



AFL-CIO Union Movement Embarks on Massive Drive for Employee Free Choice

by [James Parks](#), Mar 5, 2008

The union movement is launching an unprecedented effort to pass the **Employee Free Choice Act**. Meeting in San Diego, the AFL-CIO Executive Council yesterday committed to mobilize at least 1 million working people to pass the legislation.

The **statement** "The Employee Free Choice Act: Million-Member Mobilization Our Bargaining Rights: Worth Working For, Our Bargaining Rights: Worth Voting For" lays out the urgent need to pass the bill.

America's workers must regain their bargaining power to maintain and expand the middle class. The American middle class was created by the ability of workers to form unions and bargain collectively after the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935. More and more Americans are beginning to understand that collective bargaining can promote broadly shared economic growth and prosperity, higher wages, better jobs, better and more extensive health care coverage, retirement security and respect for workers on the job.

If passed, the federal legislation would level the playing field for workers seeking to form unions. Employers also would face stiff penalties for illegal behavior, such as being liable for fines of up to \$20,000 per charge for violating labor laws.

(You can show your support for the Employee Free Choice Act by clicking [here](#) to sign our online card.)

To enact the Employee Free Choice Act in the next Congress, the unions of the AFL-CIO are committing to getting at least 10 percent of members to sign up in support of workers' rights. The unions are committed to collecting 1 million pledges, many with photos and other indications of personal support.

They also resolve to expand the existing majorities in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate in support of the Employee Free Choice Act and to elect a president who supports signing the Employee Free Choice Act into law and is committed to lead the movement for workers' freedom to form unions.

They also agreed to integrate the movement for the Employee Free Choice Act with other ongoing efforts to turn around America—to promote health care reform, good jobs and an economy that works for all.

Click [here](#) to read “The Employee Free Choice Act: Million-Member Mobilization Our Bargaining Rights: Worth Working For, Our Bargaining Rights: Worth Voting For.”

Both Democratic candidates for president, **Hillary Rodham Clinton** and **Barack Obama**, support the Employee Free Choice Act, but the presumptive Republican nominee, **John McCain**, opposes the bill. So far, some 1,672 state and local elected officials across the country, **including 18 governors** and state legislatures, have signed up in support of the legislation either by backing a resolution or by signing on to a letter. Some 106 local county boards or city councils have passed resolutions urging their representatives to vote for employee choice.

Many policymakers and economists, including **Dean Baker** and former Labor Secretary **Robert Reich**, say passing the Employee Free Choice Act would be good for the economy.