

April 27, 2009

Dear Senator,

As leading religious organizations and denominations representing people of faith throughout the country, we are committed to promoting and uplifting the dignity of working people and particularly low-wage workers. We therefore urge you to support the Employee Free Choice Act, legislation that will help to ensure the right of all workers to form unions if they so choose, in order to negotiate decent wages, provide for their families, secure fair benefits and decent working conditions, and have a voice in the workplace.

Whenever people stand together in mutual commitment and for the common purpose of promoting and protecting their most essential dignity – a dignity that issues directly from God – then we as people of faith and good conscience have a moral responsibility to stand with them. We have a responsibility to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. We make this appeal to the conscience of every Member of Congress.

The Employee Free Choice Act presents us with an opportunity to pass legislation that is at once economically and morally efficacious for the people of our nation and our economy. Even as unions serve as vehicles by which poor workers lift themselves from poverty and into the middle class, the increased purchasing power of union members provides an effective and consistent stimulus for the general economy. When workers form unions, they have an opportunity to empower themselves and provide security for their families. They have a meaningful voice on the job and participate in a collaborative effort with their employers to fashion mutually beneficial working conditions. At its best, a union is a community of women and men devoted to one another's wellbeing and dignity, working together to secure their rights as employees, as human beings, and as children of God.

The right of workers to freely associate and form unions without fear of intimidation or retaliation is a cornerstone principle of our civil society and our modern economy. It is a principle that promotes and sustains the health of our middle class, ensures quality of life for all working people, and empowers even those in low-wage jobs to achieve dignity and a decent standard of living. Presently, however, this right is fundamentally threatened. Workers who attempt to form unions are too often met with unrelenting opposition from their employers and have little or no effective legal recourse by which to protect their democratic right to organize. The Employee Free Choice Act will provide sound and vitally necessary reforms of current labor law which does not effectively protect workers' rights.

As people of faith, we urge you to stand with us in our support of hardworking families. We urge you to support the Employee Free Choice Act.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Baptists

American Baptist Churches USA

American Friends Service Committee

American Islamic Congress

Apostolic Catholic Church

Catholic Labor Network
Catholic Scholars for Worker Justice
Catholics United
Center of Concern
Church of the Brethren
Church Women United
Council on American-Islamic Relations
Disciples Justice Action Network (Disciples of Christ)
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Interfaith Worker Justice
Irish Apostolate USA
Jewish Labor Committee
Lutheran Volunteer Corps
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Muslim American Society Freedom (MAS Freedom)
Muslim Public Affairs Council
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
The Network of Spiritual Progressives
Pax Christi USA: National Catholic Peace Movement
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office
Progressive Jewish Alliance
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
Sikh Council on Religion and Education
Sojourners
Southern Christian Leadership Conference
Tikkun
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
Uri L'Tzedek (The Orthodox Jewish Social Justice Movement)
We Are Family