
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4008

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2007 Regular Session

By House Commerce & Labor (originally sponsored by Representatives Conway, Campbell, Green, Appleton, Hasegawa, VanDeWege, Ormsby, Moeller, Chase, Cody, Wood, Miloscia, Williams, Hunt, Dickerson, Morrell, Sells, Flannigan, Ericks, and Kenney)

READ FIRST TIME 02/12/08.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, In 1935, the United States established, by law, that
9 workers must be free to form unions; and

10 WHEREAS, The freedom to form or join a union is internationally
11 recognized by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a
12 fundamental human right; and

13 WHEREAS, The free choice to join with others and bargain for better
14 wages and benefits is essential to economic opportunity and good living
15 standards; and

16 WHEREAS, Unions benefit communities by strengthening living
17 standards, stabilizing tax bases, promoting equal treatment, and
18 enhancing civic participation; and

19 WHEREAS, States in which more people are union members are states
20 with higher wages, better benefits, and better schools; and

1 WHEREAS, Union workers receive better wages and benefits, as they
2 earn twenty-nine percent more than workers without a union, are thirty-
3 five percent more likely to have access to health insurance, and are
4 four times more likely to have access to a guaranteed defined-benefit
5 pension; and

6 WHEREAS, Unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the income gap
7 for minorities and women, by increasing median weekly earnings by
8 thirty-one percent for union women workers, thirty-one percent for
9 African-American workers, fifty percent for Latino workers, and nine
10 percent for Asian-American workers; and

11 WHEREAS, Workers across the nation are routinely denied the freedom
12 to form unions and bargain for a better life, with twenty-five percent
13 of private sector employers illegally firing at least one worker for
14 union activity during organizing campaigns; and

15 WHEREAS, Seventy-seven percent of the public believes it is
16 important to have strong laws protecting the freedom for workers to
17 make their own decision about having a union, and fifty-eight percent
18 of workers would join a union if they had the chance; and

19 WHEREAS, Employers often refuse to bargain fairly with workers
20 after forming a union by dragging out first contract bargaining for up
21 to two years in forty-five percent of successful campaigns; and

22 WHEREAS, Each year millions of dollars are spent to frustrate
23 workers' efforts to form unions, and most violations of workers'
24 freedom to choose a union occur behind closed doors, with seventy-eight
25 percent of employers forcing employees to attend mandatory antiunion
26 meetings; and

27 WHEREAS, When the right of workers to form a union is violated,
28 wages fall, race and gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination
29 increases, and job safety standards disappear; and

30 WHEREAS, A worker's fundamental right to choose a union free from
31 coercion and intimidation is a public issue that requires public policy
32 solutions, including legislative remedies; and

33 WHEREAS, The Employee Free Choice Act has been introduced in the
34 United States Congress in order to restore workers' freedom to join a
35 union; and

36 WHEREAS, The Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard workers'
37 ability to make their own decisions with these abuses, provide for

1 first contract mediation and arbitration, and establish meaningful
2 penalties when employers violate workers' rights;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the United
4 States Congress enact the Employee Free Choice Act, H.R. 800, or
5 substantially similar legislation, to protect and preserve for
6 America's workers their freedom to choose for themselves whether or not
7 to form a union.

8 BE IT RESOLVED, That Your Memorialists support the Employee Free
9 Choice Act which would:

10 (1) Authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union
11 as the bargaining representative when a majority of employees
12 voluntarily sign authorizations designating that union to represent
13 them;

14 (2) Provide for first contract mediation and arbitration; and

15 (3) Establish meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's
16 freedom to choose a union;

17 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
18 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
19 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
20 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
21 Washington.

--- END ---