

# Minnesota Business Leaders

*A coalition powered by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce along with chambers, associations, and businesses to save the secret ballot.*



## **Update: Week of March 2**

### **Are You a Coalition Member Yet?**

This past week, the Waconia Chamber of Commerce became the 46th member of Minnesota Business Leaders. Thanks to their president, Kellie Sites, for signing them up.

Don't forget, if you are still thinking of joining MBL but need more information to present to your board, click [here](#). This sample resolution was drafted by the Rochester Area Chamber and is a great resource.

Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber  
Apple Valley Chamber  
Brainerd Lakes Chamber

## **Legislative Update**

Over the last few days, there have been countless rumors about when the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) may be introduced and brought up before the House or Senate.

Most noteworthy are the rumors that EFCA may be introduced as soon as Monday. However, the fact is that Rep. George Miller and Sen. Ted Kennedy can introduce their bills whenever they want. In fact, they made quite a show of preparing to introduce the bill last month, only to pull the plug and regroup, presumably because they do not have an adequate number of co-sponsors.

The debate over EFCA has begun, but the most important vote – cloture in the Senate is not imminent. The Senate is scheduled to conduct a hearing on the issue next week (with or without a bill introduced). However, we know that the unions are

Burnsville Chamber  
 Chamber of Commerce of Fargo  
 Moorhead  
 Chamber Grand Forks/East Grand  
 Forks  
 Dakota County Regional Chamber  
 Duluth Area Chamber  
 Eden Prairie Chamber  
 Edina Chamber  
 Elk River Area Chamber  
 Faribault Area Chamber  
 Greater Wayzata Area Chamber  
 Hastings Area Chamber  
 I-94 West Chamber  
 International Falls Area Chamber  
 Lakeville Area Chamber  
 Litchfield Chamber  
 Minneapolis Regional Chamber  
 Minnesota Chamber  
 MN Automobile Dealers Association  
 MN Beverage Association  
 MN Grocers Association  
 MN Trucking Association  
 MN Associated Builders &  
 Contractors  
 MN Business Partnership  
 MN Lodging Association  
 MN Restaurant Association  
 North Hennepin Area Chamber  
 Northfield Area Chamber  
 Owatonna Area Chamber  
 Printing Industry of MN  
 Richfield Chamber  
 River Heights Chamber  
 Rochester Area Chamber  
 Saint Paul Area Chamber  
 Saint Peter Area Chamber  
 SouthWest Metro Chamber  
 St. Cloud Area Chamber  
 TwinWest Chamber  
 U.S. Chamber  
 Waconia Chamber of Commerce  
 Wahpeton Breckenridge Area  
 Chamber  
 White Bear Area Chamber  
 Willmar Lakes Area Chamber  
 Winona Area Chamber

highly unlikely to make a serious push for a Senate vote until the Minnesota Senate contest between Norm Coleman and Al Franken is resolved. Other questions regarding Sen. Kennedy's health and availability to vote and whether Sen. Burriss will remain in the Senate also come into play – the bottom line is that the unions need every vote they can get if they are to have a chance at breaking a filibuster.

Whether or not the bill is introduced next week, it remains critically important that we collectively ramp up our efforts to generate opposition to the bill. As part of our efforts, for example, we continue to conduct our seminars, seek meetings along with the MN Chamber with members of the delegation, place letters and newsletters, and prepare for the May trip to DC. We are continuing to grow our grassroots network here in MN and across the country and these efforts are having a real impact. Thank you for all you are doing!

## From the U.S. Chamber - EFCA News Release

### **New Study Shows Card Check Legislation Would Eliminate 600,000 Jobs in 2010**

*Economist Urges Congress Not to Enact Legislation*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—According to a new study released today by noted economist Dr. Anne Layne-Farrar, the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)—also known as card check legislation—would negatively impact the landscape of the U.S. economy, increasing unemployment and stifling job growth for all Americans.

“Unions claim they are the ticket to the middle class, but this study confirms that passing EFCA would have a damaging effect on an already weakened economy,” said Randel Johnson, vice president of Labor, Immigration, and Employee Benefits at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. “This legislation is a bad idea any time, but is particularly irresponsible at a time

## Let's Take Your Concerns to DC...

Have you marked your calendar for May 11-13 yet? MCCE's Washington DC fly-in, held in conjunction with the U.S. Chamber's Small Business Summit, will be a remarkably important event in the EFCA battle. The cost for this event is \$450 per person. Be sure to register through MCCE, as you'll save up to nearly \$300 per person by doing so. Click [here](#) for a registration form.

## Communicate with Your Members!

We would like to provide you with a sample [newsletter article](#) as well as a sample [email](#) that you can customize and use to communicate with your members. We recommend that you put these tools to use now as it is critical to keep informing your members about the pending legislation.

## Letters to Congress

Check out the coalition's letter to Congress [here](#). If you have not signed on yet, please do so now by clicking on "Add you name to this letter."

Don't forget, now is the time to send a letter to your respective delegates in Congress. When you do, contact Dan Nelson of the U.S. Chamber ([dnelson@uschamber.com](mailto:dnelson@uschamber.com)) as the Chamber will hand deliver any letters to members of Congress at their Washington D.C. offices. We recommend that you take advantage of this opportunity as it can take

when policy makers should be focusing on creating, not destroying, jobs."

According to the study, *An Empirical Assessment of the Employee Free Choice Act: The Economic Implications*, an increase in 1.5 million union members in one year would lead to the loss of 600,000 jobs by the following year. Jobs losses directly attributed to the passage of card check legislation would be equal to the entire population of Boston or seventy-five percent of San Francisco. Dr. Layne-Farrar also found that although workers organized under card check will typically receive higher pay than their unrepresented counterparts, the review of the economic literature reveals that these increased costs must be offset by decreases in other areas which go beyond wages and benefits.

*An Empirical Assessment of the Employee Free Choice Act: The Economic Implications*, was funded by the Alliance to Save Main Street Jobs, which is a coalition of numerous business groups including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The author, Dr. Anne Layne-Farrar, is an economist from the non-partisan firm LECG consulting. This study complements a recent report authored by renowned legal scholar Richard A. Epstein titled the [Case Against the Employee Free Choice Act](#).

To view the full report visit:

<http://ssrn.com/abstract=1353305>

## Outreach Updates

On Wednesday, the I-94 West, Elk River Area, Monticello, North Hennepin Area and Buffalo Area Chambers held the latest seminar on Card Check. About 35 people attended - thanks for organizing this regional workshop!

Throughout the month of March, the Austin Area, North Hennepin and Richfield Chambers of Commerce will all be discussing Card Check during their monthly

weeks for items sent via regular mail to reach Congressional leaders.

Here's a list of [Congressional contact information](#). This list now also contains the addresses of both Coleman's and Franken's campaign offices as we've had requests for their contact information.

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### **Minnesota Business Leaders: Your Go-To Resource**

Click [here](#) for a list of the coalition's contacts.

meetings in order to learn more about the pending legislation. Thanks for making time to talk about the issue with your members.

Thanks to Brad Meier, president of the Owatonna Area Chamber, for submitting a Card Check op-ed piece to one of Owatonna's local papers. Check out his article here:

*Commentary, Brad Meier, Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism: Employee Free Choice Act: Not good for employees*

Appearing in the Owatonna People's Press: It seems everyone's first inclination right now is to pull back and cut spending because of a reduction in resources. As government goes through this exercise, it is vitally important that the structure of the private sector economy stays intact so that our economy is positioned for success in the future. Now that Congress has passed a stimulus package, one of the next pieces of legislation could drastically change the way businesses operate and interact with their employees. You might have heard about Card Check, otherwise known as the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). It's legislation that would take away an employee's right to a secret ballot when voting for or against a union.

<http://www.owatonna.com/news.php?viewStory=104249>

#### **Upcoming seminars and their hosts:**

*Wednesday, March 11:* Rochester Area and Minnesota Chambers

*Friday, March 13:* Detroit Lakes, Fergus Falls, Fargo Moorhead and Minnesota Chambers

*Monday, March 16:* Brainerd Lakes and Minnesota Chambers, Lakes Area Human Resource Association

You are receiving this email because you recently joined the Minnesota Business Leaders coalition or you are a chamber or business association in Minnesota that may have interest in becoming active on this issue.

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