



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RESOLUTION NO. 170251

Introduced March 9, 2017

Councilmembers Johnson and Henon

RESOLUTION

Urging the United States Congress to reject H.R.785, also known as the National Right-to-Work Act, due to the legislation's negative impact on the ability of unions to bargain on behalf of working-class families.

WHEREAS, H.R.785, better known as the National Right-to-Work Act, aims to prevent employers and unions from entering into union-security agreements, which allow unions in workplaces with such agreements to collect dues from non-members to help cover the costs of negotiation. Without such agreements, unions would face a 'free-rider' problem, whereby non-members would be able to reap the benefits of collective bargaining without paying the costs necessary to secure those benefits; and

WHEREAS, Unions have played a crucial role in raising the standard of living for members and non-members alike, using the power of collective bargaining to transform the relationship between employers and employees. Collective bargaining benefits include better healthcare coverage, higher wages and a more secure retirement; and

WHEREAS, A union's ability to effectively advocate on behalf of workers is put in jeopardy when individuals are able to take advantage of negotiated benefits without paying for the costs of negotiation. Right-to-work legislation will prevent unions from recouping those costs from non-members and effectively incentivize non-membership. If unions are deprived of the resources necessary to stand up for workers, working-class families will likely see a marked decline in their standard of living; and

WHEREAS, While one of the bill's primary sponsors in the House of Representatives, Rep. Joe Wilson, argues that the goal of federal right-to-work legislation is "to protect American workers," in effect the law will drastically undermine workers' ability to collectively bargain for higher wages and better working conditions; and

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WHEREAS, Unions have historically provided workers with robust protection against unfair employment practices, and their advocacy has helped to lift the standard of living for millions of Americans. The National Right-to-Work Act will severely hamper unions' ability to effectively represent working class families and continue that mission; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Council hereby urges the United States Congress to reject H.R.785, also known as the National Right-to-Work Act, due to the legislation's negative impact on the ability of unions to bargain on behalf of working-class families.