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Press Release

House Appropriations Committee Clears Way for Worker Gag Bill

The legislature isn't listening to the voters who elected them to focus on creating jobs. Instead, the legislature is more interested on restricting workers' rights. Two weeks ago, Firefighters, Nurses, Police Officers, Teachers, Students and community allies taped their mouths shut to symbolize the effect these bills would have on their families. A week later they left the committee hearing in unison after testifying in order to showcase that only corporate special interests would remain in committee hearings if this legislation were to pass into law. Today workers from across the state converged on a House Appropriations Committee meeting to stand united against HB 1021, giving passionate testimonies against this anti democratic legislation.

Tom Mulling, an employee from Palm Beach County said in testimony that, "There is nothing worse than having no control over your situation. I pay my dues so I can have a voice. As an ordinary citizen, I can't compete in Tallahassee with big business and their lobbyists. I can't contribute thousands of dollars to a candidate." He continued by saying, "Tallahassee politicians shouldn't try to tell me how to spend my money. It is my paycheck, my choice. My fellow workers and I should not be punished because we may disagree with the people in power or speak out against the policies with which we don't agree with."

Representative Dorworth (R, Heathrow) used Orwellian logic to state that this legislation would empower union members, however Representative Franklin Sands (D, Plantation) rejected this statement calling this "union busting" legislation. The Worker Gag Bill is nothing less than an abuse of power that restricts access to the democratic process. That's not how America works. If this legislation passes, big business will still have their advocates, average working Floridians will not.

In spite of bipartisan opposition, the bill passed out of the Appropriations Committee and will be heading to the House floor for further consideration.

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