

## What Upcoming Legislation is Causing Employers Stress?

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The **Arbitration Fairness Act** will void all pre-dispute agreements to arbitrate claims arising out of the employment relationship. And this will adversely affect employers that require employees to sign an arbitration agreement when they are hired. Many employers prefer arbitration because it's generally faster and less expensive than litigation.

While the employer and employee remain free under the act to agree to arbitration after a dispute arises, this is far less likely to occur. The Arbitration Fairness Act will increase litigation as arbitration falls by the wayside. The act may also make it more likely that the employee will prevail.

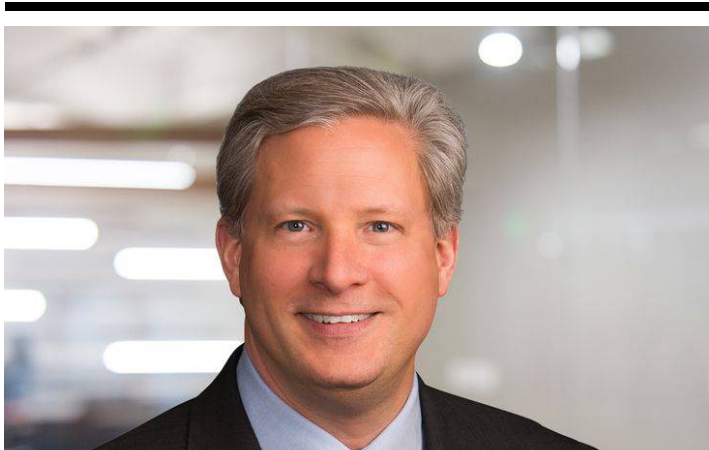
The **Patriot Employer Act** would allow an employer to be designated a "Patriot" employer and receive a tax break if it agrees to maintain headquarters in the United States, pay 60 percent of employee healthcare premiums, provide a qualifying pension plan for employees, compensate each employee at a certain wage level, avoid increased outsourcing of work overseas and (perhaps most significantly) maintain a neutral position with respect to a union campaign to organize its work force. The amount of the tax break? One percent.

A designated Patriot employer may be tempted to advertise its status as a way to attract customers, but doing so will also identify the employer as an easy target for union organizers.

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