



Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

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February 27, 2007

Support Workers' Right to Organize Vote for H.R. 800, the Employee Free Choice Act

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights coalition, with nearly 200 member organizations, we urge you to support the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) (H.R. 800). The bill will reform the current system for forming unions to give all working people the freedom – as a basic civil right – to make their own choice about whether to form a union and bargain for better wages and benefits. Until workers can exercise a free choice, they will continue to lose power in our country, living standards will continue to suffer, and our middle class will continue to decline.

The Employee Free Choice Act levels the playing field for employees by: (1) providing certification of a union when a majority of workers sign cards designating the union as their bargaining representative (“majority sign-up” or “card check”); (2) strengthening penalties for companies that illegally coerce or intimidate employees in an effort to prevent them from forming a union; and (3) bringing in a neutral third-party to settle a contract when a company and a newly certified union cannot agree on a contract after three months.

LCCR believes that forming a union is a civil right; yet workers who try to do so are routinely fired, intimidated, harassed, and targeted for discrimination. A recent analysis of National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) data shows that one in five active union supporters is illegally fired for union activity during union organizing campaigns. Surveys show that workers are fired for union activity in 25 percent of NLRB election campaigns; in 78 percent of NLRB campaigns, employers require supervisors to deliver anti-union messages to the workers whose jobs and pay they control; in 92 percent of NLRB campaigns, employers force workers to attend closed-door anti-union meetings; in 51 percent of NLRB campaigns, employers threaten to close the workplace if employees vote for union representation; in 78 percent of NLRB campaigns, employers hire union-busting consultants to prevent their employees from forming a union; and in 14 percent of campaigns, employers use electronic spying, video and still cameras, long distance microphones, company guards, and even local police to spy on workers.

LCCR supports H.R. 800 because we believe that the best opportunity for working people to get ahead economically is to bargain with their employer for better wages,

“Equality In a Free, Plural, Democratic Society”



benefits, and working conditions. Workers who belong to unions earn 30 percent more than non-union workers; are 63 percent more likely to have employer-provided health care; and are four times more likely to have guaranteed pensions. The EFCA will eliminate bitter, divisive, and often-lengthy anti-union campaigns, as well as one-sided rules that tilt the playing field in favor of employers.

We urge you to support the interest of workers by voting in favor of H.R. 800. Should you require further information or have any questions, please contact Nancy Zirkin at 202/263-2880, regarding this or any issue.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
President and CEO

Nancy Zirkin
Vice President