

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 07-0254R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Curran, Young, President Rawlings-Blake, Mitchell, Kraft,
Reisinger, Clarke, Holton, Spector, Harris, D’Adamo, Conaway, Welch, Branch
Introduced and adopted: February 12, 2007

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

In Support of Federal Legislation – The Employee Free Choice Act

FOR the purpose of expressing support for this legislation that provides for the recognition of a union when the majority of employees voluntarily sign authorizations, offers mediation and binding arbitration to resolve first contracts, and strengthens penalties for violations during organizing and first contract efforts; and urging the Maryland Congressional Delegation to secure enactment of the provisions of the Employee Free Choice Act.

Recitals

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

Unions are known to benefit communities by strengthening living standards, stabilizing tax bases, promoting equal treatment, and enhancing civic participation. Union workers receive better wages and benefits, 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.

Unions also help raise workers’ pay and narrow the income gap for minorities and women, increasing median weekly earnings by 31% for women and African Americans, 50% for Latinos, 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.

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

However, 77% of the general public believe it is important to have strong laws protecting the freedom of workers to make their own decisions about having union representation, and 58% of workers polled would join a union if they were afforded the opportunity.

Employers are still known to 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 each year to frustrate workers’ efforts to form unions.

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

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 the Employee Free Choice Act that is now before Congress, in order to restore a worker's
2 freedom to join a union.

3 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
4 Body supports this legislation that provides for the recognition of a union when the majority of
5 employees voluntarily sign authorizations, offers mediation and binding arbitration to resolve
6 first contracts, and strengthens penalties for violations during organizing and first contract
7 efforts; and urges the Maryland Congressional Delegation to secure enactment of the provisions
8 of the Employee Free Choice Act.

9 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
10 Honorable Members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, the Assistant Director, AFL-
11 CIO Politics and Field Department, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of State
12 Relations, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.