

Insights: Alerts

# Illinois Passes Law Limiting 'Captive Audience' Meetings

August 15, 2024

Written by **Christopher M. Caiaccio**

---

On July 31, 2024, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed Senate Bill 3649, the “Worker Freedom of Speech Act,” (the “Act”) which prohibits employers from using “captive audience” meetings with employees to discuss an employer’s position on religious or political matters, including union representation and the right to opt out of union membership.

The Act does not prohibit these meetings entirely; it only prohibits employers from punishing, discharging, or otherwise penalizing employees declining to attend captive audience meetings. Employers may continue to hold such meetings as long as they are *voluntary*.

Employees have a private right of action to enforce their rights under the Act and may seek make-whole monetary damages, injunctive relief, as well as the recovery of their attorneys’ fees and costs. The Illinois Department of Labor may also impose a penalty of \$1,000 per violation against the employer.

The Worker Freedom of Speech Act becomes effective on January 1, 2025. The Act, however, is already facing legal challenges. On August 8, 2024, the Liberty Justice Center filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, challenging the constitutionality of the law on First Amendment grounds. Kilpatrick’s Labor and Employment Team will keep you updated on any additional developments.

## Related People

---



**Christopher M. Caiaccio**

t 404.815.6203

ccaiaccio@ktslaw.com