

### **Q: What evidence do you have to show that government unions need reform?**

A: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, overall union membership has declined from over 20% of employed wage and salary workers in 1983 to just 11% in 2015.

There has, however, been a **significant increase in the number of government union workers**. Based on 2015 data, BLS states that public-sector workers have a union membership rate five times greater than that of private-sector workers. Given the current and expected growth of government unions, Missouri should address concerns sooner rather than later.

### **Q: Can't government union members already vote to decertify their union if it's not doing its job?**

A: Yes, but it's a lengthy and bureaucratic process. To file a petition for an election to decertify a union, a member must follow these steps:

- Gather the signatures of 30% of the bargaining unit members. This "showing of interest" in an election could require thousands of signatures.
- Next, the State Board of Mediation reviews the validity of the "showing of interest" for a decertification election and decides if the claim is substantiated.
- Only if the claim is substantiated will a decertification election be held.

### **Q: How many times has a union successfully been decertified through the current process?**

A: Since 2010, seven unions have been decertified through the petition process required by the State Board of Mediation in forty-six elections. This does not include petitions for decertification that may have been filed but were not approved by the Board.

### **Q: Won't the elections be costly?**

A: The election provisions in this legislation are based on the Wisconsin model. In 2011, WI implemented similar elections at no cost to the state. If a union chooses to run for recertification, it must pay a filing fee determined by the State Board of Mediation, which can minimize costs by conducting the elections via telephone or an Internet-based system.

### **Q: Who will conduct the elections? Would all government unions, including those representing police, fire fighters and teachers, have to go through the State Board of Mediation for these elections?**

A: The State Board of Mediation will conduct the elections. The proposed bills give the Board the authority to conduct recertification elections, even if another entity currently conducts a union's regular elections.

### **Q: Why should a union force workers into an election they didn't ask for?**

A: A union may choose whether or not to run for recertification. If the union chooses to, no member is forced to vote, just as no citizen is forced to vote in local or national elections of public officials. If a union does not want to run for recertification, its certification will lapse.

### **Q: Why do we need these recertification elections if there are already regular elections where members can vote out ineffective union officials and vote against a labor agreement?**

A: The elections required in SB 602 and HB 1577 are different than the elections that occur to elect union officers or to approve a labor agreement. The elections proposed in this legislation allow workers to hold their union accountable, and give workers a choice if they are unhappy with their union's representation. Voting for or against union officers or a labor agreement doesn't allow workers the choice of a completely different union that may better serve them.