

## **Statement of Mr. Souder on H.R. 800, the Employee Free Choice Act**

Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak in opposition to the Employee Free Choice Act.

Elections have always been sacred in America. Indeed, they are integral to the freedom and democracy our nation fought for in our war for independence. Unfortunately, the wrongly-named Employee Free Choice Act would tell workers contemplating whether to join a union that they don't deserve this critical democratic right, and for this reason I strongly oppose the bill.

Under current law, a majority of workers must vote in a secret ballot election in order to form a union, unless the employer agrees to a "card check" agreement, whereby the employer pledges to recognize the union automatically if a majority of signed union authorization cards are collected—a process which is obviously susceptible to manipulation and abuse, and a far cry from a free and fair private ballot election. The Employee Free Choice Act would make this undemocratic card check process the default method for attaining union recognition. If it were to pass, federal law would be sanctioning a process that stifles workers' free speech and undermines the very core of our democracy—the right of all Americans to think and act without coercion. This must be opposed at all costs.

Mr. Chairman, I especially want to take a moment to remember Rep. Charlie Norwood for his tireless work on these issues during his service with the Committee. Tragically, Mr. Norwood passed away yesterday after a battle with lung cancer. Congressman Norwood led the fight for the sanctity of secret ballot elections through his sponsorship of the Secret Ballot Election Act. We all miss him dearly.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly oppose this bill, and urge my colleagues to do so as well.