

Free Choice Act

By Dan Jerde, Area Vice President

I would like to talk to you about something I learned recently while attending Leadership School in Iowa. I heard about it before and I knew a little bit about it, but I had no idea why it was so important to all union and non-union people across the country. What I'm talking about is the **Family Free Choice Act**, which will hopefully be passed in 2008.

The current process used to form unions needs help badly – it has deteriorated and sways in the favor of those who oppose unions. The new process (**Family Free Choice Act**) would reform the current defunct process which allows employers to frequently intimidate, harass, reassign or even fire workers who support the formation of a union.

Under the Family Free Choice Act if a majority of workers sign a card authorizing a union, then the workers would have a union. This is a much better way to go about things than the current process. The current process being used to organize workers is almost the same, but the **big difference** is the employers have to approve it. Under the old process a majority of employers force the workers to undergo an election process that is administered by the NLRB, which is controlled by the Republicans due to the current president. The sitting president appoints the leaders of the NLRB. Hopefully that will change in 2008.

If the **Family Free Choice Act** passes in 2008, this would give workers the ability to bargain for a better way of life. On average, union workers earn 30% more than non-union workers. Union workers are more likely to have better health care, pensions and more paid time off. Research has found that 69% of Americans support the Family Free Choice Act - just think about that for a moment. That means that 69% of Americans would support unions if they had a choice. Wow, that just blows my mind. I believe the Family Free Choice Act is a vital part of the union movement in this country and is necessary in order to give a voice to non-union workers that have been silenced by **corporate GREED!**