

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

May 15, 2024

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 12.5 million workers and 60 affiliate unions represented by the AFL-CIO, I urge you to co-sponsor the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, to be introduced by Senator Hirono on May 16, 2024. This crucial legislation aims to establish a minimum nationwide standard of collective bargaining rights for all public service workers. It would authorize the Federal Labor Relations Authority to step in where states fail to meet these standards, ensuring workers' rights to form a union and negotiate with their employer.

Public service employees, from teachers to firefighters, corrections officers to nurses, sanitation workers to EMS personnel, are the backbone of our communities, providing essential care, education, safety, and support. They deserve the right to organize and negotiate collectively for better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Despite their vital contributions, many public service workers lack federal protections for their fundamental rights to organize and bargain collectively. This legislation grants public employees the right to join a union chosen by a majority, collectively bargain over essential workplace matters, access dispute resolution mechanisms, utilize voluntary payroll deduction for union dues, and engage in activities related to collective bargaining and mutual aid.

The Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act not only ensures fairness and dignity for public service workers but also addresses systemic disparities through collective bargaining by narrowing the wage gap for women, Black, and Latino workers and offering a pathway to economic empowerment.

It is time to ensure that these workers who labor day in and day out to serve our communities have the fundamental right to bargain collectively. The AFL-CIO urges you to become a co-sponsor of the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act. Please contact Andrew Geibel (Andrew_Geibel@hirono.senate.gov) to become a co-sponsor.

Sincerely,



Jody Calemine
Director, Government Affairs