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IN THIS EDITION, YOU WILL FIND:

- SNAP Action?
- Updates on two new labor bills: the PRO Act and "Faster Labor Contracts Act"
- News from around the nation and in your region.

National Legislative and Political News

- [Funding for the federal government runs out on March 14](#). Speaker Johnson is proposing a “clean” continuing resolution to fund the government at current levels through September 30. Democrats are seeking assurances that Trump will abide by Congress’ decisions about which programs to fund and which to cut.
- Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Ranking Member Bernie Sanders (I-VT), House Education and Workforce Committee Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA), Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) [reintroduced the Protecting the Right to Organize \(PRO\) Act](#).
- Meanwhile, Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) along with Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ), Gary Peters (D-MI), Bernie Moreno (R-OH), and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) [introduced a bill make it easier and faster for unions to get a contract](#). The "Faster Labor Contracts Act" essentially is the part of the PRO Act that would accomplish this.
- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) started [signing agreements with local law enforcement](#) to assist with federal immigration operations. These agreements, also known as 287(g) agreements, were a part of an Executive Order (EO) President Trump signed last month to revive the program.
- [Unionized REI Co-op employees, including UFCW Local 3000 members, are calling on members of the outdoor retail co-op to vote no in this year’s board of director elections](#) after the company excluded two union-backed candidates from the ballot.
- House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) [is encouraging Republican lawmakers](#) to skip town halls because of protestors.
- China [responded to new U.S. tariffs by announcing it will impose additional duties of up to 15% on imports of key U.S. farm products](#) including chicken, beef, pork,

and seafood. These new tariffs will take effect on March 10, though goods already in transit will be exempt until April 12.

- [The duty-free de minimis exemption](#) for goods under \$800 will remain in place when the tariffs on other goods from Canada and Mexico take effect.
- House Energy and Commerce Committee [members on both sides have rare bipartisan agreement](#) on lowering drug costs by creating new regulations for Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), but [are facing an impasse](#) on the legislative vehicle the reform should be attached to.
- The Trump Administration has [revoked Temporary Protected Status \(TPS\) for nearly 500,000 Haitians](#). DHS [rescinded a decision](#) by the Biden Administration that extended Haiti's TPS by 18 months. Now Haitian residents on TPS will have their status end on August 3, 2025.
- Fatal [drug overdoses have fallen 4% nationwide](#), but some states including in the West and Alaska have seen overdose deaths go up.
- DHS announced [more than 20,000 illegal aliens were arrested](#) during President Trump's first month in office. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) also announced the reopening of [privately-owned facilities](#) and [expanding detention capacity at several prisons](#) to make room for immigration detainees.
- The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee [voted 13-9 to advance former Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer's \(R-OR\)](#) nomination to be the next Secretary of Labor to the full Senate for a vote. Senator Paul (R-KY) was the only Republican to vote no, while Chavez-DeRemer picked up the support of Democratic Senators Hassan (NH), Hickenlooper (CO), and Kaine (VA). Senator Murkowski (R-AK) missed the vote.
- Senator Deb Fischer (R-NE) [reintroduced legislation to overturn](#) a Biden administration rule that required nursing homes to increase staffing levels. The rule also included waivers for rural areas and providers struggling with staffing up to 5 years to meet the requirements.
- The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) [has created a new alien registration requirement](#) for all foreigners 14 and older who are in the U.S. for 30 days or longer, their registration must include fingerprints and a current address.
- After the layoff of thousands of federal employees, calls were made to some [former employees at the FDA to return to work](#). Several of the employees asked to return worked in an office responsible for overseeing medical devices and digital health products.
- While some state's governors are proposing work, volunteer, or education requirements for some Medicaid enrollees, Georgia and Arkansas, two states that previously ran work requirement programs [are scaling back](#) these types of programs.
- States across the U.S. continue to pursue immigration priorities including:
 - in Arizona where [SB 1088](#), a bill that would require cities and counties to comply with federal orders on immigration detentions is being reviewed;
 - Kansas where legislators are , [SB 178](#), a bill that would require state law enforcement to submit a request to ICE to deputize local law enforcement as immigration officers;

- and Tennessee where [SB 750](#), would require state and local law enforcement to report monthly to the Department of Public safety about the arrests of undocumented persons.
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Region 1

- Former New York Governor [Andrew Cuomo recently announced his candidacy for Mayor of New York](#), joining a crowded field of candidates looking to deny Mayor Adams a second term. The former governor resigned from office in disgrace following sexual harassment allegations made against him in August of 2021.
- Democratic candidate for New Jersey Governor Steve Sweeney won the endorsement of the Burlington County Democratic Convention, highlighting his strategy to win over voters in his native South Jersey. [Sweeney has earned the endorsement of over a dozen labor organizations, including UFCW locals](#) based in New Jersey.

Region 2

- Legislators in West Virginia heard from a broad swath of constituents recently after the West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) approved a 14% increase in healthcare premiums, in order to stabilize coverage for public employees. In addition to petition signatures of support by every county board of education, [the West Virginia AFL collected over 7,000 signatures in support of fixes to PEIA](#). The WV-AFL recently held a press conference to build support for their asks, joined by over 200 delegates to the WV-AFL Legislative Conference.
- Governor Moore of Maryland is calling on agencies in Maryland to [assist federal workers affected by the recent mass layoffs by offering them positions](#) within the state apparatus. Moore stated that upwards of 10,000 probationary employees in Maryland alone could have been impacted by the recent federal cuts.

Region 4

- In Ohio a bipartisan bill [banning non-compete employment contracts passed both the state House and Senate](#), and has been sent to Governor's Desk.
- Michigan [Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed a new minimum wage bill into law](#). The new minimum wage law is \$12.48 an hour, with minimum for minors at 85% of that (\$10.61) and tipped employees at 38% (\$4.74).
- Kentucky House GOP pass the ["REINS Act" which prevents Kentucky state agencies](#) from making rules that are not explicitly authorized by the Kentucky state legislature if the rule or action costs more than \$50,000 over two years.

Region 5

- [The Wisconsin Supreme Court election on April 1](#) will shape the future of union power in the swing state.
- On March 5, the Florida Senate Appropriations Committee passed Senate Bill 158, [a bill that aims to eliminate out-of-pocket costs for supplemental breast cancer exams](#) such as MRIs and ultrasounds. The bill applies to state insurance plans and is expected to affect 25% of Florida's health policies.

Region 6

- In Nebraska, legislators oversaw a tense and divided committee hearing over Legislative Bill 532. This bill would [require businesses with at least 25 workers to tap the E-Verify system or a government equivalent](#) that checks an applicant's eligibility to work. Failure to do so under this bill could result in losing a license to conduct business.

Region 7

- [Wyoming lawmakers filed a whopping 45 election-related bills in the 2025 general session](#). The bills range from new restrictions on the voter registration process and prohibiting ballot drop boxes, to banning ranked-choice voting and curtailing the use of student IDs and Medicaid and Medicare insurance cards as acceptable forms of voter identification. Critics say Wyoming's elections are already secure given how few cases of election fraud are historically prosecuted.
- U.S. [Sen. Michael Bennet is "strongly considering" running for Colorado governor](#) in next year's election, according to two of the Democrat's top aides

Region 8

- California's Labor Federation is backing several first-in-the-nation AI bills this year aimed at [limiting how companies can use AI-powered monitoring systems to track their employees' movements](#). The package includes a bill to limit the number of self-checkouts in grocery and retail stores.
- A GOP-backed bill that passed the Arizona House on Monday would strip the attorney general, currently Democrat Kris Mayes, of her legal authority to approve the manual counties use as guidance to administer elections. The proposed bill would leave the governor's role intact [but strip that authority from the AG and instead give it to the chairs of the House and Senate election committees](#), both of whom are now Republicans.

This newsletter is distributed by the UFCW Legislative and Political Action Department. To share stories you would like to see in future emails, contact us at: ufcw-lapad@ufcw.org.