

Open Letter to North Carolina Legislators

Dear Honorable Members of the General Assembly,

We respectfully request your support of House Bill 1583, which allows voluntary collective bargaining between government entities and public employees.

HB 1583 will make collective bargaining by government entities optional, not mandatory. It is a “local option” bill, permitting local solutions. It will not repeal G.S. 95-98.1, which prohibits strikes by public employees.

Collective bargaining is a process in which both parties bring up issues of concern in the workplace. Representatives of government bodies and representatives of employees come together to negotiate solutions, including improving the delivery of public services.

Collective Bargaining for public sector employees will benefit the citizens of North Carolina as well as bodies of government and their workforces by decreasing turnover, a major problem for state, county, and local governments. Reduced turnover will result in the provision of better services and reductions in the costs of retraining and re-employment for the same jobs over and over again.

Moreover, collective bargaining provides a working forum for government employers and employees to directly address issues of race and sex discrimination, which the State of North Carolina has cited as a major concern in state government.

We believe the right to collective bargaining is an issue of fairness for public employees. It is an internationally recognized human right and will increase the morale and efficiency of all public workers.

Please pass HB 1583 in this session of the General Assembly and remove an unfair and outdated prohibition that is not good for North Carolina’s public sector workers, government, or the citizens of this state.

Yours Truly,