

January 21, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
VIA FAX: 202-224-7327

Dear Senator Reid:

The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce, northern Nevada's largest business organization with nearly 1,500 members, urges you to oppose the deceptively-named Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). If enacted, this radical measure would trample the rights of our employees and would have devastating impacts on an economy that is already reeling.

Secret ballots are the cornerstone of the democratic process. Union certification elections have employed the secret ballot for 70 years. EFCA would deprive employees of this fundamental right and defy decades of labor law precedent. By replacing the secret ballot with a public card check process, employees could be intimidated and coerced by union organizers to sign a card. Once a majority of employees sign a card, the union would automatically be certified, without a secret-ballot vote, and the employer would be required to immediately begin deducting union dues from employees' paychecks.

EFCA also would impose mandatory arbitration on any employer that did not reach a collective bargaining agreement with the union within 120 days. Federal law has never required either side in a labor dispute to accept the terms of a contract. In our capitalist system, there has always been freedom of contract. While each side is required to negotiate in good faith, neither side can have a labor contract forced upon them. EFCA would upend this balance by allowing unions to negotiate in bad faith and stall long enough that a federal mediator is assigned to the case and then may impose whatever contract that he/she sees fit.

This mandatory arbitration would effectively mean that a government agent with no knowledge of a company, its industry or market conditions, could determine wages, benefits and work rules for that employer. Federal labor law never intended the government to have the role of imposing binding contracts on business.

Public opinion polls show strong support for maintaining the right to a secret-ballot election for union certification. There is no public mandate for this radical bill.



RENO-SPARKS
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

There is also no need for this legislation. Union certification elections are administered fairly, with both the employer and union having the opportunity to present their case to employees before a secret-ballot election is conducted.

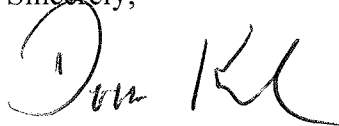
With union representation now constituting less than 10 percent of the nation's private-sector workforce, it is clear that union bosses are trying to accomplish by legislative fiat what they have not been able to achieve in the fair marketplace.

Finally, EFCA would impose new fines on employer misconduct, but not on union misconduct. Both sides should be allowed to exercise their free speech rights with equal treatment under the law. EFCA violates these basic principles.

None of these provisions will result in economic growth or putting Nevadans back to work. The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce urges you to reject this dangerous bill and continue to allow democracy in the workplace.

Thank you for your service to our state and our nation. Please do not hesitate to contact me on this or any other matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DK", written in a cursive style.

Douglas R. Kurkul
CEO

January 21, 2009

The Honorable John Ensign
119 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
VIA FAX: 202-228-2193

Dear Senator Ensign:

The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce, northern Nevada's largest business organization with nearly 1,500 members, urges you to oppose the deceptively-named Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). If enacted, this radical measure would trample the rights of our employees and would have devastating impacts on an economy that is already reeling.

Secret ballots are the cornerstone of the democratic process. Union certification elections have employed the secret ballot for 70 years. EFCA would deprive employees of this fundamental right and defy decades of labor law precedent. By replacing the secret ballot with a public card check process, employees could be intimidated and coerced by union organizers to sign a card. Once a majority of employees sign a card, the union would automatically be certified, without a secret-ballot vote, and the employer would be required to immediately begin deducting union dues from employees' paychecks.

EFCA also would impose mandatory arbitration on any employer that did not reach a collective bargaining agreement with the union within 120 days. Federal law has never required either side in a labor dispute to accept the terms of a contract. In our capitalist system, there has always been freedom of contract. While each side is required to negotiate in good faith, neither side can have a labor contract forced upon them. EFCA would upend this balance by allowing unions to negotiate in bad faith and stall long enough that a federal mediator is assigned to the case and then may impose whatever contract that he/she sees fit.

This mandatory arbitration would effectively mean that a government agent with no knowledge of a company, its industry or market conditions, could determine wages, benefits and work rules for that employer. Federal labor law never intended the government to have the role of imposing binding contracts on business.

Public opinion polls show strong support for maintaining the right to a secret-ballot election for union certification. There is no public mandate for this radical bill.



RENO-SPARKS
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

There is also no need for this legislation. Union certification elections are administered fairly, with both the employer and union having the opportunity to present their case to employees before a secret-ballot election is conducted.

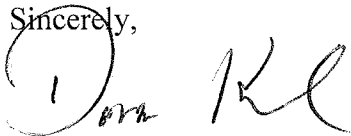
With union representation now constituting less than 10 percent of the nation's private-sector workforce, it is clear that union bosses are trying to accomplish by legislative fiat what they have not been able to achieve in the fair marketplace.

Finally, EFCA would impose new fines on employer misconduct, but not on union misconduct. Both sides should be allowed to exercise their free speech rights with equal treatment under the law. EFCA violates these basic principles.

None of these provisions will result in economic growth or putting Nevadans back to work. The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce urges you to reject this dangerous bill and continue to allow democracy in the workplace.

Thank you for your service to our state and our nation. Please do not hesitate to contact me on this or any other matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Kurkul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "K".

Douglas R. Kurkul
CEO

January 21, 2009

The Honorable Dean Heller
125 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
VIA FAX: 202-225-5679

Dear Congressman Heller:

The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce, northern Nevada's largest business organization with nearly 1,500 members, urges you to oppose the deceptively-named Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). If enacted, this radical measure would trample the rights of our employees and would have devastating impacts on an economy that is already reeling.

Secret ballots are the cornerstone of the democratic process. Union certification elections have employed the secret ballot for 70 years. EFCA would deprive employees of this fundamental right and defy decades of labor law precedent. By replacing the secret ballot with a public card check process, employees could be intimidated and coerced by union organizers to sign a card. Once a majority of employees sign a card, the union would automatically be certified, without a secret-ballot vote, and the employer would be required to immediately begin deducting union dues from employees' paychecks.

EFCA also would impose mandatory arbitration on any employer that did not reach a collective bargaining agreement with the union within 120 days. Federal law has never required either side in a labor dispute to accept the terms of a contract. In our capitalist system, there has always been freedom of contract. While each side is required to negotiate in good faith, neither side can have a labor contract forced upon them. EFCA would upend this balance by allowing unions to negotiate in bad faith and stall long enough that a federal mediator is assigned to the case and then may impose whatever contract that he/she sees fit.

This mandatory arbitration would effectively mean that a government agent with no knowledge of a company, its industry or market conditions, could determine wages, benefits and work rules for that employer. Federal labor law never intended the government to have the role of imposing binding contracts on business.

Public opinion polls show strong support for maintaining the right to a secret-ballot election for union certification. There is no public mandate for this radical bill.



RENO-SPARKS
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

There is also no need for this legislation. Union certification elections are administered fairly, with both the employer and union having the opportunity to present their case to employees before a secret-ballot election is conducted.

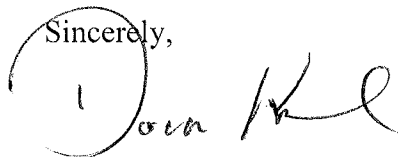
With union representation now constituting less than 10 percent of the nation's private-sector workforce, it is clear that union bosses are trying to accomplish by legislative fiat what they have not been able to achieve in the fair marketplace.

Finally, EFCA would impose new fines on employer misconduct, but not on union misconduct. Both sides should be allowed to exercise their free speech rights with equal treatment under the law. EFCA violates these basic principles.

None of these provisions will result in economic growth or putting Nevadans back to work. The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce urges you to reject this dangerous bill and continue to allow democracy in the workplace.

Thank you for your service to our state and our nation. Please do not hesitate to contact me on this or any other matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas R. Kurkul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular initial "D" on the left.

Douglas R. Kurkul
CEO