

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 070587)

RESOLUTION

Resolution in support of H.R. 800 and S. 1041 (Employee Free Choice Act).

WHEREAS, In 1935, the United States established by law that workers must be free to form unions, and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized the international and fundamental human right of the freedom to form or join a union; and

WHEREAS, Unions are known to benefit communities by strengthening living standards, stabilizing tax bases, promoting equal treatment and enhancing civic participation; and

WHEREAS, Union workers earn, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, on average, 29% more than non-union workers in similar jobs, are 35% more likely to have access to health insurance, and are 4 times more likely to have access to a guaranteed defined-benefit pension; and

WHEREAS, According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the income gap for minorities and women by increasing median weekly earnings by 31% for women and African Americans, 50 % for Latino workers, and 9 % for Asian American workers. When efforts to impede or prevent unionization are successful, wages fall, race and gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases, and job safety standards disappear; and

WHEREAS, According to a poll done by Peter Hart in December 2006, 77% of the general public believe it is important to have strong laws protecting the freedom of workers to make their own decisions about union representation, and 58% of workers polled say they would join a union if they had the opportunity; and

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WHEREAS, Despite the benefits to employees and communities, workers across the nation are routinely denied the freedom to form unions and bargain for a better life, with 78% of employers compelling attendance at mandatory anti-union meetings and 25% of private-sector employers illegally firing at least one worker for union activity during organizing campaigns; and

WHEREAS, Employers often refuse to bargain fairly with workers after a union has been formed, by dragging out first contract bargaining for up to 2 years in 45% of successful campaigns and spending millions of dollars each year to frustrate workers' efforts to form unions; and

WHEREAS, A worker's fundamental right to choose a union, free from coercion and intimidation, is a public issue that requires public policy solutions, including legislative remedies as embodied in The Employee Free Choice Act currently before Congress, in order to restore a worker's freedom to choose to join a union; now therefore

RESOLVED, That the Philadelphia City Council hereby supports the Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800 and S. 1041) that provides for the recognition of a union when the majority of employees voluntarily sign authorizations, calls for mediation and binding arbitration to resolve first contracts, and strengthens penalties for violations during all phases of organizing campaigns; and urges the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation to continue to work to secure enactment of the Employee Free Choice Act.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to Governor Rendell; and the Honorable Members of the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the fourteenth of June, 2007.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Greenlee and Ramos

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Greenlee, Ramos, Rizzo, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Goode, Reynolds Brown, Tasco, Savage, DiCicco, Kenney, Krajewski and Blackwell