

# 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 September 7*

**MBL Coalition Members are taking action TODAY to stop this misnamed and misguided legislation**

The coalition of business organizations is your go to source for EFCA information and updates. Thanks to all of our members for joining the fight to save the secret ballot!

Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber  
Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber  
Apple Valley Chamber  
Austin Area Chamber  
Brainerd Lakes Chamber  
Burnsville Chamber  
Chamber of Commerce of Fargo  
Moorhead

## Franken Meets with MN Chamber Leadership - Card Check Discussed



The Minnesota Chamber hosted a meeting with Senator Al Franken last week. More than 60 business leaders representing the

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

Chamber's board leadership and Manufacturers Coalition participated. On the issue of card check, Senator Franken reiterated his support for card check and his union membership. He misread his audience by saying he was sure most of the small and mid-size manufacturers in the room had unions – two of the sixty had union shops.

The Chamber and its members pledged to follow up with Franken and invite him to their businesses to better understand how they value their employees and how critical they are to their success.

## **New Senate HELP Committee Chairman Headlines Pro-Card Check Rally at the U.S. Capitol**

On Thursday, September 10, the Wall Street Journal's [Washington Wire](#) covered a rally in support of Card Check taking place that day at the U.S. Capitol. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), who recently became chair of the Senate's Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, headlined the rally.

*"A coalition of union interests is descending on Washington today to lobby lawmakers in support of the Employee Free Choice Act, also known as card check, which would make it easier for unions to organize. Some 300 activists from 15 states will make their appeal. The organizing group, American Rights at Work, said the activists are not union members but people who 'believe wholeheartedly' in EFCA. Iowa Democratic Sen. Tom Harkin will kick off the event which will lobby lawmakers from Arkansas, California, Colorado, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin."*

According to the Web site of the organizing group, American Rights at Work, this "...diverse group of

Willmar Lakes Area Chamber  
Winona Area Chamber  
Worthington Area Chamber

### Take Action Now!

**Talk of action on EFCA commands that we continue to educate and let our individual voice be heard!  
To contact your elected officials:**

1. Go to [www.mnbusinessleaders.com](http://www.mnbusinessleaders.com).
2. Click on "Take Action Now!"
3. Send a message urging them to reconsider their stance on EFCA.
4. Pass the link on to your friends and colleagues.

### MBL Resource Website

**Visit the coalition's new website TODAY!**

[www.mnbusinessleaders.com](http://www.mnbusinessleaders.com) is your information source for all things card check. The site has all of the EFCA resources and information you and your members will need. Powered by the U.S. Chamber, you will find links to the Chamber's card check Toolkit, EFCA facts and figures, and all of the latest news on the legislation.

### America's Leading Newspapers Weigh In

The editorial boards of some of the nation's leading newspapers, such as the *Wall Street Journal*, the *L.A. Times*, and the *Washington Post*, took a look at the Card Check bill. They concluded decisively that the legislation effectively eliminates private ballots. See the link below and read for yourself.

small business owners, veterans, farmers, students, faith leaders, civil rights activists, women's advocates, and environmentalists is uniting [in] one voice to remind lawmakers why the Employee Free Choice Act is vital to rebuilding our economy."

When asked on September 10 about the impact that Massachusetts decision on how to replace Sen. Kennedy's seat in the Senate would have on the future of Card Check, Sen. Harkin told CongressDaily that, "As soon as we see what happens [in Massachusetts], we can take the Employee Free Choice off the warm burner and put it on the hot burner."

### Trumka talks about flexing the AFL-CIO's muscles; Card Check on the horizon

As debate continues over an overhaul of the nation's health care system, the AFL-CIO's Richard Trumka looks ahead to passage of Card Check. When asked if lawmakers would pay a political price for any opposition to labor's demands, Trumka said, "We need to be a labor movement that stands by our friends, punishes its enemies and challenges those who, well, can't seem to decide which side they're on." The aggressive style that Trumka is demonstrating in the debate over health care will likely continue when the debate over Card Check reemerges this fall.

In an Associated Press story "[Trumka warns lawmakers on health care overhaul](#)" (Aug. 31, 2009), Trumka notes that this aggressive stance is part of his efforts to bolster union rolls and appeal to younger workers. In response to President Obama and other lawmakers wavering in their support of a public health care option, Trumka expressed his frustration by saying, "I think they need to understand that that [sic] you can have a bill that guarantees quality, affordable health care

» [Read the editorials](#)

### Have you Joined the Virtual March against Card Check Yet?



Click on the image above to do so!

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

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

for every American, or you can have a bill the Republicans will vote for. But you can't have both"

Also in the story:

*"The warning [over health care reform] is consistent with comments that Trumka has made in several recent public appearances. Union support for Democrats is often taken for granted, but Trumka has said the nation's largest labor federation would do more to hold elected officials accountable if they fail to back labor's causes.*

*That includes support for a measure that would make it easier for workers to organize unions. Trumka said he still expects a version of the Employee Free Choice Act to be passed in Congress this year, though Senate leaders have said the bill is on hold while lawmakers address health care and other more pressing legislation.*

*Trumka said passage of the union organizing bill would help rebuild the economy by boosting union membership and raising workers' wages through the collective bargaining process. Business groups adamantly oppose the measure."*

## Trumka discusses EFCA on C-SPAN

C-SPAN- Presumed future AFL-CIO head Rich Trumka weighed in on EFCA, related "compromise" talks, and his vision for organized labor in Monday talk, video link: <http://bit.ly/iQHgr>

(20:30) "We in the labor movement? We keep our promises. And we damn well demand and expect that people we elect keep their promises as well."

On EFCA:

(9:10) "John Maynard Keynes understood the dangers and the ravages of free market fundamentalism. I'm convinced that the president, the House, and many in the Senate understand it

too. That's why they're backing the Employee Free Choice Act."

(28:36) "We feel very confident that we're going to get it passed. We've said from the beginning that we need three things. We needed one, an ability for workers to join a union without being harassed, intimidated, or fired. We needed greater penalties because the companies, the employers simply violated the law and paying the fine was so paltry...it was a business cost. We needed larger penalties that acted as a deterrent. And three, we needed a way to resolve disputes with a drop-dead date no fault excuse so that people couldn't just surface bargain their way out forever and deny workers and employees the right to have collective bargaining. I feel absolutely certain we'll get all three of those goals met, and that we'll get it done quickly and hopefully before the end of this year."

On EFCA "compromises":

(44:25) "Unless you have the ability to deliver a bill with me I think I won't talk to you about where we're willing to compromise along with where we're not. Right now, the bill says- it's a card check bill, and we're pushing for that, and we think we're going to get the bill passed that will satisfy the three goals that I talked to you about."

On future plans:

(32:05) "After the first of the year we're coming out with, and I'm hesitant to call it this, but it will be our version of a 'Contract with America'...It will be what we think is necessary to create an economy that works for everyone...You'll see us taking sharper-edged positions...You'll see us helping the president and the congress do what they want to do in their hearts and their heads but need the political nudging to get it done- we'll be there doing the nudging from this point on."

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**Current head of the AFL-CIO shows willingness to**

## compromise; Compromise would still eliminate the current secret ballot process

In a departure from other members of the organized labor community and the man likely to succeed his post at the AFL-CIO, current president of the AFL-CIO John Sweeney has stated that he would support a version of Card Check that would remove the card check provision and insert a fast election provision in its place. While this change would remove the card check provision, it would still put in place an election timeline that would last only 5 or 10 days according to the New York Times ("[A.F.L. -C.I.O. Chief Would Back Union Bill Without Card Check](#)," September 4, 2009).

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Our mailing address is: 380 Jackson Street, Suite 287, Saint Paul, MN 55101

Our telephone:  
651.221.0850

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