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Labor Day 2026

Labor Day became a federal holiday in 1894. Originally intended to honor workers, Labor Day has also become a "state of the union(s)" review. The public approval rating of unions is 71%, according to the Gallup organization, the highest ever. Yet, union membership—private and public sector—is now 10%, compared to 20.1% in 1983. Only 5.9% of private sector employees belong to unions.

In my view, the dichotomy between the positive public perception and private sector membership status can be explained rather simply—overall, people view unions as positive, but don't believe they need one where they work. Labor continues to double down on the political process, but with that—and some success—is labor viewed as a political party more than an advocate for worker prosperity, job security and safety? Politically, those who support the "tax the rich" policies may consider Labor an ally on that issue, but that does not connect to improve the work experience of employees at union-free employers.

In the 2024 Presidential Election, the Teamsters declined to endorse Kamala Harris or Donald Trump, recognizing that their membership supported both candidates. Until Labor overall recognizes that its political focus does not resonate at the union-free workplace, there's no reason to believe that future Labor Day holidays will find unions in a stronger position than today.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Richard Lehr at (205) 323-9260 or rlehr@lmvtlaw.com.

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