



INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA - UAW

SHAWN FAIN, *PRESIDENT* • MARGARET MOCK, *SECRETARY-TREASURER*
VICE-PRESIDENTS: MIKE BOOTH • RICH BOYER • LAURA DICKERSON

September 16, 2025

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than one million active and retired members of the UAW, we urge you to vote no on H.R. 1723, *Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act*. This anti-worker bill would deny collective bargaining rights under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to hundreds of thousands of workers employed at over 500 tribal hotels and casinos and countless more at other tribal businesses in the United States.

The UAW deeply respects tribal sovereignty. The members of our union were the first to reach a collective bargaining agreement under tribal law – proving that the inherent rights of workers and the sovereignty of Tribes need not be in conflict under the current legal framework.¹ However, this legislation would remove an important backstop should workers require protection under the NLRA. Tribes should possess the sovereignty to self-govern *and* workers should be afforded fundamental protections to collectively bargain. The Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act would foreclose the latter.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has asserted jurisdiction over tribal businesses for over two decades² and various appellate courts have affirmed its authority to do so.³ Current precedent carefully balances tribal sovereignty with worker protections, precluding the NLRB from exercising jurisdiction that “touches [a Tribe’s] exclusive rights of self-governance” or “abrogate[s] treaty rights.”⁴ This legislation would blow up that balance, leaving workers without critical protections for their most basic workplace rights. As Congress continues to regulate the commerce in which Tribes choose to participate, it should not grant them a blanket exception to federal labor law.

If enacted, this bill would overturn two decades of NLRB precedent, terminate thousands of collective bargaining agreements, and strip hundreds of thousands of workers out of their unions. The dignified principle of tribal sovereignty should not be deployed to deny a worker’s fundamental right to freedom of association. We strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 1723.

In solidarity,
Rajiv Sicora
Legislative Director

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¹ Eric Gershon, Foxwoods, UAW Agree on Contract for Table-Game Dealers, HARTFORD COURANT (Jan. 27, 2010), <https://www.courant.com/2010/01/27/foxwoods-uaw-agree-on-contract-for-table-game-dealers/>

² *San Manuel Indian Bingo and Casino*, 341 NLRB No. 138 (2004).

³ *NLRB v. Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Government*, 788 F.3d 537 (6th Cir. 2015); *Casino Pauma v. NLRB*, 888 F.3d 1066 (9th Cir. 2018).

⁴ *Supra* note 2.