

Project 2025 Update II

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Today we will be looking at some very interesting developments. Finding a starting point is a challenge.

Among others nominated by President Trump, as of July 2025, Jonathan Berry is waiting for the full Senate confirmation. The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee favorably reported his nomination on June 26, 2025. If confirmed, Berry would serve as the top legal officer in the Department of Labor, giving him significant influence over labor policy, workplace regulations, and religious accommodations.

Labor Unions

The Teamsters is America's largest union, representing over 1.3 million members; this union has the largest variety of members with occupations, industries, and backgrounds represented. Their July 2025 president is Sean M. O'Brien. Ellen White told us that labor unions would play a role in making the lives of Adventists bitter.

"The time is fast coming when the controlling power of the labor unions will be very oppressive."—2 *Selected Messages*, 141.

"The trades unions will be one of the agencies that will bring upon this earth a time of trouble such as has not been since the world began."—*Last Day Events*, 116.3.

"Because of these unions and confederacies, it will soon be very difficult for our institutions to carry on their work in the cities. My warning is: Keep out of the cities. Build no sanitariums in the cities."—2 *Selected Messages*, 142.

"The work of the people of God is to prepare for the events of the future, which will soon come upon them with blinding force. In the world gigantic monopolies will be formed. Men will bind themselves together in unions that will wrap them in the folds of the enemy. A few men will combine to grasp all the means to be obtained in certain lines of business. Trades unions will be formed, and those who refuse to join these unions will be marked men."—4 *Manuscript Releases*, 74-75.

The Teamsters have recently been praising the new Secretary of the Department of Labor, Lori Chavez-DeRemer. She supports an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act, officially known as the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, and called the PRO Act. This bill aims to change or modify existing labor laws to better protect workers from employer interference when forming or joining a union. While the PRO Act was introduced in the U.S. Senate in 2023, it did not proceed to a vote in the full Senate in that year. The PRO Act was also reintroduced in

the House and Senate on March 5, 2025. This means that the 2025 version of the bill is currently in the early stages of the legislative process in the House and Senate, with a new wording of the PRO Act (H.R. 20) also being considered in 2025. This is only the first of four steps for it to be accepted into law. Why is this concerning? This amendment gives a massive amount of power to the labor unions:

"Among other things, it (1) revises [changes or improves] the definitions of employee, supervisor, and employer to broaden the scope of individuals covered by the fair labor standards; (2) permits labor organizations to encourage participation of union members in strikes initiated [started a process] by employees represented by a different labor organization (i.e., secondary strikes); and (3) prohibits employers from bringing claims against unions that conduct such secondary strikes."—*Part of the wording of the PRO Act (H.R. 842) version that passed the U.S. House on March 9, 2021.*

Another development is the effort to get all union contracts to expire at the same time. This has been suggested by the unions, so that they can unite together as a group and have more power. On May 1, 2028, there is a plan to strike, and many of the labor unions are signing up for it. In his Republican National Convention (RNC) acceptance speech on July 17, 2024, Senator J.D. Vance stated that he and President Trump would "commit to the working man." As evidence, Trump invited the Teamsters' President Sean O'Brien to speak at the RNC. A September 2, 2024, magazine, called *First Things*, published an article that was titled *Renewing Labor*; it quotes Sean M. O'Brien, who declared, "Something is wrong in this county." This article grasps his declaration and agrees, eventually drawing the conclusion that true freedom can only be found in Sunday legislation.

Executive Order 14202

President Trump issued an executive order, entitled "Eradicating Anti-Christian Bias" on February 6, 2025. Its purpose is to protect the religious freedoms of Americans and end "anti-Christian weaponization of government." Let's be honest: America has begun to make an image of the beast. The state is now being used to protect the Churches' interests—but not just any Church's interest! Below, I have listed what the task force will do:

- The task force will review the activities of all departments and agencies, to identify and eliminate anti-Christian policies, practices, or conduct.
- The task force will gather advice from various

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2 stakeholders (the ones who have a share or an interest in an enterprise—to ensure broad viewpoints and understanding are considered—including faith-based organizations, State, local and tribal governments, and Americans affected by anti-Christian conduct).

- It will identify and address gaps in laws and enforcement that have contributed to anti-Christian conduct, including by remedying any failures to fully enforce the law against acts of anti-Christian hostility, vandalism, and violence.

Perhaps you remember that words are violence? What is going to happen when you speak against the “Lord’s Day”?

“The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity, she will have to do in a terrible crisis, under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances.”—*5 Testimonies (1882-1889) for the Church, 463.*

“We have no time to lose. The end is near. The passage from place to place to spread the truth will soon be hedged with dangers on the right hand and on the left. Everything will be placed to obstruct the way of the Lord’s messengers, so that they will not be able to do that which it is possible for them to do now. We must look our work fairly in the face, and advance as fast as possible in aggressive warfare.”—*Evangelism, 30-31.*

Here are a few interesting religious freedoms that this task force was developed to protect:

- The Biden Department of Justice ignored hundreds of attacks on Catholic churches, charities, and pro-life centers.

- In 2023, a Federal Bureau of Investigation memo asserted that traditional Catholics were domestic-terrorism threats and suggested infiltrating Catholic churches as “threat mitigation [reduction, decrease].”

I found it interesting just how much legal protection Catholics are getting. While the image of the beast is definitely being formed, this is only the beginning. The First Amendment cannot be neglected or ignored, as such the fists Sunday legislation cannot serve any religious purpose; it must be secular. We know that the Sunday law will come in stages, with worship or death being the last. Here is a little refresher of the stages: 1st, no working on the sabbath; 2nd, you must worship; 3rd, you must worship, or you cannot buy and sell; 4th, you must worship, or you die. At the first stage, the deceptive power of Satan, with his miracles and demonstrations, are released upon the world:

“As we near the close of time, there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest [clearly display, show] their signal power and will exhibit themselves before the cities of the world, and this delineation [description of events] has already begun to be fulfilled. By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to

John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God’s people. All need wisdom carefully to search out the mystery of iniquity that figures so largely in the winding up of this earth’s history. God’s presentation of the detestable [hateful, abominable] works of the inhabitants of the ruling powers of the world who bind themselves into secret societies and confederacies, not honoring the law of God, should enable the people who have the light of truth to keep clear of all these evils. More and more will all false religionists of the world manifest their evil doings; for there are but two parties, those who keep the commandments of God and those who war against God’s holy law.”—*18 Letters and Manuscripts (1903), Manuscript 139, par. 14.*

“One of the marked characteristics of these false religious powers is that while they profess to have the character and features of a lamb, while they profess to be allied to heaven, they reveal by their actions that they have the heart of a dragon, that they are instigated [encouraged and provoked] by and united with satanic power, the same power that created war in heaven when Satan sought the supremacy and was expelled from heaven.”—*18 Letters and Manuscripts (1903), Manuscript 139, par. 15.*

All this encourages Sunday keepers with what they need to push onward. We may know, when the first stage passes, that the end is soon. We will know; we will see miracles with our own eyes.

“Satan is Christ’s personal enemy. He is the originator and leader of every species of rebellion in heaven and earth. His rage increases, and we do not realize his power. If our eyes could be opened to discern the fallen angels at their work with those who feel at ease and consider themselves safe, we should not feel so secure. Evil angels are upon our track every moment. We expect a readiness on the part of bad men to act as Satan suggests; but while our minds are unguarded against Satan’s invisible agents, they will assume new ground, and will work marvels and miracles in our sight. Are we prepared to resist them by the Word of God, the only weapon we can use successfully? Some will be tempted to receive these wonders as from God. The sick will be healed before us. Miracles will be performed in our sight. Are we prepared for the trial when the lying wonders of Satan shall be more fully exhibited? Will not many souls be ensnared and taken? Forms of error, and departure from the plain precepts and commandments of God, and giving heed to fables is fitting minds for these lying wonders of Satan. We must all now seek to arm ourselves for the contest in which we must soon engage. Faith in God’s Word, prayerfully studied and practically applied, will be our shield from Satan’s power and will bring us off conquerors through the blood of Christ.”—*Review and Herald, February 18, 1862, par. 22.*

The American Pope

Why did the new pope pick his name? Pope Leo XIV explained this in his speech to the College of Cardinals in the New Synod Hall, the meeting place

of the council of Church leaders, at the Vatican:

“Sensing myself called to continue in this same path, I chose to take the name, Leo XIV. There are different reasons for this, but mainly because Pope Leo XIII, in his historic *Encyclical Rerum Novarum*, addressed the social question in the context of the first great Industrial Revolution.”

Pope Leo XIV is concerned with the right to dignified labor and the just treatment of workers. In his first formal May 10, 2025, speech, he approved of Pope Leo XIII’s thoughts about the social question of the first great Industrial Revolution, which began in Britain during 1760 to 1840 and spread to other parts of the world. Pope Leo XIII spoke of the social and economic issues arising from that Industrial Revolution, particularly focusing on the relationship between capital and labor. He emphasized the dignity of work, the rights and responsibilities of both employers and employees, and the role of the state in promoting social justice. Let’s have a look at this 1891 *Rerum Novarum Encyclical* of Pope Leo XIII:

“40. The working man, too, has interests in which he should be protected by the State; and first of all, there are the interests of his soul.... 41. From this follows the obligation of the cessation [stopping, ending] from work and labor on Sundays and certain holy days. The rest from labor is not to be understood as mere giving way to idleness; much less must it be an occasion for spending money and for vicious [carried to excess and harmful] indulgence, as many would have it to be; but it should be rest from labor, hallowed [regarded as holy, sacred] by religion. Rest (combined with religious observances) disposes [puts man in a willing frame of mind] man to forget for a while the business of his everyday life, to turn his thoughts to things heavenly, and to the worship which he so strictly owes to the eternal Godhead. It is this, above all, which is the reason [of] arid motive of Sunday rest; a rest sanctioned by God’s great law of the Ancient Covenant—“Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.” [Arid: This usually refers to a dry climate with insufficient rainfall; but when applied to a motive, it suggest a lack of intellectual and emotional richness.]

So the pope feels called to follow this path. That’s prophetic! There has already been a request, from two congressmen, Chuck Fleischmann and Gerald E. Connolly, to the speaker in the House of the U.S. Congress to invite this new pope to speak. It has not been scheduled. The letter reads:

“Dear Mr. Speaker [Mike Johnson] and Mr. Minority Leader [Hakeem Jeffries],

“As you know, the recent election of the first American pope is a moment of profound historic significance for the Catholic Church and our nation. As members of Congress, we are honored to witness this remarkable milestone, and we respectfully urge you to extend a formal invitation to His Holiness Pope Leo XIV to address a Joint Session of Congress.

“Pope Leo XIV’s life and ministry, shaped in part by

his experiences in our own nation, equip him with a voice that speaks not only to Catholics, but to people of all faiths and backgrounds.

“During a time when our nation needs unifying and the world faces severe humanitarian crises, an address by his Holiness would serve as a powerful reminder of our shared commitments to peace, service to others, and moral leadership. It would also affirm [positively state and show] the deep and longstanding ties between the United States, The Holy See, and the global Catholic community.

“Thank you for your continued leadership and your consideration of this request, which would not only honor the historic nature of His Holiness’ papacy but the ideals that bind us as a nation.”

The Legality of a Sunday Law

I was very blessed to have a reader contribute their research to the next portion of my article. The contributor thinks that the first law will come through the labor unions. The labor unions have a chance because, in order to pass a Sunday law, the principles of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment must align with the principles of the Lemon Test that was established in the 1971 case of *Lemon v. Kurtzman*. This three-part test determines if a law or government activity violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, aimed at upholding a strict separation of church and state:

- The law must have a secular legislative purpose.
- Its principal or primary effect must be one that neither advances nor inhibits religion.
- The law must not encourage an excessive government entanglement with religion.

Why must the Sunday Law meet these requirements? It has to do with precedent:

“The history of Sunday Closing Laws goes back into United States colonial history and far back into English history. Commonly, the laws require the observance of the Christian Sabbath as a day of rest, although in recent years they have tended to become honeycombed [to cause to be full of cavities like a honeycomb, weaken] with exceptions. The [U.S.] Supreme Court rejected an Establishment Clause challenge to Sunday Closing Laws in *McGowan v. Maryland* [1961]. The Court acknowledged that, historically, the laws had a religious motivation and were designed to effectuate [cause something to happen] concepts of Christian theology. However, ‘[i]n light of the evolution of our Sunday Closing Laws through the centuries, and of their more or less recent emphasis upon secular considerations, it is not difficult to discern that, as presently written and administered, most of them, at least, are of a secular rather than of a religious character, and that presently they bear no relationship to establishment of religion.... ‘[T]he fact that this [prescribed day of rest, mandated by a governing authority] is Sunday, a day of particular significance for the dominant Christian sects, does not bar [prevent, prohibit, or hinder] the State from achieving its secular goals. To say that the States

cannot prescribe Sunday as a day of rest for these purposes solely because centuries ago such laws had their genesis [beginning] in religion would give a constitutional interpretation of hostility to the public welfare rather than one of mere separation of church and State.’ The choice of Sunday as the day of rest, although originally religious, now reflected simple legislative inertia [resistance to change] or recognition that Sunday was a traditional day for the choice. Valid secular reasons existed for not simply requiring one day of rest and leaving to each individual to choose the day, reasons of ease of enforcement and of assuring a common day in the community for rest and leisure. Later, a state statute mandating [requiring] that employers honor the Sabbath day of the employee’s choice was held invalid as having the primary effect of promoting religion by weighing the employee’s Sabbath choice over all other interests.—*Cornell Law School, “Sunday Closing Laws.*

We will now look at a U.S. Supreme Court case ruling, *Caldor, Inc. v. Thornton*:

“Thornton was denied his Sunday off and protested the subsequent [following] change of position by quitting and suing. In court, he invoked [used] the Connecticut statute which provides: ‘No person who states that a particular day of the week is observed as his Sabbath may be required by his employer to work on such day. An employee’s refusal to work on his Sabbath shall not constitute grounds for his dismissal.’

“[The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that:] Under the Religion Clauses, government must guard against activity that impinges [affects people] on religious freedom, and must take pains not to compel people to act in the name of any religion. In setting the appropriate boundaries in Establishment Clause cases, the Court has frequently relied on our holding in *Lemon*, supra [over and beyond], for guidance, and we do so here. To pass constitutional muster under *Lemon*, a statute must not only have a secular purpose and not foster excessive entanglement of government with religion, its primary effect must not advance or inhibit religion.

“The Supreme Court of Connecticut reversed [they said he had no grounds in court for what he did], holding the statute did not have a “clear secular purpose” (*Caldor, Inc. v. Thornton*, 191 Conn. 336, 349, 464 A.2d 785, 793 [1983]). By authorizing each employee to designate his own Sabbath as a day off, the statute evinced [clearly showed] the ‘unmistakable purpose...[of] allow[ing] those persons who wish to worship on a particular day the freedom to do so.’ (*Ibid.*) The court then held that the ‘primary effect’ of the statute was to advance religion because the statute “confers its ‘benefit’ on an explicitly religious basis. Only those employees who designate a Sabbath are entitled not to work on that particular day, and may

not be penalized for so doing” (*Id.*, at 350, 464 A.2d, at 794). The court noted that the statute required the State Mediation Board to decide which religious activities may be characterized as an “observance of Sabbath” in order to assess employees’ sincerity, and concluded that this type of inquiry is “exactly the type of ‘comprehensive, discriminating and continuing state surveillance’...which creates excessive governmental entanglements between church and state” (*Id.*, at 351, 464 A.2d, at 794 (quoting *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602, 619, 91 S.Ct. 2105, 2114, 29 L.Ed.2d 745 [1971])).

Additionally, the court stated:

“The Connecticut statute, by providing Sabbath observers with an absolute and unqualified right not to work on their chosen Sabbath, violates the Establishment Clause. To meet constitutional requirements under that Clause, a statute must not only have a secular purpose and not foster excessive entanglement of government with religion, its primary effect must not advance or inhibit religion” (*Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U. S. 602).

According to this ruling, in order to pass a Sunday law, it must be secular first, **unless overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.** We know that the stages of the Sunday law perfectly backs this understanding; therefore we should be looking for a secular push for Sunday laws before a religious push.

Editors Note *In the 2022 case of Kennedy v. Bremerton School District, the Supreme court cast aside the Lemon test, setting a new legal precedent. The judges are now to consider history and “the understanding of the Founding Fathers” when weighing establishment clause questions, instead of balancing the interests in play as prescribed by the Lemon test. Sunday laws are now at a great advantage, greater than ever before. It is unknown which ruling the supreme court will follow in future cases. Especially when considering that the term “Sundays excepted” is “enshrined in the Constitution.”*

For a finished work



Jonathan Taylor

Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35

More Food for the Little Flock —