

(AP) Many hundreds of union members are demonstrating outside a state Capitol hearing room as a Senate committee weighs making Minnesota a "right to work" state. Supporters of the Republican-sponsored measure want an amendment on November's statewide ballot. It would ask voters whether Minnesota's Constitution should be amended to make private and public union membership voluntary.



Demonstrators surrounded the hearing room and filled overflow areas Monday morning. They loudly chanted while amendment backers testified. Under current law, employees in union-represented workplaces not in the union still pay a "fair share" fee of up to 85 percent of normal dues. Amendment backers say that's not fair. They say the amendment would improve Minnesota's business climate. But union backers say those workers still benefit from the wages, benefits and conditions bargained by unions.