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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

Original Date 1/22/08

SPONSOR Sanchez, M. Last Updated _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Support Federal Employees Free Choice Act SJM 24

ANALYST Cox

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 24 requests support of the Employee Free Choice Act. This Act would authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the bargaining representative when a majority of employees voluntarily signs authorization cards designating that union to represent them.

This Joint Resolution requests that the legislature of the State of New Mexico provide for first-contract mediation and arbitration and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's freedom to choose a union.

The Joint Resolution further requests that the legislature of the state of New Mexico urge Congress to pass the Employee Free Choice Act to protect and preserve for America's workers their freedom to choose for themselves whether or not to form a union.

The Joint Memorial requests that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the New Mexico Congressional delegation and to the Governor.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Senate Joint Memorial States that:

- In 1935 the United States established by law that workers must be free to form unions; and
- the free choice to join with others and bargain for better wages and benefits is essential to economic opportunity and good living standards; and
- unions benefit communities by strengthening living standards, stabilizing tax bases, promoting equal treatment and enhancing civic participation; and
- States in which more people are union members are states with higher wages, better benefits and better schools; and
- unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the income gap for minorities and women by increasing median weekly earnings by thirty-one percent for union female workers, thirty-six percent for African American workers, forty-six percent for Latino workers and eight percent for Asian American workers; and
- workers are also more likely to have health coverage and guaranteed defined-benefit pensions in union jobs;
- and eighty percent of private-sector union workers have employer-provided health insurance compared with only forty-nine percent of nonunion workers and sixty-eight percent of union workers have defined-benefit pension plans compared with fourteen percent of nonunion workers; and
- workers across the nation are routinely denied the freedom to form unions and bargain for a better life, with twenty-five percent of private-sector employers illegally firing at least one worker for union activity during organizing campaigns; and
- seventy-seven percent of the public believes it is important to have strong laws protecting the freedom of workers to make their own decisions about having a union, and sixty percent of workers would join a union if they had the chance; and
- employers often refuse to bargain fairly after workers form a union by dragging out first-contract bargaining for up to two years in forty-five percent of successful campaigns; and
- each year millions of dollars are spent to frustrate workers' efforts to form unions, and ninety-two percent of private-sector employers force employees to attend mandatory anti-union meetings; and
- when the right of workers to form a union is violated, wages fall, race and gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases and job safety standards disappear; and
- a worker's fundamental right to choose a union without coercion and intimidation is a public issue that requires public policy solutions, including legislative remedies; and
- the federal Employee Free Choice Act received majority support in both houses of congress in 2007 but was defeated by a minority of senators; and
- the Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard workers' rights to make their own decisions about forming a union, provide for first-contract mediation and arbitration and establish meaningful penalties when employers violate workers' rights;