

## ISSUES & POLICIES

# About Captive Audience Legislation

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Despite questions over their legality, so-called “captive audience” proposals are regularly raised by Connecticut’s legislature. Such proposals have sought to restrict employers from discussing anything the legislature deems “political” at mandatory staff meetings (captive audience meetings). Captive audience measures are part of a national movement of organized labor to place limitations on employers who may want to communicate with their employees about a variety of issues, including union organizing efforts.

### **What Is Political?**

One of the main problems with captive audience proposals is that they have typically defined political so broadly that almost any topic could be considered off limits in a workplace meeting, including issues that are critical to the effective management and operation of a business. For example, past proposals would have effectively banned discussions about developments at the State Capitol, employee health and safety, government contracts, employee health plans, and myriad other topics.

### **Rights Denied**

Legislation that prohibits employers from discussing such topics at staff meetings denies workers their right to information, a right protected by the National Labor Relations Act. The NLRA has long been held to be the exclusive authority governing relations and communications between employers and labor unions in the workplace.

### **Should Be Rejected**

State lawmakers should reject any proposals that would limit critically important communications in the workplace.