



## Co-author, "Unions in Alabama and Why You Should be Concerned," Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA)

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As the United Auto Worker's former head Bob King recently stated, "the UAW will not survive" if it does not organize plants in the South.[1] The reasons are obvious. In the last thirty years the number of Union manufacturing jobs has decreased by around 80% while the number of non-union manufacturing jobs has remained steady. During this time, unions have lost millions of dues paying members and, thus, have turned their sights to the South to replenish their ranks and their coffers. Alabama, in particular, has seen a concerted effort by a number of different unions (e.g., United Auto Workers, United Steel Workers, International Association of Machinists, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union) to organize companies, both large and small, in the state. The list of companies targeted is long, and growing, and there has been organizing activity in companies across the state, from Mobile to North Alabama.

This shift in union strategy has significant implications for Alabama's future economic growth. Simply put, Alabama must remain competitive and will not attract or keep manufacturing jobs simply because the South is seen as a "business friendly" economic environment. Other states in the southeast understand the importance of keeping their employers competitive, and so must we.

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