



SJ0035

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1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, In 1935, during the middle of the Great  
3 Depression, the United States Congress established, by law,  
4 that workers in the U.S. must be free to form a collective  
5 bargaining unit; and

6 WHEREAS, The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
7 implemented by the United Nations recognizes the freedom to  
8 form or join a union as a fundamental human right; and

9 WHEREAS, Workers who first joined unions are credited with  
10 starting the American middle class, while continuing to fight  
11 for higher living standards, equal rights for all Americans,  
12 and ending discrimination in the workplace; and

13 WHEREAS, 69 percent of Americans agree that it is very or  
14 fairly important to have strong laws that give employees the  
15 freedom to make their own choice about whether to form a union  
16 in their workplace; and

17 WHEREAS, Union members consistently earn 29 percent higher  
18 wages and 35 percent better benefits than those employees who  
19 do not belong to a collective bargaining unit; and

20 WHEREAS, Union membership helps raise workers' pay and

1 narrow the income gap for minorities and women, increasing  
2 median weekly earnings by 31 percent for union women workers,  
3 31 percent for African-American workers, 50 percent for Latino  
4 workers, and 9 percent for Asian-American workers; and

5 WHEREAS, Workers across the nation are routinely  
6 intimidated when trying to form unions and bargain for a better  
7 life; 25 percent of private sector employers illegally fire at  
8 least one worker for union activity during organizing  
9 campaigns; and

10 WHEREAS, Recent national surveys show that 60 million  
11 non-union workers would like to have a union for collective  
12 bargaining in their workplace; furthermore, 78 percent of  
13 American adults favor legislation that would make it easier for  
14 workers to bargain with their employers; and

15 WHEREAS, An entire host of business consultants devoted to  
16 making sure that the National Labor Relations Act election  
17 process does not result in collective bargaining has grown into  
18 a \$4 billion industry in the United States; and

19 WHEREAS, 78 percent of employers force their employees to  
20 attend mandatory anti-union meetings; and

21 WHEREAS, 64 percent of American adults favor strengthening

1 penalties for companies that illegally intimidate or fire  
2 employees who try to form a union in their workplace; and

3 WHEREAS, Employers often refuse to bargain fairly with  
4 workers after forming a union by dragging out first contract  
5 bargaining for up to two years in 45 percent of successful  
6 campaigns; and

7 WHEREAS, The Employee Free Choice Act has been introduced  
8 in the 111th United States Congress in order to restore  
9 workers' freedom to join a union; and

10 WHEREAS, The Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard  
11 workers' ability to make their own decisions about joining a  
12 union without harassment or fear of losing their jobs, provide  
13 for first contract mediation and arbitration, and establish  
14 meaningful penalties when employers violate workers' rights;  
15 therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
18 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we support the provisions of the  
19 Employee Free Choice Act, which would authorize the National  
20 Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the bargaining  
21 representative when a majority of employees voluntarily sign  
22 authorization cards designating the union they wish to

1 represent them, provide for first contract mediation and  
2 arbitration, and establish meaningful penalties for violations  
3 of a worker's freedom to choose a union; and be it further

4       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the  
5 United States Senate Majority Leader, the Speaker of the United  
6 States House of Representatives, and to each member of the  
7 Illinois Congressional delegation.