

Employee Free Choice Act Is Anything But Free

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On Tuesday the president of the Georgia AFL-CIO wrote that the Employee Free Choice Act, which is at the forefront of the Democratic agenda this election year, would "restore America's workers' freedom to choose to come together to bargain for a better life" ("Put unionizing power back in workers' hands," @issue). Nothing could be further from the truth. The centerpiece of the act is the elimination of government-run secret-ballot union elections. And by stripping employees of the fundamental right to cast a private vote for or against union representation, the Employee Free Choice Act undermines the very principles of a free and democratic society, and only robs employees of their vital "freedom to choose."

With the EFCA, the employee's process of selecting a union begins and ends when the employee signs an authorization card. There is no election. The dangers are obvious. This law would leave employees vulnerable to threats and intimidation, and produce extraordinarily unreliable results. Even the U.S. Supreme Court has acknowledged that "the unreliability of [authorization] cards is inherent . . . in the absence of secrecy and the natural inclination of most people to avoid stands which appear to be non-conformist and antagonistic to friends and fellow employees."

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Related People



Matthew R. Simpson

Partner

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404.240.4221
Email