

NLRB Rules Trump Casino, Intimidated Workers Seeking to Join UAW

Posted By [Mike Hall](#) On February 20, 2009 @ 3:15 pm In [Legislation & Politics](#), [Organizing & Bargaining](#) | [No Comments](#)



Ruling deals casino workers new hand.

Looking for another reason workers need the [1] [Employee Free Choice Act](#)? Read on.

In May 2007, when some 400 dealers at the Trump Marina Hotel and Casino in [2] [Atlantic City, N.J.](#), voted on joining the [3] [UAW](#), they already had experienced the full weight of employer harassment.

During the course of the campaign, management suspended Mario Spina, a 20-year veteran casino dealer and union activist. Management had interrogated workers about their support for the union and their organizing activities. Also weighing heavily on their minds that day were threats from Trump Marina managers that they would lose their jobs if they voted for a voice at work with the UAW.

That's a lot to think about, and on May 11, the fear created by the casino's anti-union campaign carried over to the balloting, with the result that by only eight votes, 183-175, the workers voted against joining the union.

But now, the workers have another chance to form a union. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) [4] [ordered a new election](#) Feb. 17 because it found the threats, intimidation and other actions by Trump Marina management violated federal labor law.

The board also ordered the casino to refrain from those unlawful actions in the new election, make up the pay and benefits the suspended longtime casino dealer suffered, and post a notice that says the NLRB found the casino had violated labor law and pledges not to engage in such conduct again. (You can read the full NLRB decision [4] [here](#).)

The NLRB ruling is good news, but it comes nearly two years after workers first sought to join the UAW. Two years in which a contract could have been negotiated and workers could have been pocketing bigger paychecks and enjoying better benefits for their families.

If the Employee Free Choice Act had been law, Spina, the lead union organizer, would not have been suspended on some phony pretext in order to intimidate his co-workers. The NLRB wrote Spina's suspension

caused a fear of reprisal among the voters, some of whom stopped attending union meetings and were watchful of what they said and did regarding the topic of the union or the campaign.

If the Employee Choice Act had been law, the workers would not have been subjected to the interrogations about their union sympathies and support, the threats about losing their jobs and the disciplinary action that the NLRB found the Trump Marina workers were forced to endure.

If the Employee Free Choice Act had been law, the workers could have signed union authorization cards in an atmosphere free of intimidation, threats and harassment. When a majority of workers signed the cards, they would have their union and be ready to bargain for a better life, nearly two years ago.

One more reason we need the [1] [Employee Free Choice Act](#).

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URLs in this post:

[1] Employee Free Choice Act: <http://www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/voicework/efca/>

[2] Atlantic City, N.J.: <http://blog.aflcio.org/.../2008/06/23/thousands-fill-atlantic-city-streets-to-demand-justice-for-casino-workers/>

[3] UAW: <http://www.uaw.org/>

[4] ordered a new election: http://www.nlr.gov/shared_files/Board%20Decisions/353/v35393.pdf