
Solidarity with American workers
TUC campaign for free choice in the USA
July 2009

Brendan Barber's letter to Gordon Brown

TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber has written to British Prime Minister Gordon Brown urging him to support the Employee Free Choice Act in the USA.

"Passage of the Employee Free Choice Act would bring the US closer to compliance with the ILO core Conventions on freedom of association and free collective bargaining, and would give US workers an effective choice over whether to be represented by a trade union.

"For decades, millions of US workers have been deprived of their fundamental right to organise and bargain collectively. The global economic crisis underlines the importance for all of our societies of providing that workers are free to organise and bargain collectively. The rights and ability of workers to defend their wages and working conditions can help prevent a collapse of purchasing power and the market. The Employee Free Choice Act would be an important step in that direction for US workers.

"The Act would provide US workers a fairer opportunity to form unions without being victims of brutal intimidation, often including dismissal (30,000 American workers a year are fired for trying to organise a union). Current US anti-union practices serve as a destructive model for industrial relations in other countries, and the TUC has signed an agreement with our sister organisation in the US, the AFL-CIO, to oppose such union-busting.

"President Obama was a sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act when he was in the Senate and continues to strongly support the bill. I urge you to communicate your government's support to the US Administration on this important issue."