

Members of UFCW Locals 27, 400, and 1994 Support Employee Free Choice as Bill is Introduced on Hill



UFCW members appeared at a Senate hearing on Employee Free Choice. The bill was introduced in the House and Senate this afternoon.

Dozens of UFCW members from UFCW Locals 1994, 27, and 400 were at the Capitol today as the Employee Free Choice Act was introduced in the House and Senate. Members traveled to Washington to appear at a Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee hearing entitled, *Rebuilding Economic Security: Empowering Workers to Restore the Middle Class*. After the hearing, Senator Harkin (D-IA) and Representative Miller (D-CA) introduced the bill in each chamber of Congress.

UFCW members and members from other unions were there to show their support for Employee Free Choice as one important way to restore prosperity for American workers in the economic downturn.

"I want Employee Free Choice to pass so that other workers can enjoy the benefits that I have," said Jim Sanders, a Local 27 member at Shoppers Food Warehouse. "Even though the economy is bad right now, my wife and I are doing okay because we are both union members."

"UFCW members and working families across the

nation are standing firmly in support of this legislation," said UFCW International President Joe Hansen. "We will not let corporate America drown out reasonable debate on this issue with lies and exaggerations about the process by which workers can choose a union."

In the coming weeks, UFCW members from all over the country will be traveling to Washington, D.C. to speak to their members of Congress and urge them to support Employee Free Choice. **OP**

Obama Invites Hansen to Speak at White House Health Care Forum

At the invitation of President Barack Obama, UFCW International President Joe Hansen attended the White House Forum on Health Reform held on March 5, 2009. Hansen joined the President's nominees for Secretary of Health and Human Services, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, and Director of the White House Office of Health Reform, Nancy-Ann DeParle, in supporting the President's efforts to bring affordable, quality health care for all.



Hansen focused on how workers and unions can play an important role in reforming a health care system paralyzed by insurance companies and entrenched special interests. Health care reform is a critical step in the effort to rebuild the American middle class.

"Every UFCW member has been touched by the health care crisis. They see the devastating effects of our nation's failure to act on this issue every day

in their communities, in their families, and in their workplaces,” Hansen said.

“We will do whatever it takes to see quality affordable health care extended to everyone in this country. UFCW members demand it and our country needs it now more than ever. A real solution to America’s health care problem is the single best way to put America’s economy back on track. Reform must be based on shared responsibility, and that includes fair funding for a public health insurance option so we have real choices in our system.”

“We take this moment to urge each and every person to join us in this fight. Visit www.healthcareforamericanow.org to read our principles, tell your Congressperson or Senator of our national need for urgent health care reform, and to take action in your community.” **OP**

Bashas’ Workers Fired for UFCW Support



While dozens of UFCW members were in Washington, D.C. talking with their lawmakers about their support for Employee Free Choice, grocery workers in Arizona became unwilling examples of exactly why workers need

this law. Nearly two dozen former workers at AJ’s Fine Foods (owned by Bashas’) in Phoenix, Ariz., say they were fired for their union support.

Workers say they were fired for minor infractions that would not have ordinarily lead to termination, but that managers used as an excuse to rid their stores of union support and send a message to other

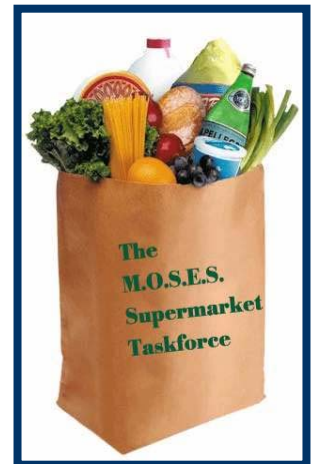
workers. One seven-year veteran was fired for being short 25 cents in her register.

“These are not bad employees. These are not people who didn’t give good customer service. We were exemplary employees,” said Julia Bishop, who was among those fired. Former employees protested outside the store in Paradise Valley over the weekend.

Employers often intimidate, harass, and even fire workers who try to form a union. American Rights at Work estimates that 30 percent of employers fire pro-union workers during union organizing drives. Employee Free Choice would mean stronger penalties for employers who violate the NLRA while employees are attempting to organize or bargain a first contract. **OP**

Michigan Local Unions Working to Bring Healthy Food, Good Jobs to Detroiters

UFCW Locals 876 and 951 are leading the way to bring healthy food and good union grocery jobs to Detroit. The locals have formed a coalition with several business, development, medical, social justice, agriculture, ecology, and political groups called the M.O.S.E.S. Supermarket Taskforce.



The Taskforce has brought to the forefront the importance of recognizing and assisting families living in the areas of Detroit that have been designated as “food deserts” – areas with no grocery stores and limited access to nutritious food options. For more information about the Taskforce, visit <http://www.ufcwcommunity.org>. **OP**