

Legislative Update

Employee Free Choice Act (Card Check Legislation)

June 17, 2009

On the federal level, the Employee Free Choice Act, also dubbed the Card Check Legislation seems to be sitting quietly waiting. Currently, there doesn't seem to be a tremendous amount of support within Congress to give this legislation any momentum. Some interest is expected in the 2010 Congressional session, however. The MMA as well as many other business associations, both statewide and nationally are strongly opposed to this unfair legislation. The Card Check bill makes the irresponsible formation of unions extremely easy for a group of employees larger than 30. Please call your federal legislator today to express your objection to this industry and job killing legislation.



What's Going on in Michigan???

The unfortunate state of Michigan's economy has lawmakers and state executives working overtime. With a state budget deficit into the billions-of-dollars, state legislators are commiserating around the clock to slice and dice the state budget. In her original budget proposal, Governor Granholm called for the combining of state agencies and cuts to state agencies across the board. Many of the proposed bills coming out of both chambers of the legislature cut state department budgets drastically. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Department of Community Health has presented a budget that cuts \$533.6 million from the current departments budget. In the budget put forth by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education, over \$160 million in awards and financial aid were cut, and the Department of Corrections budget has been trimmed by \$20 million in a proposed version.

The possible combining of two of the most active state departments is also starting to earn major attention. Senate Bill 251, which was recently referred out by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural Resources, combines the Department of Natural Resources with the Department of Environmental Quality to form one state department to be known as the Department of Conservation. If the bill passes through both legislative chambers, it will yield a savings of \$800,000 immediately by cutting both staff and rent costs for the state. The overall savings of the merge would be roughly \$16.2 million dollars more than what Gov. Granholm suggested earlier this year.

It is important to note that all of these proposals are merely that until voting from both chambers takes place and the bills are signed into law by the Governor's office. The legislature has until the end of the month of June to formulate its budget. It can certainly be expected that more tax-raising initiatives will be proposed in an effort to conserve some of the money that will otherwise be taken away from state departments.

Please contact your state legislator to share your thoughts on Michigan's future. You elected these officials and it is their job to make sure you are heard!

Please contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions on legislative issues. I can be reached via email at vanessac@eurich.com, or by phone at 517.327.9207.