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QuickPoint! – The Right to Choose or Reject Union Representation Respects Workers

By Kathryn Hickok

Why do many workers choose to [opt out of union membership](#)? Some believe they can make better use of their money than giving it to a union. Others “vote with their feet” against what they perceive to be poor union service or negotiating results. Still others leave because they oppose their unions’ political positions. They simply don’t want to support an organization that promotes different political beliefs from their own.

August 20-26, 2017 is [National Employee Freedom Week](#), a national effort to inform union members about their freedom to opt out of union membership if they choose and to make decisions about labor representation and the use of their union dues.

Many recent scientific surveys have been conducted to see how the public and members of union households think about these issues. In 2015, [National Employee Freedom Week](#) asked members of union households this question:

“Are you aware that you can opt-out of union membership and of paying a portion of your union dues without losing your job or any other penalty?”

Surprisingly, over 27 percent of Oregon union household members surveyed that year answered No. This implies that a large number of [Oregon’s current union membership](#) of 228,000 may not realize that membership and some dues are optional.

The right to work without third-party interference is more than an economic issue; it is a profoundly moral one as well. In America, no one should be compelled to join a union or to pay union dues in order to hold a job. For more information about how employee choice can benefit Oregon workers, visit oregonemployeechoice.com.

Kathryn Hickok is Publications Director at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.

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