

## Workers Rally at U.S. Capitol for Employee Free Choice



**Former Fresh & Easy worker, James Satler, met with Senator Feinstein's staff to urge passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.**

Last week, UFCW members and staff joined thousands of workers in Washington, D.C., to rally for passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, a bill that would make it easier for workers to join unions.

Workers know that the process for forming a union is broken. That's why over 250,000 UFCW members—more than any other labor union—signed cards this year in support of passing Employee Free Choice. In fact, since last year, 1.5 million union members and supporters have signed cards to pass Employee Free Choice. Workers got the chance to deliver thousands of those cards to key Senate officials after the rally.

Workers from across the country also spoke out about why the Employee Free Choice Act is needed to help level the playing field and fix our broken economy. James Satler, a former Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market grocery worker, was fired for what he believes was his vocal support of a union in his workplace. He came all the way from Huntington Beach, Calif., to tell his story to his Senators and to urge them to pass the

bill—lobbying both Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who is not a certain “yes” vote—and Sen. Barbara Boxer, a staunch supporter of the bill. Satler was joined by many other workers who told similar stories of harassment and intimidation at the workplace, demonstrating that the Employee Free Choice Act is necessary to protect workers wishing to organize from retaliation.

At the rally, Rep. George Miller and Sen. Tom Harkin, two sponsors of the Employee Free Choice Act, also spoke about the importance of this legislation. For more information on Employee Free Choice and what your members can do to get involved, go to [www.ufcwforfreechoice.org](http://www.ufcwforfreechoice.org).

## UFCW Members Demand: Confirm Hilda Solis Now!

The confirmation of Labor Secretary Nominee Hilda Solis has been stalled for nearly a month by Republican senators.



Solis has been a loyal champion of working Americans, fighting for workers' rights and safety. She is extremely well-qualified for the position and will make an excellent Secretary of Labor. It's an outrage that Republican senators are obstructing her confirmation. Our country needs a strong Labor Secretary immediately to help solve our jobs crisis.

UFCW members and staff should contact their Senators and urge them to confirm Secretary-designate Hilda Solis. Go to [http://ufcwaction.org/campaign/confirm\\_solis\\_now](http://ufcwaction.org/campaign/confirm_solis_now) or call the Capitol switchboard to be connected with your Senator at (202) 224-3121.

**CONGRATULATIONS... to UFCW Local 876 Secretary-Treasurer Rick Blocker on his election to the 14th District's Democratic Party Chair in SE Michigan. Rick will be a strong advocate for the interests of Michigan's workers during these tough economic times.**

## UFCW Activist Stands Up For Employee Free Choice and Unions, is Demoted by Company

Joe Sorrentino, a worker at a Wakefern-owned PriceRite Supermarket in North Providence, Rhode Island, has been punished for standing up for a union at his workplace, according to charges filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) by UFCW Local 328.

Sorrentino and other PriceRite employees have been working to organize a union with the UFCW, but have faced a campaign of company harassment and intimidation. This campaign has been all the more unfortunate since Wakefern also owns/and or supplies ShopRite—a grocery chain where most workers belong to the UFCW and have a union voice on the job.



**Sorrentino speaking with reporters on behalf of Employee Free Choice in January.**

Shortly after receiving national attention for speaking out on behalf of the Employee Free Choice Act at a Washington, D.C., press conference on January 13, Sorrentino was demoted and given a pay cut—the kind of harassment by corporations against workers that the Employee Free Choice Act would help eliminate. UFCW Local 328 has filed charges with the NLRB, seeking reinstatement of Sorrentino's position and pay, as a Night Crew Chief.

UFCW locals, grocery workers, labor allies, and community members will rally on Thursday to support Sorrentino and demand he be reinstated—and that PriceRite respect its employees' right to form a union.

## Local 711 Members Stick Together for Contract with Affordable Health Care

Members of UFCW Local 711 in Las Vegas have ratified a new contract with the Kroger Company's Smith's and Food 4 Less stores. The agreement includes affordable health care, a major achievement for workers in the current economic climate, and covers more than 2,800 Smith's workers and 900 Food 4 Less workers at 47 stores in and around Las Vegas.

During negotiations, it was important to workers to keep the same health care plan. Because UFCW Local 711 members stuck together and spoke out, they secured affordable health care with no employee contributions.

In addition, the new contract gives new employees dependent care coverage as soon as the employee is eligible for care—a major improvement, and one that will make a big difference for new employees trying to pay the bills and care for their families in these tough economic times.

## UFCW Constituency Groups Unveil New Initiatives to Work on Core Issues

UFCW Constituency Groups have announced new initiatives on core UFCW issues and campaigns this year. UFCW Women's Network President Rhonda Nelson said her group would make passage of the Employee Free Choice Act its number one priority, working with allies to make sure Senators understand that passage of the Act is a must for working women.

UFCW United Latinos President Johnny Rodriguez spoke of the United Latinos' plans to develop a model program where our union is facilitating the way for UFCW immigrant members to become citizens. And UFCW Minority Coalition President Don Cash announced the group would conduct a major outreach and education campaign in Asian and African American communities to support Local 5's organizing efforts in nail salons.

All three groups expressed high hopes that President Obama would be an advocate for workers on these issues and other issues affecting women, minorities, and immigrants in the U.S. workforce.