



# PUBLIC UNION RECERTIFICATION

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**THE PROBLEM:** Once a government union comes to power, it can stay in power indefinitely. No further elections are scheduled and no term limits are imposed. This means workers can do little to ensure their union truly represents their interests and is held accountable.

**THE SOLUTION:** Regular public union recertification elections.

Regular public union elections would give workers the right to elect union representation to fixed terms. Regular elections would help keep union actions in line with worker interests and lead to competition among unions. It would also help prevent backlash from union leadership in response to decertification petitions.<sup>1</sup>

**WHO ELSE DOES IT?** Currently, Wisconsin and Iowa require regular public union elections.

## THE OPPORTUNITY:

The Commonwealth Foundation recently gave Missouri a letter grade of 'D' regarding its public labor laws. Show-Me Institute research indicates that regular union elections need not be prohibitively expensive and offer a way to ensure that unions serve workers—not the other way around.

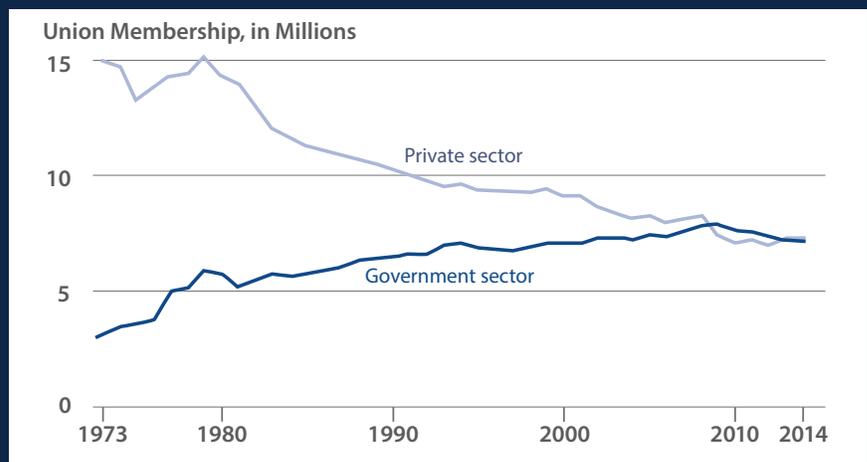
## KEY POINTS

- Public workers in Missouri should have the right to choose who represents them.
- Regular elections would make unions more accountable to those they represent, just as regular government elections pressure politicians to be accountable to voters.
- Regular elections can be held at a reasonable cost to taxpayers.

<sup>1</sup>Employees can only force an election through a petition process in which their personal information is made public.

## UNION MEMBERSHIP INCREASINGLY FOUND IN GOVERNMENT SECTORS

*Unions were once concentrated in factories, mills, and other sites of private commerce. Today half of American union members are government employees, not tradesmen or factory workers.*



Note: Figures for 1982 have been interpolated.

Source: Barry T. Hirsch and David A. Macpherson, "Union Membership and Coverage Database from the CPS," 2014, <http://www.unionstats.com>.

## SHOW-ME INSTITUTE RESOURCES

**Policy Study:** "A Primer on Government Labor Relations in Missouri"

**Essay:** "The Low Cost of Labor Reform"