



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 240

Resolution acknowledging workers' gains through the American labor movement.

By Council Members Miller, Kallos, King and Ulrich

Whereas, The American labor movement is based on the concept of a just society, in which social equality and honest labor are celebrated and fostered to improve the lives of workers throughout the nation; and

Whereas, From the late 1700's to present-day, the American labor movement made great accomplishments through workers' increased ability to unionize and collectively bargain for better compensation, benefits and worker safety standards; and

Whereas, According to The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), key events in American labor history include: the 1892 Homestead Strike, where skilled workers collectively bargained for good wages and fair work rules against a union-busting millionaire; the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, where more than 100 workers died due to unsafe work conditions, bringing attention to worker safety standards; and the Great Postal Strike of 1970, where federal employees fought for the right to collectively bargain; and

Whereas, These events allowed for important legislation and changes to be made in hopes of creating a more fair and just workplace for all workers, regardless of class, creed, race or income; and

Whereas, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) highlights the American labor movement's top legislative accomplishments in the 1900s which include: the Social Security Act and the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, the Civil Rights Act/Title VII in 1964, the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970, and the Family and Medical Leave Act

in 1993; and

Whereas, These pieces of legislation ensure that American workers have equal access to employment, a fair wage, safe working conditions, and the ability to join a union and collectively bargain, including the use of agency shops; and

Whereas, “The State of the Unions 2017: A Profile of Organized Labor in New York City, New York State, and the United States” (The State of the Unions 2017), a report by the Joseph S. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, indicates that organized labor in the United States has suffered sharp decline in numbers and influence in recent years, thus making it more important than ever to acknowledge the gains of the American labor movement; and

Whereas, According to the State of the Unions 2017 report, although organized labor has suffered a decline in numbers and influence throughout the United States from 2016 to 2017, New York State had more union members-just under 2 million-than any other state in the United States except California, with New York City accounting for about 876,000 union members; and

Whereas, The American labor movement has made a huge impact on the United States and more specifically, on New York State and New York City, thus it is important to acknowledge the gains of workers that were won to create a more just and equal workforce; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York acknowledges workers’ gains through the American labor movement.

LS #3115
KK
2/27/18