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Missouri's right-to-work law suspended after unions turn in 300K signatures for statewide vote

St. Louis Public Radio | By [Jo Mannies](#), [Marshall Griffin](#)

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Image

Marshall Griffin | St. Louis Public Radio

More than 1,000 union members gathered Friday in the Missouri Capitol.

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Updated at 3:25 p.m. with law suspended — With the submission of more than 300,000 signatures Friday, Missouri's right-to-work law won't go into effect Aug. 28 and its fate likely will be put to voters in 2018.



Credit Marshall Griffin | St. Louis Public Radio

More than 1,000 union members gathered Friday in the Missouri Capitol.

The law is suspended, Secretary of State spokeswoman Maura Browning told St. Louis Public Radio. The office still needs to verify that at least 100,000 of the signatures are from registered voters — the minimum to force a statewide vote in November 2018.

She said the count will take weeks and that if there isn't enough, the law will be put in place.

More than 1,000 union members packed the rotunda at the state Capitol this morning, and then many marched down the street to Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft's office, where they turned over the petitions.

"It's not about one party, whether you're a Democrat or a Republican," according to Billy Dicken, a Harviell resident and member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. "It's not even about who the governor is upstairs, even though we don't agree. It's all about the voters, and letting us decide what we need for our families."

The right-to-work law would bar unions and employers from requiring all workers in a

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the regular session and then-Gov. Eric Greitens signed it in February.

State Sen. Bob Onder, a Republican from Lake St. Louis, is among the law's major supporters. He cast the union effort as unfair to workers and the public.

"Union bosses are attempting to stifle the will of Missouri voters who voted for a pro-Right-to-Work legislature and governor in order to create jobs and protect workers," Onder said in a statement sent out by the Liberty Alliance, a political action committee that supports the law. "Every signature must be examined to protect the integrity of the referendum process."

This is a developing story.

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Jo Mannies

Image

Jo Mannies has been covering Missouri politics and government for almost four decades, much of that time as a reporter and columnist at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. She was the first woman to cover St. Louis City Hall, was the newspaper's second woman sportswriter in its history, and spent four years in the Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau. She joined the St. Louis Beacon in 2009. She has won several local, regional and national awards, and has covered every president since Jimmy Carter. She scared fellow first-graders in the late 1950s when she showed them how close Alaska was to Russia and met Richard M. Nixon when she was in high school. She graduated from Valparaiso University in northwest Indiana, and was the daughter of a high school basketball coach. She is married and has two grown children, both lawyers. She's a history and movie buff, cultivates a massive flower garden, and bakes banana bread regularly for her colleagues.

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Marshall Griffin

Image

St. Louis Public Radio State House Reporter Marshall Griffin is a native of Mississippi and proud alumnus of Ole Miss (welcome to the SEC, Mizzou!). He has been in radio for over 20 years, starting out as a deejay. His big break in news came when the first President Bush ordered the invasion of Panama in 1989. Marshall was working the graveyard shift at a rock station, and began ripping news bulletins off an old AP teletype and reading updates between songs. From there on, his radio career turned toward news reporting and anchoring. In 1999, he became the capital bureau chief for Florida's Radio Networks, and in 2003 he became News Director at WFSU-FM/Florida Public Radio. During his time in Tallahassee he covered seven legislative sessions, Governor Jeb Bush's administration, four hurricanes, the Terri Schiavo saga, and the 2000 presidential recount. Before coming to Missouri, he enjoyed a brief stint in the Blue Ridge Mountains, reporting and anchoring for WWNC-AM in Asheville, North Carolina. Marshall lives in Jefferson City with his wife, Julie, their dogs, Max and Liberty Belle, and their cat, Honey.

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