

Alaska Trucking Association, Inc.

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The authoritative voice of the trucking industry in Alaska

HR 5 Testimony before
House Labor and Commerce Committee
Aves D. Thompson, Executive Director
February 11, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Aves Thompson, Executive Director of the Alaska Trucking Association. I am here today to testify in support of HR 5 opposing the Employee Free Choice Act commonly referred to as the Card Check bill.

Card Check or the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) is one of the most contentious issues to appear in the labor/management arena for many years.

The secret ballot is one of the most treasured and envied rights that Americans possess. The EFCA will take away the right of employees to use the secret ballot to make the decision whether to organize in the workplace. While many of our member companies work with collective bargaining units in their place of business, many do not. This is not a referendum on whether there should be collective bargaining units but the method by which votes are taken to make that decision. We believe that the current mechanisms operate fairly giving each employee the right to make their decision in private without any undue influence from either the organizers or the employers.

Secondly, this bill introduces the federal government into the contract negotiation process. This bill provides that if the parties cannot come to agreement within a specified time period, a government employee presides over binding arbitration and that government employee can impose his/her decision on the employer and the bargaining unit for a period of up to two years. It is impossible to believe that a government arbitrator can have sufficient knowledge of the industry and/or the specific issues in that specific workplace to make an educated decision. Additionally, there is nothing either party can do to change the arbitrator's decision for the two year period.

There are a number of other issues, however, we feel that these two issues alone are sufficient to warrant a yes vote on this resolution.

On behalf of our nearly two hundred member companies, we urge you to vote yes on HR 5.



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January, 2009