities, and flexibility to improve their work lives. Finally, voters in California roundly rejected a similar restrictive approach to independent work with the passage of Proposition 22.

Now more than ever, we need a mix of commonsense relief measures and policies that promote and maximize opportunities and flexibility for workers. Independent work is and will continue to be crucial in helping our economic recovery, but only if lawmakers allow it to be an onramp to economic opportunity and recovery.

Recent technological advancements have increased opportunities for all people to find well-paying and satisfying work that fits around their lives, rather than having to fit their lives around their work. As technology continues to improve, it will become easier to connect people with

opportunities to leverage their own capital, expertise, and other resources. For this reason, a fresh look at public policy will be needed to fully realize the macroeconomic benefits of these trends. CWI and its members seek to collaborate with all policymakers on the advantages of independent work as well as identify bipartisan opportunities to enhance this positive trend by modernizing existing federal workforce policy for the benefit of workers, consumers, businesses, and the overall economy. To reiterate, CWI commends the efforts to create an economy that works for all stakeholders but urges you to oppose H.R. 842 and its approach to independent work.

To learn more about CWI, please visit www.workforceinnovation.net.

Sincerely,

Coalition for Workforce Innovation