

# Labor's Language: Glossary of Union Terms

Labor agreements, publications, and even officials often use terms that are almost exclusive to the labor arena. To help stewards feel more comfortable operating in this arena, "Labor's Language: A glossary of Labor's Terms" is a regular Steward Edition feature.

**Trustee:** An elected union official whose duty is to monitor the finances of a local union, joint council, conference, or international union. Also, an official appointed by the Independent Review Board or General President of the International Union to manage a local union in trusteeship.

**Trusteeship:** The assumption of control over a local union by an international union, or by the federal government under the RICO Act. Provided

for by the Constitutions of most international unions, trusteeships suspend the normal governmental process of a local union and take over management of the local's assets and the administration of its internal affairs. The Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959 established controls over the establishment and administration of trusteeships.

**Unfair Labor Practices:** Those employer or union activities classified as "unfair" by federal or state labor relations acts. Under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), employer unfair labor practices include employer threats against protected, collective activity, employer domination of unions, discrimination against employees for collective activity, and employer failure to bargain in good faith with

union representatives. Union unfair labor practices include failure to represent all members of the bargaining unit, failure to bargain in good faith, and conducting secondary boycotts.

**Unfair List:** Also referred to as a 'Do Not Patronize List.' The basis for placement of an employer on an Unfair List is anti-labor conduct including, but not limited to, the following: failure to sign a labor agreement; commission of an unfair labor practice; violations of state or federal laws or rules; utilization of non-union labor; utilization or promotion of non-union goods or services; anti-union practices; or failure to provide workers with fair and equitable wages and benefits, decent hours and working conditions.



876 Horace Brown Drive  
Madison Heights, MI 48071

Roger Robinson  
President

Rick Blocker  
Secretary/Treasurer

George Misko  
Recorder

1-800-321-6406  
www.ufcw876.org

# UFCW 876 STEWARD EDITION

United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 876 • Vol. 5 No. 3 • March 2009

## A Call to Action from Your Union

### Passage of Employee Free Choice Critical to Workers, Nation

Local 876 is calling on all stewards to take an active role in securing passage of the the most important piece of labor reform in a generation -- the Employee Free Choice Act.

"Prior to the collapse of the nation's economy, I would have said the future of the labor movement depends on passage of the Employee Free Choice Act," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president said. "Now, with our economy in shambles, I believe the future of our nation depends on the passage of this critical legislation."

It is predicted passage of Employee Free Choice will increase union membership, strengthen union contracts, and will put workers on the path to economic prosperity needed to rebuild the nation's economy, by allowing workers to freely choose union representation in a simple and fair process, free from employer intimidation and harassment.

"President Obama said he will sign the legislation, but getting Employee Free Choice on his desk won't be an easy task," Robinson said. "Big business

is spending over \$50 million dollars on a massive media campaign of lies, distortions, and misinformation aimed to turn public opinion against the legislation. That is in addition to the millions of dollars they have spent lobbying congress to vote against Employee Free Choice. Labor is fighting back, and we need each and every member to join us in this fight for the future of labor and our country."

See the inside pages for ways you can join the fight for passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.

## Spring Celebration

Featuring...

- Photos with the Easter Bunny
- Kids' Activities and Crafts ● Hot Dogs, Beverages & Treats
- Moon Bounce ● Raffles

\$2 Per Person\* -- Children under 2 Free  
Space is Limited

Purchase Tickets in Advance from your Union Representative  
or the Local 876 Office at 1-800-321-6406.

Tuesday  
March 31  
4 p.m.  
to  
8 p.m.  
UFCW  
Local 876  
Union Hall

\* Monies will be Donated to  
Michigan Food Banks.

Use the flyers included in this mailing to spread the word about UFCW Michigan's Spring Celebration. For more information, and/or flyers, call the union office.

# Take Action for Employee Free Choice

From talking to members about the Employee Free Choice Act, to calling a legislator urging his or her support for the Act, stewards can take a variety of action to secure passage of this critical legislation.

The following is a list of activities in which stewards can participate to garner support for passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.

✓ **Talk About Employee Free Choice:** Opponents of Employee Free Choice have spent millions on aggressive media campaigns aimed at convincing Americans Employee Free Choice is a bad idea. Many employers, have also waged their own internal anti-Employee Free Choice campaigns.

To counteract these efforts, stewards can set the record straight, talking to their coworkers, family and friends about the need for Employee Free Choice and debunk the myths being spread regarding the act.

Stewards can use the details on this page in their conversations about Employee Free Choice. For more information on the act, go to Local 876's website at [www.ufcw876.org](http://www.ufcw876.org).

✓ **Write a Letter to the Editor:** Sending a letter to the editor of your local paper is a great way to reach a large audience with your message of support for Employee Free Choice, and correct any misinformation that may have been published in their paper regarding the Act.

Sample letters to the editor can be found on-line from the UFCW at [http://www.ufcw.org/issues/right\\_to\\_organize/tools/index.cfm](http://www.ufcw.org/issues/right_to_organize/tools/index.cfm), or by calling the Local 876 office.

✓ **Contact Congress:** Members of Congress need to hear their constituents want them to vote in favor of Employee Free Choice. Even elected officials who support Free Choice need to know their position has wide support, as they will be pressured to change their vote. Emails, letters, and telephone calls are all effective ways to communicate messages of support to Congress. Elected officials keep careful track of how many "for" and "against" messages their office receives on issues coming before them. Opponents of Employee Free Choice will be relentless in their efforts to convince congress to vote against the legislation, making it vital that supporters of the bill are regularly in contact with the legislators and even more persuasive in their communications with members of congress.

You can identify your legislators and receive a listing of their contact information, by going to [http://www.ufcw.org/issues/find\\_your\\_political\\_reps](http://www.ufcw.org/issues/find_your_political_reps) or calling the Local 876 Political Director at 1-800-321-6406 ext. 8644.

✓ **Become a UFCW Employee Free Choice Activist:** The UFCW International Union is building an activist network composed of members from across the country who are interested in doing all they can to secure passage of Employee Free Choice. To sign-up as an activist go to [http://ufcwaction.org/campaign/efca\\_Activist](http://ufcwaction.org/campaign/efca_Activist).

# Setting the Record Straight: Employee Free Choice Fact vs. Fiction

Special interest groups, fueled by big business, have launched a massive public relations campaign to derail reform of the nation's broken labor law system by cranking out misleading propaganda. Here are the facts to refute the opposition's fiction about the Employee Free Choice Act.

**Fiction:** The "legislation would end the rights of employees to secret ballot elections." – *Center for Union Facts*

**Fact:** The Employee Free Choice Act does not abolish elections.

Under the proposed legislation, workers get to choose the union formation process—elections or majority sign-up. What the Employee Free Choice Act does prevent is an employer manipulating the flawed system to influence an election outcome.

When faced with organizing campaigns: 25 percent of employers illegally fire pro-union workers; 51 percent of employers illegally threaten to close

down worksites if the union prevails; and, 34 percent of employers coerce workers into opposing the union with bribes and favoritism.

**Fiction:** NLRB elections are "the only way to guarantee worker protection from coercion and intimidation." – *Coalition for a Democratic Workplace*

**Fact:** Workers are more susceptible to coercion in NLRB elections than majority sign-up.

Workers in NLRB elections are twice as likely (46 percent vs. 23 percent) as those in majority sign-up campaigns, to report management coerced them to

oppose the union. Further, less than one in 20 workers (4.6 percent) who signed a card with a union organizer said the presence of the organizer did not make them feel pressured to sign the card.

**Fiction:** "Legal recognition of a union has traditionally been achieved through secret ballot elections...just like how a person votes for a senator or congressman." – *Center for Union Facts*

**Fact:** Current union elections involving secret ballots bear no resemblance

to political elections.

In union elections, workers' free speech rights are squelched, employers practice various forms of economic coercion, and labor law allows employers to indefinitely delay recognition through drawn-out appeals.

The following chart was designed by a University of Oregon political scientist illustrating the conclusion of his study which found the secret ballot election process has little in common standards used to elect U.S. public officials.

## Union Secret Ballot Elections Not the Same as U.S. Elections

Opponents of Employee Free Choice are trying to convince the public the current process used to elect union representation is the same one used to elected U.S. public officials, and therefore should not be changed. The chart below shows how the two processes have nothing in common beyond the use of secret ballots.

Democratic Election Standard	U.S. Public Office Elections	Union Secret Ballot Elections
Equal Access to the Media & Voters	YES	NO
Freedom of Speech	YES	NO
Voters Free of Coercion	YES	NO
Campaign Finance Regulation	YES	NO
Timely Implementation of the Vote	YES	NO
Secret Ballot	YES	YES

## Free Workshop to Help Ease Members' Concerns Over the Current Financial Crisis

The Local 876 Retirement Services Center is holding a free two-session workshop for members concerned about how the current financial crisis is impacting their retirement plans.

Workshop topics include:

- 401(k) and IRA review
- Pension review and filing help
- Building a retirement income
- Ask the Experts Q&A Session

**Wednesday, March 11 & 18**  
**6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**  
**Local 876 Union Hall**

For more information, or to sign up for the workshop, members should call the Retirement Services Center at 1-800-321-6406 ext. 8645. Individual appointments can be made for members who cannot attend the workshop.

## Employee Free Choice Act Legislative Summary

The Employee Free Choice Act would bring fairness to the system used by workers to choose union representation by requiring the following components.

**1. Union Certification Determined on the Basis of Signed Authorization Cards.** The bill requires certification of a union as the workers' bargaining representative if a majority of employees in the unit signed authorization cards designating the union as their bargaining representative.

**2. First Contract Mediation and Arbitration.** Under the bill, if an employer and a union engaged in bargaining for their first contract are unable to reach agreement within 90 days, either party may request mediation. If mediation is unable to bring the parties to agreement after 30 days of mediation, the dispute will be referred to binding arbitration.

**3. Stronger Penalties for Company Violations While Employees Organizing or Bargaining a First Contract.** The bill requires federal court injunctions, triple back pay and civil fines of up to \$20,000 per violation, for violations of the National Labor Relations Act committed by employers against employees during any time when employees are attempting to organize a union or negotiate a first contract with the employer.