

AN ACT

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR THEIR APPROVAL OR REJECTION

AT THE

GENERAL ELECTION

TO BE HELD

On Tuesday, the Third day of November, 1914,

Proposed by Initiative Petition No. 8, filed in the office of Secretary of State, July 3, 1914, commonly known as Abolishing Employment Offices Measure.

(Will appear on the official ballot in the following form)

PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

INITIATIVE MEASURE NO. 8, entitled "An act to prohibit the collection of remuneration or fees from workers for the securing of employment or furnishing information leading thereto, and providing a penalty for violation thereof."

FOR Initiative Measure No. 8.....

AGAINST Initiative Measure No. 8.....

Initiative Measure No. 8.

BALLOT TITLE

"An act to prohibit the collection of remuneration or fees from workers for the securing of employment or furnishing information leading thereto, and providing a penalty for violation thereof."

AN ACT to prohibit the collection of fees for the securing of employment or furnishing information leading thereto and fixing a penalty for violation thereof.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Washington:

SECTION 1. The welfare of the State of Washington depends on the welfare of its workers and demands that they be protected from conditions that re-

sult in their being liable to imposition and extortion.

The State of Washington therefore exercising herein its police and sovereign power declares that the system of collecting fees from the workers for furnishing them with employment, or with information leading thereto, results frequently in their becoming the victims of imposition and extortion and is therefore detrimental to the welfare of the state.

SEC. 2. It shall be unlawful for any employment agent, his representative, or any other person to demand or receive either directly or indirectly from any person seeking employment, or from any person on his or her behalf, any remuneration or fee whatsoever for furnishing him or her with employment or with information leading thereto.

SEC. 3. For each and every viola-

tion of any of the provisions of this Act the penalty shall be a fine of not more than one hundred dollars and imprisonment for not more than thirty days.

STATE OF WASHINGTON—ss.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State, January 30, 1914.

I. M. HOWELL, Secretary of State.

Argument Against Initiative Measure No. 8.

The advocates of this measure infer that there is now no regulation of private agencies. The agencies are now working under strict city ordinances, under direct supervision of labor commissioners, and each under \$1,000 bond. Licenses can be revoked or suspended at any time, and if there are unreliable agencies the fault must lie with the labor commissioners and the city councils.

There is no greater percentage of unworthy men in the employment agency business than in any other profession.

The private agency guarantees the position, and in cases of failure to supply it, the fee and fare paid to and from the place of employment is returned. The free agency guarantees nothing, and where there is any mistake and the applicant does not secure the position, he is out expenses which he cannot afford to lose.

This act would wipe out a business which has taken years to build up and should be considered from the standpoint of actual facts rather than by an appeal to prejudice.

What system will perform the work of the private agency? The public free agency will not. As proof of this we quote from the 13th Annual Report Labor Statistics, Illinois Free Offices, David Ross, Sec., pp. 7-8:

"It is supposed that the assumption of the state and at its expense, the work of the employment bureaus would eliminate the occupation of the private employment agent, and that people in need of employment would prefer to patronize a state office where the service is free rather than pay fees charged by the private employment agents. * * * In fact, there are more private employment agencies now than before the state entered the business. * * * The strictly commercial agencies transact fully 90 per cent. of the entire business. One single agency was the means of securing * * * over one-third more than the six free employment offices conducted by the state. * * * These comparative figures by no means prove that the effort of the state in this direction has failed, * * * but they do serve to direct attention to the essentially different methods of meeting the requirements of the labor market; and

the mistaken notions of those who supposed that a few offices maintained by the state, could under any circumstances be capable of handling a situation such as that developed in an industrial center * * * where each of a great number of privately conducted offices are catering to a particular business, fortified by years of experience and special equipment in its line. However, discouraging as it may be to the enthusiastic advocate of government functions, it is impossible for one agency, however benevolently disposed, to do the work of a hundred."

Second paragraph, page 2, Illinois report:

"The six state offices show there were 59,827 positions secured. The positions secured during the year were at a cost of 71 cents each to the state."

On the basis of Illinois' experience, the Washington taxpayers would have to pay more than \$250,000 to perform the same work now done by the private agencies. There are approximately 100 employment agencies in Washington.

For years the larger cities of the state and benevolent associations have conducted free employment agencies, yet the private agencies have flourished and grown with the other industries of Washington. This is proof positive that the free agency does not meet the demand of the laborers. Industrial history shows positive necessity for a means of bringing employer and employee together.

The unorganized laborers, representing 70 per cent of the labor world, would lose the only means of finding employment should this measure become a law. The free public agencies have become recruiting stations for the Unions and for that reason measures of this sort are always urged by so-called labor leaders.

SEATTLE EMPLOYMENT AGENTS ASSN.,

By H. A. PRATT, *Secretary*.
WOMANS DOMESTIC GUILD,
By MRS. LUCILE CROSBY, *Mgr.*

STATE OF WASHINGTON—ss.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State, July 23, 1914.

I. M. HOWELL, *Secretary of State*.