



The Voice of Small Business®

ALASKA

March 17, 2009

The Honorable Mike Kelly  
Alaska House of Representatives  
State Capitol Building  
Juneau Alaska 99801-1182

RE: House Bill 185

Dear Representative Kelly

On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business/Alaska, I wish to express our support for House Bill 185. The National Federation of Independent Business is the largest small-business advocacy group in Alaska.

HB 185 promotes and ensures open competition on state construction projects, while maintaining government neutrality towards construction contractors' labor relations. As small business owners, we believe that the cost and quality of a project should be the focus of government contracts, not whether the employees of a business chose to organize into a union. We believe this type of coercion of employees is not in the best interest of our employees.

Employees in Alaska have the freedom to choose employers based on the best situation for the individual employee. Some choose to affiliate with employers who are organized by unions; some choose to affiliate with businesses that are not union shops. Protecting that freedom of choice is the responsibility of government. Forcing union membership is not.

While some may say that government requirements of a union shop does not discriminate against employees, they ignore the fact that the Alaska state government provides many millions of dollars in contracts. To the extent some employers are arbitrarily prevented from competing limits the potential employment of employees who choose not to affiliate with a union, ignoring the skill they may bring to the job.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation on behalf of employees across Alaska.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis L. DeWitt", is written over a horizontal line.

Dennis L. DeWitt  
Alaska State Lobbyist