

(SB917)

GOVERNOR'S VETO

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto Senate Bill 917, which establishes mandatory union collective bargaining for state and local government employees.

This bill eliminates the prohibition on collective bargaining by state employees and would require state government entities including most executive branch, independent state authorities, and institutions of higher education to engage in mandatory union collective bargaining. The bill also requires local governments and school divisions to engage in mandatory union collective bargaining. Finally, the legislation covers some non-state employees, specifically, independent health providers who accept Medicaid payments.

The legislation represents a fundamental shift in employment policy in the Commonwealth of Virginia that would threaten the funding and delivery of critical state and local services and will collectively costs taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

Furthermore, the bill lacks a funding mechanism for implementation, leaving agencies unprepared to manage the administrative and legal complexities involved. With no comprehensive assessment of financial or operational impact, the proposal introduces significant uncertainty in government workforce management ahead of its July 2026 effective date.

Accordingly, I veto the legislation.