

KEATING-OWEN CHILD LABOR ACT

According to the 1890 U.S. census, more than one million children age 10-15 were employed, and the number grew to two million by 1910. Children as young as age 5 or 6 worked as many as 18-20 hours per day. The Keating-Owen Child Labor Act of 1916 was passed by Congress and signed into law by the president to address the issue of child labor. However, the Supreme Court declared the act to be unconstitutional.

Transcript of Keating-Owen Child Labor Act of 1916

[...] AN ACT To prevent interstate commerce in the products of child labor, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That no producer, manufacturer, or dealer shall ship or deliver for shipment in interstate or foreign commerce, any article or commodity the product of any mine or quarry situated in the United States, in which within thirty days prior to the time of the removal of such product therefrom children under the age of sixteen years have been employed or permitted to work, or any article or commodity the product of any mill, cannery, workshop, factory, or manufacturing establishment, situated in the United States, in which within thirty days prior to the removal of such product therefrom children under the age of fourteen years have been employed or permitted to work, or children between the ages of fourteen years and sixteen years have been employed or permitted to work more than eight hours in any day, or more than six days in any week, or after the hour of seven o'clock postmeridian, or before the hour of six o'clock antemeridian: *Provided,* That a prosecution and conviction of a defendant for the shipment or delivery for shipment of any article or commodity under the conditions herein prohibited shall be a bar to any further prosecution against the same defendant for shipments or deliveries for shipment of any such article or commodity before the beginning of said prosecution.

SEC. 2. That the Attorney General, the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Labor shall constitute a board to make and publish from time to time uniform rules and regulations for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 3. That for the purpose of securing proper enforcement of this Act, the Secretary of Labor, or any person duly authorized by him, shall have authority to enter and inspect at any time mines, quarries, mills, canneries, workshops, factories, manufacturing establishments, and other places in which goods are produced or held for interstate commerce; and the Secretary of Labor shall have authority to employ such assistance for the purposes of this Act as may from time to time be authorized by appropriation or other law...

SEC. 7. That this Act shall take effect from and after one year from the date of its passage.

Approved, September 1, 1916.

Sources

Davis, K. (2003). *Documenting "The other half": The social reform photography of Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine*. University of Virginia. http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA01/Davis/photography/reform/progressive_era.html

Our Documents. (n.d.). *Transcript of Keating-Owens Child Labor Act of 1916*.
https://www.ourdocuments.gov/print_friendly.php?flash=false&page=transcript&doc=59&title=Transcript+of+Keating-Owens+Child+Labor+Act+of+1916+%281916%29