

Rep. Cuellar Supports American Workers & Union Jobs

Rep. Cuellar is an Original Cosponsor of the *Tax Fairness for Workers Act* in the 118th Congress.

- Makes the tax deduction for union dues above-the-line (available for everyone, even if they do not itemize deductions).
- Reinstates the tax deduction for unreimbursed employee expenses, such as job search expenses, travel, out of pocket cost of uniforms and tools, and supplies attributable to a trade or business consisting of the performance of services by the taxpayer as an employee.

Rep. Cuellar is an Original Cosponsor of the *No Tax Breaks for Union Busting Act* in the 118th Congress.

- Ends the taxpayer subsidization of business anti-union activity.
- Classifies business' interference in worker organization campaigns as not tax deductible, similar to how corporate political speech or lobbying is already treated in the tax code.

Rep. Cuellar Signed a Letter reaffirming UPS employees' right to collectively bargain—and their right to withhold their labor and participate in a strike—on July 18, 2023.

- In the event a fair and equitable collective bargaining agreement cannot be reached by August 1, the letter commits to respecting workers' statutory and constitutional rights to withhold their labor and initiate and participate in a strike.
- The letter's signers pledge not to intervene in the collective bargaining process between Teamsters and UPS.

Rep. Cuellar Wrote to Congressional Leadership urging immediate reauthorization of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) on December 30, 2022.

- Rep. Cuellar led 30 colleagues in supporting this critical pro-worker program.
- 2.5 million American workers have participated in TAA since Congress first established the program in 1974.
- TAA now assists almost 100,000 workers annually, providing tuition-free job training, relocation allowances, income support, and a health coverage tax credit. This includes almost 13,000 Texans on an annual basis.
- The program expired on July 1, 2022, at which point the Department of Labor stopped accepting new applications and began phasing out activities.

Rep. Cuellar Signed a Letter urging the Biden Administration to prioritize partnering with union workforces on green energy projects on March 10, 2023.

- Congress, through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, authorized the Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs Program (H2Hubs) to facilitate projects involving networks of clean hydrogen producers.

- The letter urges the Department of Energy to prioritize applicants for the H2Hubs program whose applications include:
 - Written confirmation that H2Hubs will be a source of high-quality, good-paying, union jobs in Texas;
 - A signed community workforce agreement with participating Texas labor organizations and disadvantaged community groups;
 - A written labor peace agreement for all operations and maintenance employees as they decide whether to form a union; and
 - A written plan for existing unionized fossil fuel workers to transition into unionized hydrogen jobs.

Rep. Cuellar Signed a Letter urging the Biden Administration to prioritize semiconductor funding to companies that create good-paying, union jobs on February 9, 2023.

- The CHIPS Act provides billions of public dollars in grants, loans, loan guarantees, and investment tax credits to rebuild America’s semiconductor manufacturing capacity and bolster a domestic supply chain.
- The letter urges the Administration to prioritize funding to companies committed to creating good-paying, union jobs.
- The letter also asks the Administration to require applicants to make binding, enforceable commitments to job quality and workplace standards, worker protections at facilities, build workforce development partnerships with unions, and meaningfully engage with union stakeholders throughout the process.

Rep. Cuellar is an Original Cosponsor of the *Paycheck Fairness Act of 2023 (H.R. 17)* in the 118th Congress.

- Addresses wage discrimination on the basis of sex.
- Amends equal pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to restrict the use of the bona fide factor defense to wage discrimination claims, makes it unlawful to require an employee to sign a contract or waiver prohibiting the employee from disclosing information about the employee's wages, and increases civil penalties for violations of equal pay provisions.

Rep. Cuellar is a Cosponsor of the *Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 2663)* in the 118th Congress.

- Requires OSHA to issue a standard requiring health care and social service employers to write and implement a workplace violence prevention plan to prevent and protect their employees from violent incidents.

Rep. Cuellar is a Cosponsor of the *Railroad Employee Equity and Fairness (REEF) Act (H.R. 2785)* in the 118th Congress.

- Removes sequestration constraints on the unemployment insurance program for railroad employees.

FY 24 House Appropriations Bill

Rep. Cuellar secured a **\$1.3 million earmark** for union apprenticeships in San Antonio.

- The funds will be used to purchase equipment and renovate workspaces for the City of San Antonio's Ready to Work apprenticeship program.
- The program focuses on upskilling through apprenticeships and partners with local unions, such as the **International Association of Ironworkers, the Communications Workers of America, North America's Building Trade Unions, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.**

FY 23 Omnibus Appropriations Bill

As a senior member of the House Committee on Appropriations, Rep. Cuellar helped secure **\$13.8 billion for the Department of Labor**, an increase of \$652 million above the fiscal year 2022 enacted level. This includes:

- **\$299 million for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)**, an increase of \$25 million.
 - Ensures workers have a voice in their workplace and protects their rights to collective bargaining.
 - **First increase in NLRB funding since 2014.**
- **\$10.5 billion for the Employment and Training Administration**, an increase of \$545 million.
 - **\$2.9 billion** for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act State Grants, an increase of \$50 million.
 - **\$285 million** for Registered Apprenticeships, an increase of \$50 million.
 - **\$65 million**, an increase of \$15 million, for Strengthening Community College Training Grants to help meet local and regional labor market demand for a skilled workforce by providing training to workers in in-demand industries at community colleges and four-year partners.
 - **\$1.760 billion** for Job Corps, an increase of \$12 million.
 - **\$3.1 billion** for operation of the Unemployment Insurance program, an increase of \$284 million.
- **\$1.9 billion for Worker Protection Agencies**, an increase of \$52 million.
 - **\$260 million** for the Wage and Hour Division, an increase of \$9 million.
 - **\$632 million** for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, an increase of \$20 million.
 - **\$191 million** for the Employee Benefits Security Administration, an increase of \$6 million.

Teachers, First Responders, and Public Sector Employees

Rep. Cuellar is a Cosponsor of the *Social Security Fairness Act of 2023* (H.R. 82) in the 118th Congress.

- Repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) from the Social Security Act.
- Ensures public sector workers and their families can receive full Social Security benefits after two previous statutes reduced them.

Rep. Cuellar is an Original Cosponsor of the *Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act* (H.R. 4260) in the 118th Congress.

- Establishes a new, fairer formula that will pay Social Security benefits in proportion to the share of a worker's earnings that were covered for Social Security purposes.

Rep. Cuellar Cosponsored the *Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 2021* (H.R. 3225) in the 117th Congress.

- Provides collective bargaining rights for police officers, firefighters, and EMS personnel.
- Provides employers and their workers with a framework to define benefits and solve disputes is necessary to ensure a productive workforce and a safe working environment.
- Bill has not yet been reintroduced in the 118th Congress.

Rep. Cuellar is a Cosponsor of the *Equal COLA Act* (H.R. 866) in the 118th Congress.

- Makes annual COLA for both the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) equivalent to the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W).

Rep. Cuellar Cosponsored the *IDEA Full Funding Act* (H.R. 5984) in the 117th Congress.

- Under the 1975 IDEA legislation, the federal government committed to pay 40 percent of the average per pupil expenditure for special education.
- However, that pledge has never been met, and current funding is at just 15.7 percent.
- The IDEA Full Funding Act would require regular increases in IDEA spending to finally meet our commitment to America's children and schools.
- Bill has not yet been reintroduced in the 118th Congress.

Rep. Cuellar is a Cosponsor of the *American Teachers Act* (H.R. 882) in the 118th Congress.

- Provides teacher salary incentive grants that support state efforts to increase teacher salaries to a minimum of \$60,000 per year. Establishes a second grant program to provide cost of living adjustments for teachers earning \$60,000 or above.

Rep. Cuellar is a Cosponsor of the *Pay Our Correctional Officers Fairly Act* (H.R. 3199) in the 118th Congress.

- Addresses staffing and retention problems facing BOP facilities by allowing for competitive pay that considers factors such as cost-of-living, commute times, and the hard work and dedication of correctional officers.

Postal Workers

Rep. Cuellar Voted For the *Postal Service Reform Act of 2022* (H.R. 3076) on February 8, 2022.

- Signed into law.
- Eliminates the aggressive pension prefunding requirement that hurt the Postal Service financially.
- Integrates postal worker retirees' health care with Medicare.
- Together, these two reforms will create over \$49 billion in savings for the Postal Service over the next ten years.
- Requires the Postal Service to maintain its standard of delivering at least six days a week.

Rep. Cuellar Cosponsored the *Federal Retirement Fairness Act* (H.R. 4268) in the 117th Congress.

- Allows employees once designated as casuals, transitional employees (TEs) or city carrier assistants (CCAs) to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees.
- Bill has not yet been reintroduced in the 118th Congress.

Rep. Cuellar is an Original Cosponsor of a resolution supporting 6-day mail delivery service (H.Res. 277).

- Calls on USPS to take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.

Rep. Cuellar Cosponsored a resolution supporting a return to pre-2012 postal service standards (H.Res. 119) in the 117th Congress.

- As a part of its "Network Rationalization Plan," the Postal Service has proposed service standard reductions resulting in the closure of hundreds of processing plants and reducing hours at thousands of post offices.
- Overnight mail service was eliminated from most rural communities and severely reduced in metropolitan areas.
- Bill has not yet been reintroduced in the 118th Congress.

Rep. Cuellar Cosponsored a resolution opposing privatization of the U.S. Postal Service (H.Res. 47) in the 117th Congress.

- Affirms that USPS should remain an independent establishment of the federal government and not be privatized.
- Bill has not yet been reintroduced in the 118th Congress.

118th Congress – Relevant Votes

Rep. Cuellar Voted Against the *Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act (H.R. 277)* on June 14, 2023.

- Effectively halts the implementation of critical new public health and safety safeguards, financial reforms, and worker protections.
- Agencies could not enforce a major rule unless both houses of Congress affirmatively approved it, with no alterations, within a 70-day window.

Rep. Cuellar Voted Against the *Protecting Taxpayers and Victims of Unemployment Fraud Act (H.R. 1163)* on May 11, 2023.

- Eliminates \$2 billion in funding that the Department of Labor is using to combat UI fraud.
- Allows state UI agencies to use temporary contractors rather than experienced public employees for important work to process claims and improve systems.
- Subject innocent UI claimants with non-fraud overpayments to ten years of potential collection efforts in what could amount to a surprise bill.

Rep. Cuellar Voted Against the *Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act (H.R. 140)* on March 9, 2023.

- Bars federal employees from alerting social media platforms to nefarious foreign influence campaigns, inviting autocratic regimes and foreign actors to increase their attacks on American democracy.
- There is no clear, comprehensive national security exception, and most law enforcement action would be subject to a burdensome and unworkable reporting requirement and 72-hour waiting period.
- Imposes prison time and fines on federal employees who violate the law.

Rep. Cuellar Voted Against the *Family and Small Business Taxpayer Protection Act (H.R. 23)* on February 9, 2023.

- Rescinds \$80 billion provided by Congress for the IRS to step up tax enforcement and crack down on tax avoidance among the ultrawealthy.
- Funding will allow IRS to hire 87,000 IRS employees, modernize the agency's antiquated technology system, and create \$124 billion in revenue over the next decade.
- Projected to increase the deficit by more than \$114.3 billion over the coming decade.

Rep. Cuellar Voted Against the *SHOW UP Act (H.R. 139)* on February 1, 2023.

- Ends pandemic telework and remote work arrangements for federal employees within 30 days of enactment.
- Ignores proof offered by the Office of Personnel Management that flexible work arrangements both enabled the federal government to maintain operations at key agencies and attract and retain qualified workers.

Updated on 8/29/2023