

Farmers & Ranchers for EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE



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Farmers and Ranchers Coalition Formed in Support of the Employee Free Choice Act and the Middle Class

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn., June 23, 2009 – Today, a new rural coalition announced its support of the Employee Free Choice Act as an important step towards rebuilding the middle class: **Farmers & Ranchers for Employee Free Choice**. The coalition represents more than 125,000 individuals in 30 states and includes the [League of Rural Voters](#), the [Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund](#), the [National Family Farm Coalition](#), and other organizations with a stake in the future of rural America. Citing the fact that workers struggling to make it on rock bottom wages can't afford to buy the products that farmers and ranchers grow, raise and sell, the group says it's time for Congress to take action on wages by passing the Act.

"Without better wages and working conditions that are offered through union membership, it's impossible for American workers in rural and urban areas to afford decent food, housing, or to create wealth in their communities," says Ralph Paige, Executive Director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives / Land Assistance Fund. The coalition's Web site, [RememberTheMiddleClass.com](#) includes a petition to Congress and a direct link for those who want to send a message to their U.S. Senator or Representative. An e-mail message campaign will help the coalition reach rural voters in states where Congressional support is critical.

Although overall support for the Employee Free Choice Act is growing, "there are some Senators who still say we can't afford the legislation because of our current economic mess," noted Niel Ritchie, Executive Director of the League of Rural Voters. "But they're missing the point. We see the Employee Free Choice Act as an economic stimulus package aimed directly at the middle class."

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