

Kentucky Doubles Down: Right To Work And No Prevailing Wage

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Over the weekend, Kentucky became the 27th state in the U.S. to pass a statewide Right-to-Work Act. And while they were at it, the Kentucky senate also passed a bill eliminating the commonwealth's prevailing wage act for public construction projects. Both bills take effect immediately. Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin signed a right-to-work measure into law this weekend. Republicans had introduced the measure on Jan. 3 at the start of the legislative session and were able to speed it through the legislature and have it on the governor's desk by weeks' end. In making this move, Kentucky joined Indiana (2012), Michigan (2013), Wisconsin (2015), and West Virginia (2016), which have all recently passed right-to-work laws. [News coverage of the bill is available here](#). Kentucky's prevailing wage act, similar to other states', required contractors to pay certain hourly rates based upon job classification and duty to workers employed on public construction projects. Those rates are considered "prevailing" because they are based upon union contract wage rates for similar work. Opponents of these acts say that they drive up the cost of public projects. Adherents say they force employers doing public work to maintain wages and working conditions. [News coverage on the repeal is available here](#).

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