Resolution on Secondary Boycotts

WHEREAS, in 1947 Congress enacted the Taft-Hartley amendments to the National Labor Relations Act prohibiting striking unions from engaging in boycotts against parties who were not involved in a dispute with the union—so called secondary boycotts; and

WHEREAS, in 1986 railroad unions adopted nationwide secondary boycott tactics in an effort to force settlement of dispute with a regional railroad in New England; and

WHEREAS, subsequently the Supreme Court ruled that since Congress had not amended the Railway Labor Act, which covers the railroad and air-line industry, to prohibit secondary boycotts, such tactics were lawful for unions in those industries; and

WHEREAS, in 1989 the machinists union, in the context of a dispute with Eastern Airlines, threatened to picket various railroads and to disrupt service on heavily used commuter rail lines in an effort to force the appointment of a presidential emergency board; and

WHEREAS, as the law now stands, a local dispute involving one employer can result in the disruption of vital transportation services throughout the nation and be transformed into a national crisis; and

WHEREAS, by being able to engage in secondary boycotts, rail and airline unions can inflict hardship on neutral parties as a means of exacting concessions that could not otherwise be gained through the normal collective bargaining process; and

WHEREAS, the ability to engage in secondary boycotts permits rail and airline unions to wield power specifically denied to all other unions and to hold the nation hostage to their parochial interests; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of (state) memorialize Congress to amend the Railway Labor Act to include rail and airline unions in prohibiting this unfair labor practice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the clerk of the House of Representatives and Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to the President of the United States Senate, to the Secretary of Labor of the United States and to each Member of Congress of the United States.