

University Counsel Worry About NLRB Ruling Allowing Teaching Assistants to Unionize

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The article, "University Counsel Worry About NLRB Ruling Allowing Teaching Assistants to Unionize," featured in *Corporate Counsel*, highlighted the concerns of counsel, who represent private colleges and universities, regarding the impact of a landmark ruling Tuesday from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) allowing student teaching assistants at private universities to unionize.

Joe Ambash, who represented Brown University in a 2004 case and authored a brief on behalf of Ivy League schools supporting Columbia's position, said "the impact of the decision is sweeping because the NLRB basically is saying that our private institutions of higher education, which we all understand to be 'educational institutions' have suddenly been transformed into workplaces."

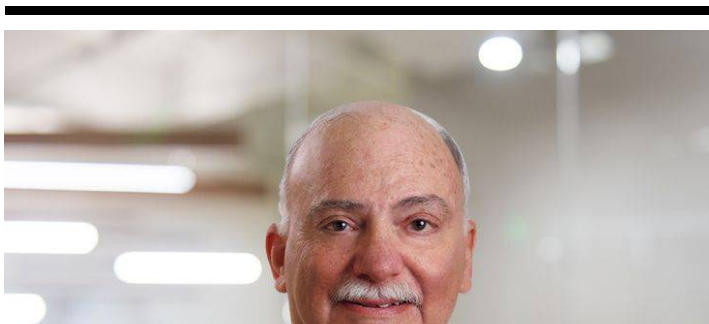
Joe said that bringing an employer and employee relationship into the academy would force universities into a stance where they may have to bargain, sometimes at great expense over a long period of time, over such issues as who can teach what and when they can teach it.

Columbia has expressed disappointment in the NLRB's decision, but did not respond to a request for comment on whether it plans to appeal it. The university cannot launch an appeal until a union election has been held successfully, Joe said.

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