

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 51

By Cooper

A RESOLUTION relative to job creation.

WHEREAS, prior to the economic downturn of the last decade, the average unemployment rate was about 5 percent, reaching a low of 4.4 percent during 2006 and 2007, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

WHEREAS, the height of the Great Recession saw double-digit unemployment rates, but since then, the unemployment rate has reversed course and currently sits at 3.7 percent; and

WHEREAS, a founding ideal of the labor movement is the assembling of a broad progressive coalition for social and economic justice; and

WHEREAS, during the last decade, macroeconomic shifts placed communities around the country at risk, threatening the economic security of all and accelerating deep divides and inequalities in our society; and

WHEREAS, these circumstances demonstrate that the struggles of workers are inextricably interwoven with the struggles of communities; and

WHEREAS, such vital issues for workers today include raising the minimum wage, paid sick leave, family and medical leave, freedom to form a union, a living wage, collective bargaining rights, equal pay for equal work, outsourcing, fair wages for all workers, immigration reform, wage theft, and the misclassification of workers; and

WHEREAS, unions work hand in hand with community partners and allies to reverse negative economic trends and create opportunities for all while building a robust democratic and participatory society, strong and safe neighborhoods, and racial, ethnic, and gender equality; and

WHEREAS, when a union and community jointly build a lasting, powerful movement for social and economic justice and an enduring democracy, their collective voices will be heard and collective purposes achieved; and

WHEREAS, initially created to support workers locked out by Kellogg, the Coalition for the Organizational Protection of People and Equal Rights (COPPER) seeks to work collaboratively as an organization consisting of labor, religious, social, and civil organizations that demonstrate a belief in empowering and defending the well-being of all community members; and

WHEREAS, COPPER comprises more than thirty representatives from labor, religious, civic, and social organizations, and the coalition continues to grow as its fight to achieve economic fairness and remedy the imbalance of power within the Memphis community expands; and

WHEREAS, COPPER's example of an active coalition to build a jobs movement that results in full employment should guide the efforts of policymakers at the state and local levels; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, U.S. Representative John Conyers, Jr., introduced the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Training Act, which, if enacted, would direct the U.S. Secretary of Labor to establish a Full Employment National Trust Fund with two separate accounts, one account for employment opportunity grants to states, local governments, and Native American tribes for job-creating activities in communities whose economies are not at a level of full employment and one account for workforce investment programs; and

WHEREAS, the bill would also establish arbitration procedures for resolution of disputes for grant recipients and require the U.S. Secretary of Labor to post a whistleblower hotline on the U.S. Department of Labor's website for the public to report noncompliance with the Act's requirements; and

WHEREAS, under the legislation, the Secretary of Labor would be directed to convene a national employment conference to bring together leaders of small, medium, and large

businesses, labor, government, and other parties to discuss employment, with particular attention to structural unemployment and the plight of disadvantaged youth; and

WHEREAS, the bill amends the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to revise member composition requirements for state and local workforce investment boards to include at least 25 percent of the chief executive officers of minority-serving, community-based organizations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we support the establishment of a Full Employment National Trust Fund with two separate accounts, one for employment opportunity grants to states, local governments, and Native American tribes for job-creating activities in communities whose economies are not at a level of full employment and one account for workforce investment programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on Congress to pass legislation to establish the National Full Employment Trust Fund and create employment opportunities for the unemployed in the United States of America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we support the establishment of labor-community partnerships that convene labor, religious, social, and civic organizations to work collaboratively to empower and defend the well-being of all workers within a community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Tennessee Congressional Delegation, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Labor.