

(Washington, DC)- Today, Rep. Jason Altmire (PA-4), a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, voted to strengthen America's middle-class by providing workers a free choice to join together to bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

H.R. 800, the bipartisan Employee Free Choice Act, passed this afternoon by a vote of 241 to 185.

The Employee Free Choice Act will help workers share in our nation's growth and prosperity by supporting the basic right of workers to form a union. The Employee Free Choice Act will protect employees seeking to unionize from discrimination, intimidation, and harassment from employers. Under this measure, employees will be able to form a union when a majority of workers signs authorization cards.

"Workers who belong to unions earn on average 30 percent more than non-union workers and are more likely to have better health care and pension benefits," Rep. Altmire stated. **"This bill will give workers a chance to make real choices for themselves about whether or not to form a union."**

According to Altmire, more than half of all workers in the United States say they want to be in a union, but only 12 percent belong to one.

"America's working men and women are struggling to make ends meet," said Rep. Altmire. **"This bill fixes a broken union election process and offers workers the best opportunity to organize and bargain for benefits and wages."**

In addition to allowing workers to form a union through majority sign-up, the Employee Free Choice Act would put in place real penalties against employers that illegally fire or discriminate against workers for union activity. Furthermore, when employers and newly formed unions are unable to agree upon a first contract, the measure would allow either party to refer the matter to mediation and binding arbitration.