S. 1970

To secure the rights of public employees to organize, act concertedly, and bargain collectively, which safeguard the public interest and promote the free and unobstructed flow of commerce, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

June 25, 2019

Ms. Hirono (for herself, Mr. Schumer, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Brown, Mr. Schatz, Mr. Blumenthal, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Reed, Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Booker, Mr. Cardin, Ms. Smith, Ms. Hassan, Mr. Menendez, Ms. Stabenow, Ms. Cantwell, Ms. Baldwin, Ms. Harris, Mr. Casey, Mrs. Shaheen, Mr. Van Hollen, Ms. Cortez Masto, Mr. Coons, Mr. Carper, Mr. Sanders, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Wyden, Mr. Peters, Ms. Warren, Mr. Merkley, Mr. Markey, Ms. Rosen, Mr. Udall, Ms. Duckworth, and Mr. Leahy) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To secure the rights of public employees to organize, act concertedly, and bargain collectively, which safeguard the public interest and promote the free and unobstructed flow of commerce, and for other purposes.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

- This Act may be cited as the "Public Service Free-
- 3 dom to Negotiate Act of 2019".

4 SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

- 5 (a) IN GENERAL.—In this Act:
- (1) AUTHORITY.—The term "Authority" means
 the Federal Labor Relations Authority.
 - (2) APPROPRIATE UNIT.—The term "appropriate unit" means a bargaining unit of public employees or supervisory employees that share a community of interest, have a bargaining history or history of prior organization, and represent the desires of employees seeking representation.
 - (3) Collective Bargaining", used with respect to public employees, supervisory employees, and public employers, means the performance of the mutual obligation of the representative of a public employer and the exclusive representative of public employees and supervisory employees in an appropriate unit of the employer to meet at reasonable times and to consult and bargain in a good-faith effort to reach agreement with respect to wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment affecting such employees and to execute, if requested by either party, a written document incorporating any collective bar-

- gaining agreement reached, but the obligation referred to in this paragraph does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or to make a concession (as described in section 8(d) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 158(d))).
 - (4) Confidential employee" means an employee of a public employer who acts in a confidential capacity with respect to an individual who formulates or effectuates management policies in the field of labor-management relations.
 - (5) COVERED PERSON.—The term "covered person" means an individual or a labor organization.
 - (6) Emergency services employee" means—
 - (A) a public employee providing out-of-hospital emergency medical care, including an emergency medical technician, paramedic, or first responder; or
 - (B) a public employee providing other services in response to emergencies that have the potential to cause death or serious bodily injury, including an employee in fire protection activities (as defined in section 3 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203)).

- 1 (7) EMPLOY.—The term "employ" has the 2 meaning given the term in section 3 of the Fair 3 Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203).
 - (8) Labor organization.—The term "labor organization" means any organization of any kind that is not under the control directly or indirectly by a public employer in which such employees participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with public employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work.
 - (9) Law.—The term "law", used with respect to a State or a political subdivision thereof, includes the application of the laws of such State or such political subdivision, including any regulations or ordinances issued by such State or such political subdivision.
 - (10) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term "law enforcement officer" has the meaning given such term in section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10284).
 - (11) Management employee" means an individual employed by a public employer in a position the duties

1	and responsibilities of which require the individual to
2	formulate or determine the policies of the employer.
3	(12) Public Employee.—
4	(A) In general.—The term "public em-
5	ployee''—
6	(i) means, except as provided in clause
7	(iii), an individual, employed by a public
8	employer, who in any workweek is engaged
9	in commerce or is employed in an enter-
10	prise engaged in commerce;
11	(ii) includes an individual described in
12	clause (i) who is temporarily transferred to
13	a supervisory or management position; and
14	(iii) does not include a supervisory
15	employee, management employee, or con-
16	fidential employee, or an elected official.
17	(B) Commerce; enterprise engaged in
18	COMMERCE.—For the purpose of this para-
19	graph, the terms "commerce" and "enterprise
20	engaged in commerce" have the meanings given
21	such terms in section 3 of the Fair Labor
22	Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203).
23	(13) Public employer.—The term "public
24	employer" means any of the following that employs
25	individuals:

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1	(A) A State or the political subdivision of
2	a State, including a territory or political sub-
3	division of a territory.
4	(B) Any authority, agency, school district,
5	board or other entity controlled and operated by
6	an entity described in subparagraph (A).
7	(14) State.—The term "State" means each of
8	the several States of the United States, the District
9	of Columbia, and any territory or possession of the
10	United States (as defined in section 3 of the Fair
11	Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203)).
12	(15) Substantially provide or substan-
13	TIALLY PROVIDES.—The term "substantially pro-
14	vide" or "substantially provides", used with respect
15	to the rights and procedures described in section
16	3(b), means providing rights and procedures that
17	are equivalent to or greater than each of the rights
18	and procedures described in such section.
19	(16) Supervisory employee.—
20	(A) In general.—Except as provided in
21	subparagraph (B), the term "supervisory em-
22	ployee" means an individual, employed by a
23	public employer, who in any workweek is en-
24	gaged in commerce or is employed in an enter-

prise engaged in commerce and who—

1	(i) has the authority in the interest of
2	the employer, if the exercise of such au-
3	thority is not merely routine or clerical in
4	nature but requires the consistent exercise
5	of independent judgment, to—
6	(I) hire, promote, reward, trans-
7	fer, furlough, lay off, recall, suspend,
8	discipline, or remove public employees;
9	(II) adjust the grievances of pub-
10	lie employees; or
11	(III) effectively recommend any
12	action described in subclause (I) or
13	(II); and
14	(ii) devotes a majority of time at work
15	to exercising the authority under clause (i).
16	(B) Commerce; enterprise engaged in
17	COMMERCE.—For the purpose of this para-
18	graph, the terms "commerce" and "enterprise
19	engaged in commerce" have the meanings given
20	such terms in section 3 of the Fair Labor
21	Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203).
22	(b) STATE LAW.—If any term defined in this section
23	has a substantially equivalent meaning to the term (or a
24	substantially equivalent term) under applicable State law
25	on the date of the enactment of this Act, such term (or

- 1 substantially equivalent term) and meaning under such
- 2 applicable State law shall apply with respect to the term
- 3 defined under this Act with respect to such State.

4 SEC. 3. FEDERAL MINIMUM STANDARDS.

(a) Determination.—

- (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Authority shall make a determination for each State as to whether the laws of such State substantially provide for each of the rights and procedures under subsection (b) and not later than 30 days after the enactment of this Act, the Authority shall establish procedures for the implementation of this section.
- (2) Consideration of additional opinions.—In making the determination under paragraph (1), the Authority shall consider the opinions of affected public employees, supervisory employees, labor organizations, and public employers. In the case where the Authority is notified by an affected public employer and labor organization that both parties agree that the law applicable to such employer and labor organization substantially provides for the rights and procedures described in subsection (b), the Authority shall give such agreement weight

- to the maximum extent practicable in making the Authority's determination under paragraph (1).
 - (3) LIMITED CRITERIA.—In making the determination described in paragraph (1), the Authority may consider the criteria described in subsection (b) and not any other criteria.

(4) Subsequent determinations.—

- (A) IN GENERAL.—A determination made pursuant to paragraph (1) shall remain in effect unless and until the Authority issues a subsequent determination, in accordance with the procedures set forth in subparagraph (B).
- (B) REQUEST.—A public employee, supervisory employee, public employer, or labor organization may submit to the Authority a written request for a subsequent determination under paragraph (1) with respect to a State if a material change of law in the State has occurred.
- (C) Issuance.—Not later than 30 days after receipt of a request under subparagraph (B), the Authority shall issue a subsequent determination under paragraph (1) if satisfied that a material change of law in the State has occurred.

1	(5) Judicial review.—Any covered person or
2	public employer aggrieved by a determination of the
3	Authority under paragraph (1) may, during the 60-
4	day period beginning on the date on which the deter-
5	mination was made, petition any United States
6	Court of Appeals, in the circuit in which the covered
7	person or public employer resides or transacts busi-
8	ness or in the Court of Appeals for the District of
9	Columbia Circuit, for judicial review. In any judicial
10	review of a determination made by the Authority
11	under paragraph (1), the procedures contained in
12	subsections (c) and (d) of section 7123 of title 5,
13	United States Code, shall be followed.
14	(b) Federal Minimum Standard.—The collective
15	bargaining rights and procedures under this subsection
16	are as follows:
17	(1) A right of public employees and supervisory
18	employees—
19	(A) to self-organization;
20	(B) to form, join, or assist a labor organi-
21	zation or to refrain from any such activity;
22	(C) to bargain collectively through rep-
23	resentatives of their own choosing; and
24	(D) to engage in other concerted activities
25	for the purpose of collective bargaining or other

1	mutual aid (including the filing of joint class or
2	collective legal claims) or protection.
3	(2) A requirement for public employers to—
4	(A) recognize the labor organization of its
5	public employees (freely chosen in an election
6	by a majority of such employees voting in the
7	appropriate unit or chosen by voluntary rec-
8	ognition if that method is permitted under
9	State law), without requiring an election to re-
10	certify a labor organization that is already rec-
11	ognized as the representative of such employees
12	unless not less than 30 percent of such employ-
13	ees in the appropriate unit freely sign a petition
14	to decertify such labor organization—
15	(i) not earlier than the date that is 1
16	year after the date of the election (or after
17	a voluntary recognition if permitted under
18	State law) of the representative;
19	(ii) if a valid collective bargaining
20	agreement covering such employees and
21	labor organization expires, not earlier than
22	the date that is 1 year after the expiration
23	of such agreement; and
24	(iii) not during the term of a valid col-
25	lective bargaining agreement covering such

1	employees and labor organization, except
2	for the 30-day period beginning on the
3	date that is 90 days before the expiration
4	of such agreement;
5	(B) collectively bargain with such recog-
6	nized labor organization; and
7	(C) commit any agreements with such rec-
8	ognized labor organization to writing in a con-
9	tract or memorandum of understanding.
10	(3) An interest impasse resolution mechanism
11	that includes a procedure for the settlement of griev-
12	ances (including fact-finding, mediation, and arbitra-
13	tion) and culminates in binding arbitration.
14	(4) Payroll deduction of labor organization fees
15	for any duly selected representative of public em-
16	ployees and supervisory employees pursuant to the
17	terms of an authorization executed by such public
18	employees.
19	(5) The enforcement of all relevant rights and
20	protections provided by the law in the applicable
21	State and enumerated in this section, and of any
22	written contract or memorandum of understanding
23	between a labor organization and a public employer,

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1	(A) a State administrative agency, if the
2	State so chooses;
3	(B) at the election of an aggrieved party,
4	the State courts; or
5	(C) in the case of an alleged violation, mis-
6	interpretation, or misapplication of the contract
7	or memorandum of understanding, a grievance
8	resolution procedure negotiated in such contract
9	or memorandum.
10	(c) Compliance With Rights and Proce-
11	DURES.—If the Authority determines under subsection (a)
12	that the laws of a State substantially provide each of the
13	rights and procedures described in subsection (b), then
14	subsection (d) shall not apply.
15	(d) Failure To Substantially Provide.—
16	(1) In general.—If the Authority determines
17	under subsection (a) that the laws of a State do not
18	substantially provide for each of the rights and pro-
19	cedures described in subsection (b), then such State
20	shall be subject to the rules and activities of the Au-
21	thority under section 4 beginning on the later of—
22	(A) the date that is 2 years after the date
23	of enactment of this Act;
24	(B) the date that is the last day of the
25	first regular session of the legislature of the

1	State that begins after the date of the enact-
2	ment of this Act; or
3	(C) in the case of a State receiving a sub-

- (C) in the case of a State receiving a subsequent determination under subsection (a)(4), the date that is the last day of the first regular session of the legislature of the State that begins after the date the Authority made the determination.
- (2) Partial failure.—If the Authority makes a determination that a State does not substantially provide for each of the rights and procedures described in subsection (b) because the State fails to substantially provide for all of such rights and procedures with respect to all public employees or supervisory employees, the Authority shall identify—
 - (A) the categories of public employees or supervisory employees of such State that shall be subject to the rules and activities of the Authority under section 4, pursuant to section 7(b)(4), beginning on the applicable date under paragraph (1);
 - (B) the categories of public employees and supervisory employees of such State that shall not be subject to the rules and activities of the Authority under section 4;

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1	(C) the categories of rights and procedures
2	described in subsection (b) for which the State
3	does not substantially provide for certain public
4	employees and supervisory employees; and
5	(D) the categories of rights and procedures
6	described in such subsection for which the State
7	substantially provides for all employees.
8	SEC. 4. MINIMUM STANDARDS ADMINISTERED BY THE FED-
9	ERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY.
10	(a) In General.—Not later than 1 year after the
11	date of enactment of this Act, the Authority shall issue
12	rules and take such actions that the Authority determines
13	appropriate to establish and administer collective bar-
14	gaining rights and procedures that substantially provide
15	for the rights and procedures described in section 3(b) for
16	States described in section 3(d).
17	(b) Role of the Federal Labor Relations Au-
18	THORITY.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Authority
19	shall—
20	(1) protect the right of public employees—
21	(A) to self-organization;
22	(B) to form, join, or assist any labor orga-
23	nization or to refrain from any such activity;
24	(C) to bargain collectively through rep-
25	resentatives of their own choosing; and

1	(D) to engage in other concerted activities
2	for the purpose of collective bargaining or other
3	mutual aid (including the filing of joint class or
4	collective legal claims) or protection;
5	(2) supervise or conduct elections to determine
6	whether a labor organization has been selected as an
7	exclusive representative by a majority of the public
8	employees and supervisory employees voting in such
9	election in an appropriate unit;
10	(3) provide for the payroll deduction of labor
11	organization fees to any such duly elected exclusive
12	representative pursuant to the terms of an author-
13	ization executed by a public employee or supervisory
14	employee;
15	(4) determine the appropriateness of units for
16	labor organization representation;
17	(5) require public employers to—
18	(A) recognize the labor organization of its
19	public employees or supervisory employees
20	(freely chosen by a majority of such employees
21	voting in the appropriate unit) as the exclusive
22	representative of such employees;
23	(B) bargain in good faith with such labor
24	organization concerning public employees' or

supervisory employees' terms and conditions of

- employment, which shall include a procedure for the settlement of grievances culminating in binding arbitration in any agreement and a procedure for resolving any impasses in collective bargaining; and
 - (C) commit any agreements to writing in a contract or memorandum of understanding;
 - (6) prohibit practices which interfere with, coerce, or intimidate public employees or supervisory employees in the exercise of rights guaranteed in paragraph (1) or regulations issued thereunder;
 - (7) conduct hearings and resolve complaints concerning violations of any rule or order issued by the Authority pursuant to this Act;
 - (8) resolve exceptions to the awards of arbitrators that violate or exceed the scope of public policy; and
 - (9) take such other actions as are necessary and appropriate to effectively administer this Act, including issuing subpoenas requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of documentary or other evidence from any place in the United States, administering oaths, taking or ordering the taking of depositions, ordering responses to

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written interrogatories, and receiving and examining
witnesses.

(c) Enforcement.—

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(1) In General.—The Authority may issue an order directing compliance by any covered person or public employer found to be in violation of this section, and may petition any United States Court of Appeals with jurisdiction over the parties, or the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to enforce any such final orders issued pursuant to this section or pursuant to rules issued under this section, and for appropriate temporary relief or a restraining order. Any covered person or public employer aggrieved by an order issued by the Authority under this section may, during the 60-day period beginning on the date on which the order was issued, petition any United States Court of Appeals, in the circuit which the covered person or public employer resides or transacts business or in the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, for judicial review. Any petition or appeal under this section shall be conducted in accordance with subsections (c) and (d) of section 7123 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) Private right of action.—

1	(A) FILING A CIVIL ACTION.—Unless the
2	Authority has filed an order of enforcement as
3	provided in paragraph (1), any party may, after
4	the 180-day period following the filing of a
5	charge with the Authority pursuant to the rules
6	issued by the Authority under this section, file
7	a civil action against any named State adminis-
8	trator in an appropriate district court of the
9	United States to enjoin such administrator to
10	enforce compliance—
11	(i) with this Act or the rules issued by
12	the Authority under this section; or
13	(ii) to enforce compliance with any
14	order issued by the Authority.
15	(B) TIMING.—Any civil action brought
16	under subparagraph (A) shall be brought not
17	later than the earlier of—
18	(i) the date that is 180 days after the
19	expiration of the 180-day period described
20	in subparagraph (A); or
21	(ii) the date that is 180 days after the
22	date that the Authority dismisses a charge
23	described in subparagraph (A).
24	(C) Notice.—A party filing a civil action
25	under subparagraph (A) shall provide notice of

- such action to the Authority not later than the date of the filing of such action.
- (D) 3 JURISDICTION AND ATTORNEYS' 4 FEES.—An appropriate district court of the United States in which a civil action under sub-6 paragraph (A) is filed shall have jurisdiction 7 over such action without regard to the amount 8 in controversy or the citizenship of the parties 9 and may award reasonable attorneys' fees.

10 SEC. 5. LOCKOUTS AND EMPLOYEE STRIKES PROHIBITED

11 WHEN EMERGENCY OR PUBLIC SAFETY SERV-

- 12 ICES IMPERILED.
- 13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), any em14 ployer, emergency services employee, or law enforcement
 15 officer subject to the rules and activities of the Authority
 16 under section 4 may not engage in a lockout, strike, or
 17 any other organized job action of which a reasonably prob18 able result is a measurable disruption of the delivery of
 19 emergency or public safety services. No labor organization
- 20 may cause or attempt to cause a violation of this sub-
- 21 section.
- 22 (b) No Preemption.—Nothing in this section shall
- 23 be construed to preempt any law of any State or political
- 24 subdivision of any State with respect to strikes by emer-
- 25 gency services employees or law enforcement officers.

1	SEC. 6. EXISTING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNITS AND
2	AGREEMENTS.
3	The enactment of this Act shall not invalidate any
4	certification, recognition, result of an election, collective
5	bargaining agreement, or memorandum of understanding
6	that—
7	(1) has been issued, approved, or ratified by
8	any public employee relations board or commission,
9	or by any State or political subdivision or an agent
10	or management official of such State or political
11	subdivision; and
12	(2) is in effect on the day before the date of en-
13	actment of this Act.
14	SEC. 7. EXCEPTIONS.
15	(a) In General.—The Authority shall not make a
16	determination under section 3(a) that the laws of a State
17	do not substantially provide for the rights and procedures
18	under section 3(b) on the basis that relevant laws in the
19	State—
20	(1) permit a public employee or supervisory em-
21	ployee to appear on the employee's own behalf with
22	respect to the relationship of the public employee or
23	supervisory employee with the public employer in-
24	volved;
25	(2) do not cover public employees or supervisory
26	employees of the State militia or national guard: or

1	(3) do not apply to a political subdivision of a
2	State if—
3	(A) such political subdivision has a popu-
4	lation of fewer than 5,000 people or employs
5	fewer than 25 public employees; and
6	(B) the State in which such political sub-
7	division is located notifies the Authority that
8	such subdivision is exempt from such laws be-
9	fore the date on which the Authority makes the
10	determination.
11	(b) Compliance.—
12	(1) Actions of States.—Nothing in this Act
13	shall be construed to require a State to rescind or
14	preempt the laws of any political subdivision of the
15	State if such laws substantially provide for the
16	rights and procedures described in section 3(b).
17	(2) Actions of the district of colum-
18	BIA.—Nothing in this Act or in the rules issued
19	under this Act shall be construed—
20	(A) to require the District of Columbia to
21	rescind—
22	(i) section 501 of the District of Co-
23	lumbia Government Comprehensive Merit
24	Personnel Act of 1978 (1–605.01, D.C.
25	Official Code), establishing the Public Em-

1	ployee Relations Board of the District of
2	Columbia; or
3	(ii) section 502 of such Act (1–
4	605.02, D.C. Official Code), establishing
5	the power of the Board;
6	(B) to preempt the laws described in sub-
7	paragraph (A); or
8	(C) to limit or alter the powers of the gov-
9	ernment of the District of Columbia pursuant
10	to the District of Columbia Home Rule Act
11	(Public Law 93–198; 1–201.01 et seq., D.C.
12	Official Code).
13	(3) Actions of the authority.—Nothing in
14	this Act shall be construed to preempt—
15	(A) the laws of any State or political sub-
16	division of a State that substantially provide for
17	the rights and procedures described in section
18	3(b);
19	(B) the laws of any State or political sub-
20	division of a State that substantially provide for
21	the rights and procedures described in section
22	3(b), solely because such laws provide that a
23	contract or memorandum of understanding be-
24	tween a public employer and a labor organiza-
25	tion must be presented to a legislative body as

1	part of the process for approving such contract
2	or memorandum of understanding; or

- (C) the laws of any State or political subdivision of a State that permit or require a public employer to recognize a labor organization on the basis of signed authorizations executed by employees designating the labor organization as their representative.
- 9 (4) LIMITED ENFORCEMENT POWER.—In the 10 case of a law described in section 3(d)(2), the Au-11 thority shall only exercise the authority under sec-12 tion 4 with respect to the categories of public em-13 ployees or supervisory employees for whom State law 14 does not substantially provide the rights and proce-15 dures described in section 3(b).

16 SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

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