



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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2019 IFPTE Issue Brief

116th Congress

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ATLANTIC

Labor Law Reform Needed Now More Than Ever

Mazen Alsabe
NORTHEAST

IFPTE 2019 Legislative Request: Urge Congress to introduce and pass labor law reform legislation comparable to the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), introduced in the 110th, 111th and 114th Congresses, and passed in the House of Representatives in 2007.

Joel Funfar
SPEEA

Overview:

While there has yet to be a labor law reform bill similar to the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) introduced since the 114th Congress, EFCA-like legislation continues to be desperately needed to level the playing field between private sector workers who want to form unions, versus wealthy employers who all too often manipulate the current law to frustrate union organizing drives. Despite stagnant and, in some cases declining worker salaries in an era of steep worker productivity increases neither EFCA, nor any other labor law reform bill was ultimately passed into law.

Laurence Griffin
WESTERN

According to a 2018 Economic Policy Institute (EPI) briefing paper, The [Productivity-Pay Gap](#), “From 1973 to 2017, net productivity rose 77.0 percent, while the hourly pay of typical workers essentially stagnated—increasing only 12.4 percent over 44 years [after adjusting for inflation]” (see EPI chart on reverse side of this paper). In citing reasons for the sustained wage stagnation, EPI pointed to their [First Day Fairness Agenda](#) to restore fairness for workers, arguing that while, “There are many factors contributing to this economic inequality; however, the common thread that binds almost all of them is the erosion of the bargaining power of low- and middle-wage workers.” So, by bringing equity to our private sector labor laws we will not only be leveling the playing field for workers who want to pursue collective bargaining, we will also be rebuilding our middle class by increasing worker wages.

Gay Henson
EASTERN FEDERAL

Increased worker salaries due to collective bargaining are borne out in 2018 US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data comparing union represented worker salaries to non-union represented workers. The data shows that, “Nonunion workers had median weekly earnings that were 82 percent of earnings for workers who were union members (\$860 versus \$1,051)”, representing roughly \$9,932 more annually for union represented workers.

Misty Hughes-Newman
CANADIAN

A Broken NLRB Election Process:

IFPTE believes that without concrete labor law reform similar to what has been called for in EFCA legislation, worker wages, benefits and working conditions will continue to suffer. Congress should support American workers by providing an alternative to the broken NLRB election process, by which private sector employers would have an obligation to respect the demonstrable free will of a majority of its employees through a card check process, first contract arbitration and stiff penalties against employers who intimidate and illegally interfere with workers during organizing drives. This change in process would short circuit the undue delay working men and women face in fulfilling their wish, and federal statutory right, to form a union, and protect such individuals from the all too common unlawful tactics utilized by employers before and after an NLRB scheduled election.

Donna Lehane
SPEEA

John Mader
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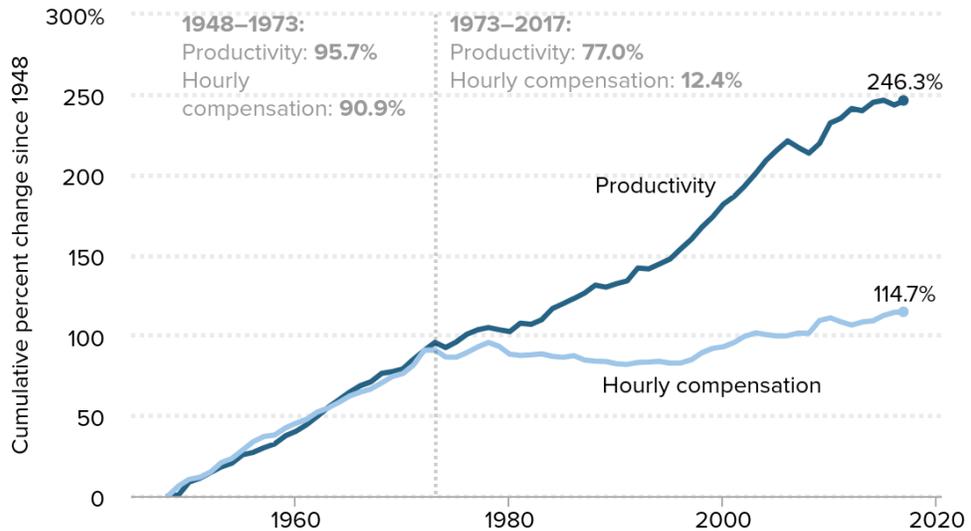
Tina Zellmer
MIDWESTERN

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The gap between productivity and a typical worker's compensation has increased dramatically since 1973

Productivity growth and hourly compensation growth, 1948–2017



Notes: Data are for compensation (wages and benefits) of production/nonsupervisory workers in the private sector and net productivity of the total economy. “Net productivity” is the growth of output of goods and services less depreciation per hour worked.

Source: EPI analysis of unpublished Total Economy Productivity data from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Labor Productivity and Costs program, wage data from the BLS Current Employment Statistics, BLS Employment Cost Trends, BLS Consumer Price Index, and Bureau of Economic Analysis National Income and Product Accounts

Updated from Figure A in *Raising America's Pay: Why It's Our Central Economic Policy Challenge*