

**INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 800, THE EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT --  
(Extensions of Remarks - February 05, 2007)**

[Page: E260]

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SPEECH OF  
**HON. GEORGE MILLER**  
OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2007

- Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, today, I am pleased to be joining 230 of my colleagues in introducing H.R. 800, the Employee Free Choice Act. The Employee Free Choice Act is a bipartisan bill designed to provide workers with a fair opportunity to bargain with employers for better wages, benefits and working conditions.
- In recent years, despite a growing economy, the middle class has been squeezed. Corporate profits and executive compensation have skyrocketed, but the middle class has seen their wages stagnate, while the costs for basic needs like healthcare, education, food, energy and housing continue to increase. Globalization and misguided government policies have contributed to a growing income disparity and less economic security for middle class families.
- One way to help the middle class is to provide them with a fair opportunity to organize and join unions, so they can have a say in what goes on in the workplace. Workers who belong to unions earn 30 percent more than nonunion workers. In addition, they are 62 percent more likely to have employer-provided health coverage and four times more likely to have pensions.
- The current process for forming unions is badly broken and so skewed in favor of those who oppose unions, that workers must literally risk their jobs in order form a union. Although it is illegal, one quarter of employers facing an organizing drive have been found to fire at least one worker who supports a union. In fact, employees who are active union supporters have a one-in-five chance of being fired for legal union activities. Sadly, many employers resort to spying, threats, intimidation, harassment and other illegal activity in their campaigns to oppose unions. The penalty for illegal activity, including firing workers for engaging in protected activity, is so weak that it does little to deter law breakers.
- Even when employers don't break the law, the process itself stacks the deck against union supporters. The employer has all the power; they control the information workers can receive, can force workers to attend anti-union

meetings during work hours, can force workers to meet with supervisors who deliver anti-union messages, and can even imply that the business will close if the union wins. Union supporters' access to employees, on the other hand, is heavily restricted.

- The Employee Free Choice Act would add some fairness to the system by: (1) allowing a majority of employees the opportunity to select to be represented by a union by expressing their decision through the signing of authorization cards; (2) provide for mediation and arbitration when workers and employers cannot agree on a first contract; and (3) increase penalties against employers who threaten, intimidate or fire workers for engaging in protected activity.
- I urge all my colleagues to join in this effort to provide working people with a real opportunity to bargain for better wages and benefits.

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