

Argentinean Congress Approves Anti-Layoff Bill; President to Veto



Buenos Aires, May 21 (RHC)-- The lower house of the Argentinean Congress has approved a bill aimed at freezing the dismissal of workers in the country, but the government of President Mauricio Macri has pledged to veto the bill.

The legislation was approved by a vote of 147 to three, with 88 abstentions after a six hour debate. A similar bill was approved by the Senate in April. The legislation was supported by the leftist Front for Victory bloc in Congress, which is in opposition to the right-wing president.

"Today we are here to try to stop what's going on with the daily deliveries of dismissal notices. Without workers there are no companies, without companies there is no market and without a market there is no consumption," said Oscar Romero, head of the leftist bloc of lawmakers.

The bill declares a labor emergency for six months, during which all layoffs would be forbidden. Public and private institutions would have to pay a double severance for unjustified dismissals.

More than 154,000 workers have been fired or suspended since President Mauricio Macri took office in December 2015, according to a report by Argentina's Center of Political Economy.

On Friday, Macri said he'd veto the legislation and that the veto would be official on Monday, May 23rd, when the Official Gazette is published.

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