State of Vermont
Senate Chamber

Montpelier, Vermont
Senate Resolution

By Senators Campbell, McCormack, Illuzzi, Galbraith, Ashe, Ayer, Baruth, Brock, Carris, Cummings, Flory, Fox, Giard, Hartwell, Kitchel, Kittell, Lyons, MacDonald, Miller, Nitka, Pollina, Sears, Snelling, Westman, and White,

S.R. 8. Senate resolution expressing support for the collective bargaining rights of public employees.

Whereas, public servants are our friends, neighbors, and constituents, and through their carrying out our legislative enactments, they enable us to meet our commitments to all citizens, and

Whereas, historically, labor unions are responsible for the civilized working conditions we take for granted, including the 40-hour work weeks, laws pertaining to child labor and health and safety conditions, overtime pay, and health insurance and pension coverage, and

Whereas, as a central part of our democracy, labor unions are the bulwark of assuring a strong middle-class society, and collective bargaining is neither a weapon nor a bludgeon but rather an enlightened method to resolve disagreements in good faith, and

Whereas, the state of Wisconsin recently passed legislation eliminating that state's employees' right to bargain collectively except for "base wages" of one year's duration and even then only for increases that do not exceed the consumer price index unless a voter referendum to the contrary is approved, and

Whereas, the same act also terminates entirely the collective bargaining rights of the University of Wisconsin System, the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority, and certain home care and child health care providers, and

Whereas, although a Wisconsin state judge has enjoined enforcement of this law based on the failure of the legislature to observe Wisconsin's advance notice requirements for public meetings, the legislative and executive desire to enact this measure remains strong, and it is still possible that this or a similar measure may yet become law, and

Whereas, other states are also proposing to roll back collective bargaining rights, and the matter is now on the forefront of legislative consideration in Ohio and Indiana, and

Whereas, collective bargaining is a fundamental right in accordance with Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Rights of which the United States is a signatory, and

Whereas, the International Labor Organization, of which the United States is a member, in its Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work defines the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collectively bargain as essential rights of workers, and

Whereas, the American Baptist Church, the Episcopal Church, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Presbyterian Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, and the United Universalists Association of Congregations as well as other religious organizations support the rights of employees to bargain collectively, and

Whereas, the United States of America is a union of many disparate states that collectively work together for their mutual well-being on many different levels, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont, despite these hard economic times, recognize the great value of all public sector employees and reaffirm the legitimacy of their right to bargain collectively by sitting down with their employer in an atmosphere of mutual respect, *and be it further*

Resolved: That workers in all states, regardless of economic sector and job title or responsibility, must have a basic right to organize and bargain collectively for a fair and just outcome, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels, Ohio Governor John Kasich, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, and all labor unions in Vermont.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED TO:

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John H. Bloomer, Jr.
Secretary of the Senate

DATE:_____