

Chairman Cox, and Chairman Harkins, thank you for holding this meeting on worker bills, including my House Bill 173, which raises the grading of the offense of intentionally misclassifying workers as independent contractors when they are not – they are EMPLOYEES under our law.

Sometimes, these misclassifications can occur as an honest mistake, and no good prosecutor will bring a case in that instance, but after one offense, most employers SHOULD be educated enough to know the difference and follow the law correctly.

My bill, HB 173, establishes a useful definition of “INTENT” where it says, “Evidence of a prior conviction under this subsection shall be admissible as evidence of intent under subsection (a).”

Many jobs that earn family-sustaining wages, that do NOT require a 4-year college degree frequently contain SOME risk of bodily injury in an accident, and having the correct Worker’s Compensation coverage in place, as my bill incentivizes, can be an important safeguard against career-threatening injuries or worker bankruptcy.

I urge all of my colleagues, on BOTH sides of the aisle, to give this bill your strongest consideration of passing through to the floor of the House for further action.

Again, I thank you for holding this meeting as a valuable first step.