

## **Collective bargaining is one of the best ways to improve the economy**

**By Letters**

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Recently, the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB) issued a press release outlining their opposition to the Employee Free Choice Act. I would like to give a more realistic view of this legislation.

The Employee Free Choice Act would allow employees to exercise their constitutional right to Freedom of Association. If a majority of employees sign a card stating they would like to form a union so they can discuss their working conditions the enactment of the Employee Free Choice Act would protect that right.

In their press release the NFIB stated the current election process ensures employees aren't subject to intimidation, harassment, or other coercion. That would come as a surprise to the fifty three percent of non-union workers that would join a Union if given the chance. Why don't they? The non-profit Human Rights Watch states "legal obstacles tilt the playing field so steeply against Freedom of Association that the United States is in violation of international human rights standards for workers". This is a fancy way of saying it takes a hero willing to put their job, reputation, and pride on the line to form a Union under current law. Every year twenty thousand workers are illegally fired, demoted, laid off, or suspended as a result of their union activity. Fortunately, there are heroes willing to demand a voice at work. From the hard working members of the building trades unions to the many auto workers that reside in this area their actions have improved the lives of many citizens and local businesses. As a result of their ability to bargain better pay and working conditions the businesses of this area have benefited from increased sales and economic activity, the NFIB would be well advised to consider the revenue side of their members businesses and not just the cost before issuing statements about their priorities.

The ability of workers to collectively bargain is one of the primary differences between first world and third world nations. To improve our economy, collective bargaining should be encouraged and the Employee Free Choice Act does just that.

**Darin Gilley**

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