

# UNISON

Southend Local  
Government Branch

## YOUR RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

The Government wants the right to limit 'facility time'. When trade unions represent our members and negotiate with the employers, it's hardly ever done by paid officials. It's done by local representatives who are given time off for these duties.

If facility time is reduced, it will make it harder for UNISON to support your basic right to representation if you face a disciplinary, an absence review or a restructure.

## JOINING THE UNION

Most UNISON members, particularly in the public sector pay our subs straight from our salary. The government want to stop this.

They hope this will make it harder to recruit new members to the union.

It will be OK to deduct your tax, or buy a car or a bike through 'salary sacrifice' - but not to pay to belong to a trade union!

let us  
work for  
a better  
future  
drop the  
Trade  
Union Bill

# Help stop the Trade Union Bill

- The government are pushing a Trade Union Bill through Parliament.
- If it becomes law, it will make it even more difficult for unions like UNISON to represent our members.
- There would be limits on facility time for representation and on paying our subs.
- It will be harder than ever to hold ballots for the industrial action we sometimes need.

## DEMOCRACY

There would have to be at least a 50% turnout to make an industrial action ballot valid. In 'important' services like education and transport, at least 40% of the whole electorate will have to vote 'Yes'.

If the same rules were applied to a parliamentary election, NEITHER of the Southend MPs would have been elected.

In 2014, turnout in Southend council elections was less than 34% - NONE of those councillors would have been elected.

It's good enough if you want to get into parliament to pass laws, but not for us on the rare occasions we need to take action to protest about pay or pensions.

## Don't let the government take away our rights:

- To represent our members
- To take action if and when we need to
- To fund our trade union

## You can help-

# use the letter overleaf to write to your MP

**This is a Model letter to your MP. You can use these words, or write your own!**

You have to write to the MP for your area. If you want to find out who that is, you can check at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/> where you'll also find their email address. If you'd like a Word copy of this letter so you can put your own together, contact [unison@southend.gov.uk](mailto:unison@southend.gov.uk) or look on our website <http://www.unisonsouthend.org.uk> under Resources . If you can get a letter filled in, UNISON will post it for you - return it to the UNISON office, Lower Ground Floor, Civic Centre.

.....MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

Dear

**Trade Union Bill**

I work in public services. I'm also a member of a union, UNISON, and I am deeply concerned about the impact of the Trade Union Bill.

At a time when public services are struggling to cope, and employees are facing increasing workloads, rising levels of stress and pay freezes, I don't understand why the government is seeking to undermine our right to be supported and represented in the workplace. Even the Government's own Regulatory Policy Committee has stated that the Trade Union Bill is 'not fit for purpose'.

The Bill heaps red tape and bureaucracy on to trade unions, proposing to use agency workers to break strikes and bringing in voting thresholds for industrial action ballots, all of which will undermine the fundamental right to strike. Going on strike and losing a day's pay is an action of last resort for someone like me – but without it, it will tip the balance in the workplace too far in favour of the employer. When you take away the right to strike, you remove the incentive for employers to negotiate with us, which could mean disputes last longer because they're not resolved.

Cuts to the time trade union representatives have to help us means we will not be represented in job evaluations, grievances, disciplinary processes or when we need help with health and safety. The Bill will just damage good relationships in the workplace, hurt morale and increase staff turnover. I also believe that having the option to pay union subs through pay slip deduction is useful and I can't understand why employers should not have that option given they allow charity and other deductions at source. I understand there are several employers who have said this publicly too.

I am also concerned about the effect on civil liberties relating to the Bill's proposals to use ASBO's on trade union picket lines and other restrictions. The BIS department's own impact assessment could not quote any evidence for these proposals prompting the Regulatory Policy Committee to state that 'there is little evidence presented that there will be any significant benefits from this proposal' and 'the definition of the problem currently appears weak and unsubstantiated'. Asking trade unions to give two weeks' notice of any website and social media content including facebook or twitter about a union dispute *including any changes or updates in content* doesn't seem in touch with the modern world.

There is still time for the Government to withdraw this legislation and to act in the interests of the thousands of your constituents who are trade union members – and ultimately the interests of all workers, whether they are in a union or not. I hope that I can meet with you in person to talk further about my concerns. Can you let me know when I can meet you at your constituency office or surgery?

Yours sincerely,

Name:

Address:

Postcode:



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