



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL AND ALDERMEN INTRODUCE RESOLUTION TO PROTECT CHICAGO'S
MIDDLE CLASS**

*State's Proposal is in Opposition to Mayor's Strategic Goal to Protect Worker's Rights and Strengthen
Chicago's Middle Class*

Mayor Emanuel and members of City Council today introduced a resolution to protect the rights of Chicago's middle class. The resolution declares opposition to the Governor's proposal to create local right to work zones in Chicago and municipalities throughout Illinois and calls on the Committee on Workforce Development and Audit to hold a hearing to address this issue and bring together public officials, civic representatives and members of the public in an effort to fully address this matter.

"Asking cities like Chicago to pass 'Right to Work' zone resolutions sets up a race to the bottom. I have repeatedly said I will not support – and will oppose every step of the way – any resolution in Chicago that directly threatens our strategic goal to strengthen Chicago's middle class," said Mayor Emanuel. "When companies look for a new home or a place to grow, our competition is the other great cities of the world like New York, London, Beijing, and Tokyo. Competing against Mississippi and Alabama for low wages is not a strategy to build a great city. By building a stronger local economy with good-paying jobs, Chicago will continue to be among those great cities and every resident, from every neighborhood, will benefit."

The proposal would limit prevailing wage laws, change workers' compensation laws and eliminate project labor agreements. These actions have the potential to dismantle labor organizations, which have historically protected the rights of working and middle-class Chicagoans, and could lead to lower median wages, reduced benefits, and unsafe working conditions for all employees whether they are union or non-union.

"We have seen the negative impact 'right to work' laws have on neighboring states, namely workers earning less, an increase in race and gender income inequalities, and an increase in workplace fatalities," said Chicago Federation of Labor President Jorge Ramirez. "Governor Rauner's 'right to work' zones will eliminate the economic mobility that is necessary to continue to grow Chicago's

middle class. We applaud Mayor Emanuel and the City Council for taking a stand against a policy that would destroy the livelihoods of the very people they were elected to protect."

The City of Chicago and organized labor have been working together to ensure that a skilled labor workforce is available to local businesses in neighborhoods across the city. Mayor Emanuel believes that unions are an important part of ensuring that all Chicago residents have a fair shot at the middle class.

Since 2011, Mayor Emanuel has worked with labor to establish partnerships across the city and sister agencies including facilitating a historic project labor agreement with labor leaders and the Chicago Transit Authority to provide expanded job opportunities for economically disadvantaged workers in the Chicago area, as well as, recently working with Chicago Public Schools and the building trades to extend their project labor agreement.

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