

1 [Employee Free Choice Act.]

2 **Resolution in support of the Employee Free Choice Act which would authorize the**
3 **National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the bargaining representative**
4 **when a majority of employees voluntarily sign authorizations designating that union to**
5 **represent them; provide for first contract mediation and arbitration; and establish**
6 **meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's freedom to choose a union.**
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8 WHEREAS, in 1935, the United States established, by law, that workers must be free
9 to form unions; and

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

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

14 WHEREAS, unions benefit communities by strengthening living standards, stabilizing
15 tax bases, promoting equal treatment and enhancing civic participation; and

16 WHEREAS, states in which more people are union members are states with higher
17 wages, better benefits and better schools; and

18 WHEREAS, union workers receive better wages and benefits, with union workers
19 earning 29 percent more than workers without a union, 35 percent more likely to have access
20 to health insurance, and are four times more likely to have access to a guaranteed defined-
21 benefit pension; and

22 WHEREAS, unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the income gap for minorities
23 and women, by increasing median weekly earnings by 31 percent for union women workers,
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1 31 percent for African-American workers, 50 percent for Latino workers, 9 percent for Asian
2 American workers; and

3 WHEREAS, workers across the nation are routinely denied the freedom to form unions
4 and bargain for a better life, with 25 percent of private-sector employers illegally firing at least
5 one worker for union activity during organizing campaigns; and

6 WHEREAS, 77 percent of the public believes it is important to have strong laws
7 protecting the freedom for workers to make their own decision about having a union, and 58
8 percent of workers would join a union if they had the chance; and

9 WHEREAS, employers often refuse to bargain fairly with workers after forming a union
10 by dragging out first contract bargaining for up to two years in 45 percent of successful
11 campaigns; and

12 WHEREAS, each year millions of dollars are spent to frustrate workers' efforts to form
13 unions, and most violations of workers' freedom to choose a union occur behind closed doors,
14 with 78 percent of employers forcing employees to attend mandatory anti-union meetings; and

15 WHEREAS, when the right of workers to form a union is violated, wages fall, race and
16 gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases and job safety standards
17 disappear; and

18 WHEREAS, a worker's fundamental right to choose a union free from coercion and
19 intimidation is a public issue that requires public policy solutions, including legislative
20 remedies; and

21 WHEREAS, the Employee Free Choice Act has been introduced in the U.S. Congress
22 in order to restore workers' freedom to join a union;

23 WHEREAS, The Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard workers' ability to make
24 their own decisions with these abuses, provide for first contract mediation and arbitration, and
25 establish meaningful penalties when employers violate workers' rights

1 RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
2 supports the Employee Free Choice Act, which would authorize the National Labor Relations
3 Board to certify a union as the bargaining representative when a majority of employees
4 voluntarily sign authorizations designating that union to represent them; provide for first
5 contract mediation and arbitration; and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a
6 worker's freedom to choose a union.

7 FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge Congress to pass the Employee Free Choice Act
8 to protect and preserve for America's workers their freedom to choose for themselves whether
9 or not to form a union.

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