

EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

ASHHRA opposes the Employee Free Choice Act of 2007 (H.R. 800/S. 1041) because it would change the current union election system that is based on the bedrock principle of democracy: free and fair elections where ballots are cast in private, free from interference or influence by either side. It also weakens another fundamental principle of U.S. labor law, the voluntary agreement, by forcing negotiating parties into binding arbitration.

Union Certification through Signed Authorization Cards

H.R. 800/S. 1041 proposes to amend the National Labor Relations Act by requiring employers to recognize a labor union solely through a card check process, permitting unions to avoid elections where employees make decisions by secret ballot. Under the card check approach, union authorization cards are signed in the presence of an interested party, for example, a union organizer or pro-union co-worker. The cards are said to represent the true intent of the workers. ASHHRA believes this legislation strips away existing safeguards assured under federal law and leaves workers unprotected from outside influence and pressure.

First Contact Arbitration

The bill will effectively send any bargaining disputes to binding arbitration after 120 days. With binding arbitration, workers lose their say. H.R. 800/S. 1041 does not permit workers to terminate arbitration. Workers cannot vote down a contract and send the union back to the negotiation table under binding arbitration, and they cannot reject an arbitrator's ruling. Under the proposed legislation, once an arbitrator is called in, his or her word is final.

Position:

ASHHRA opposes H.R. 800/S. 1041.

SECRET BALLOT PROTECTION ACT

ASHHRA supports The Secret Ballot Protection Act, H.R. 866, as secret ballot elections are a fundamental part of our free society and our system of government. H.R. 866 supports the long-standing federal policy of secret ballot elections as set forth in the existing text of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). The use of organizing methods that do not involve the use of secret ballot elections calls into question the ability of employees to express their views in a free, non-coercive environment. A secret ballot process contained in H.R. 866 helps ensure fairness in the election process and will not otherwise change the manner in which parties (unions and employers) conduct themselves in elections under the NLRA.

Position:

ASHHRA supports H.R. 866.

The American Society for Healthcare Human resources Administration (ASHHRA) is the nation's only personal membership group dedicated to meeting the professional needs of human resources professionals in hospitals and healthcare organizations. ASHHRA is a Personal Membership Group of the American Hospital Association and a joint membership partner with the Society for Human Resources Management. For information about ASHHRA, please contact Suzanne Graham, Project Assistant, at (312) 422-3724.