



Pennsylvania House of Representatives Votes to End Stalking, Harassment and Terroristic Threats in Labor Disputes

Insights

4.22.15

Currently, harassment, stalking and threatening to use a weapon of mass destruction are all crimes – unless you are a union member engaged in a labor dispute. Yesterday, April 22, 2015, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a bill to end the crimes code carveout allowing parties to a labor dispute to stalk, harass, and make deadly threats. The measure comes after the federal indictment and conviction of Ironworkers Local 401, whose leaders and members were charged with multiple crimes related to the December 2012 burning and vandalism of a Quaker meetinghouse construction site in the Chestnut Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia. Several other incidents are outlined in the indictment, most of which started with harassment, unwelcome visits to jobsites and direct threats. Law enforcement was handcuffed by the carveout from intervening earlier, which may have prevented the violence and destruction of property.

Pennsylvania's unions oppose the legislation. Pennsylvania AFL-CIO officers accuse the bill of being an "overreach by a political agenda that is not based on reality but on extreme ideology against unions" and "an effort to engage in union busting" saying that "current laws are protecting the rights of workers to have a voice and to protect the property of businesses."

The bill now heads to the state Senate. We will keep you apprised of further developments.