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2022 Louisiana Legislative Session Update

Week 7 was a great week for the merit shop! We had several bills appear in committee and on the house and senate floors. Most of these bills pitted ABC against powerful interests who showed up *en masse* in an attempt to influence legislators. ABC prevailed in every single fight.

Representative Paula Davis deserves a big “thank you” from ABC! She played a critical role in helping us pass some priority legislation out of committee on Monday. The legislation, HB 300, was authored by Rep. DeVillier. We worked closely with Rep. DeVillier to amend the bill and ensure that it accomplished its goal of reducing unnecessary restrictions on experienced plumbers. The bill was set to be heard in the House Commerce Committee on Monday, but Rep. DeVillier was unable to attend the meeting to present his bill. Representative Davis stepped in to present both the bill and our amendments to the committee. It reported favorably without objection.

ABC and our coalition partners have been fighting to prevent the legislature from enacting SB 151, which would enshrine the Governor’s limitations on ITEP into the state constitution. Senator Pope brought the bill to the senate floor Wednesday afternoon, but then shelved it after lengthy debate. Senator Pope has the right to force a vote, but I don’t expect that he will do so. We have the votes to kill it on the floor if he does. **ABC-LA opposes SB 151.**

On Thursday the House Labor & Industrial Relations Committee heard three bills opposed by ABC, two of which sought to establish a statewide minimum wage and one that would expand upon current law requiring equal pay for women. Private employers are already prohibited from discriminating based on sex, so this bill would have burdened private employers with additional requirements, complaint procedures, and methods of adjudication. There were several groups and individuals who testified in support of these three bills (including AFL-CIO & the Louisiana Democratic Party Chairwoman), while ABC was one of only three associations appearing in opposition. Supporters’ emotions ran high during testimony, eventually spurring Chairwoman Carpenter to remind them of the rules of decorum. **All three bills failed to pass.**

See below for individual explanations of this week’s bills

HB 681, by Clay Schexnayder, establishes the State and Local Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Commission. HB 681 passed off the house floor 96-0. **ABC-LA supports HB 681.**
HB 96-0

HB 219, by Representative Green, amends current equal pay requirements for public employees to extend to private employers. Private employers are already prohibited from discriminating based on sex, so this bill would have burdened private employers with additional requirements, complaint procedures, and methods of adjudication. HB 219 failed to report out of committee. **ABC-LA opposes HB 219.**

HB 229, by Representative Green, provides for a constitutional amendment establishing a minimum wage of \$11.65 per hour. After extensive testimony and debate, HB 229 failed to report out of the House Labor & Industrial Relations Committee. **ABC-LA opposes HB 229.**

HB 300, by Representative DeVillier, eliminates the restricted journeyman plumber license and restricted master plumber licenses as options for licensure of plumbers. An ABC amendment to the bill provides that formerly “restricted” licensees are now able to practice their craft statewide. HB 300 reported out of the House Commerce Committee without objection. **ABC-LA supports HB300.**

HB 311, by Representative Marcelle, establishes a \$10 hourly minimum wage to go into effect on January 1, 2023 and then increase to \$12 per hour on January 1, 2024. After extensive testimony and debate, HB 311 failed to report from the House Labor & Industrial Relations Committee. **ABC-LA opposes HB 311.**

HB 1062, by Representative Freeman, allows an individual to petition an occupational licensing board for review of a regulation issued by that board. HB 1062 reported favorably out of the House Commerce Committee. **ABC-LA supports HB 1062.**

SB 151, by Rogers Pope, enshrines Governor Edwards’ limitations on ITEP into the state constitution. This includes capping the property tax exclusion at 80% and requiring the approval of the parish governing body, school board, sheriff, and municipal government prior to granting the tax exemption. Senator Pope returned SB 151 to the calendar, but we do not expect him to bring the bill back up for a vote. **ABC-LA opposes SB 151.**

SB 271, by Senator Womack, provides that public entities may not consider information not included in the Louisiana Uniform Bid Form when reviewing bids for public works. SB 271 passed off the senate floor 33-0. **ABC-LA supports SB 271.**

SB 423, by Senator Foil, provides that a product supplier for public works may seek approval for products other than that specified in the contract within seven days of bid opening. If the prime design professional fails to respond to the request within three days of submission, the submitted product shall be considered approved. SB 423 passed off the senate floor 33-0. **ABC-LA is monitoring SB 423.**

SB 429, by Senator Womack, provides that a public entity shall publish and furnish to the contractor on a public works project with an itemized list of the remaining matters to be finished, errors to be remedied, or any inconsequential matters, within 10 days of substantial completion of the public works. The public entity may amend the punch list within 14 days after initial publication. SB 429 passed off the senate floor 32-0. **ABC-LA supports SB 429.**



Thank you all for supporting the merit shop. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time.

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