

## **Resolution – Employee Free Choice Act**

The ICEM World Conference for the Rubber Industries, meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, USA, on 12-13 May 2009, wishes to convey its unqualified support for the Employee Free Choice Act.

This Congress knows of the importance in America of passing the Employee Free Choice Act. We know that a strong economy depends on workers given the opportunity to join a trade union and to bargain collectively so that fair wages and social benefits are lifted for all in a society.

This, we believe, is the basic underpinning of the Employee Free Choice Act.

The Employee Free Choice Act would move the United States considerably closer to being in conformity with the human rights standards of the ILO. Although workers could still have a secret ballot election if they wished, proof of majority support would be sufficient to enable them to bargain with their employers. Typically in the United States, a representation election becomes a battle ground.

During representation elections currently, employees are forced to listen to anti-union propaganda in “captive audience” meetings while trade unions are denied full and free access to the workplace. About 75% of employers use union busting consultants to help them generate fear.

Some protections for the right to organise exist in the US legislation, but their enforcement is so weak that there is rampant corporate lawlessness. For example, tens of thousands of workers are fired for union activity each year. That means that union supporters are dismissed in around a quarter of such campaigns. The Employee Free Choice Act would increase penalties for this kind of unacceptable behaviour.

The Employee Free Choice Act would require mediation and, if necessary, arbitration, to provide an environment for constructive and productive industrial relations.

Be it resolved, that the ICEM Global Rubber Conference stands firmly behind the American trade unions in your efforts to get the United States Congress to pass this legislation into law, with the support of President Barack Obama. We consider it an essential element in a free society that workers be allowed to join a trade union in an unobstructed way.