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UNIONS BALANCE POLITICAL DISCOURSE

**STUDY FINDS UNIONS GIVE
VOICE TO VOTERS POLITICIANS
CAN OTHERWISE EASILY IGNORE**



A new study finds that unions typically give voice to the politically disenfranchised. (Shutterstock)

1 It cited as an example that representatives
11L much more likely to act in the general
c good on Chinese tariffs in districts
where unions have a voice than in districts
where that's not the case.



Tariffs have proved to be a controversial issue across Illinois, with steelworkers at the U.S. Steel Granite City Works cheering them, while farmers are opposed. Gov. Rauner has backed President Trump's trade war.

Frank Manzo IV, policy director for the Illinois Economic Policy Institute, agreed with the findings.

"The authors present compelling evidence that the strength of the unions is linked to the responsiveness of Congress on issues that matter for working-class families," Manzo said, and it confirms similar U.S. studies.

"The research is clear that the labor movement increases political engagement among working-class families," he added. "Labor unions boost voter turnout, promote working-class Americans running for office, and provide poor and middle-class families a voice — both in the workplace and in the halls of Congress."

Manzo pointed out that "efforts to weaken unions result in pay cuts for workers and more inequality in the economy." He cited "right-to-work" laws like the one that was rejected in Missouri earlier this month, which have been found to make states less likely to raise the minimum wage for low-income workers and more likely to repeal local prevailing wage laws for skilled construction workers.