

October 2008

President's Letter

Dear ICCE Members:

Hello everyone! First, I would like to once again thank Decorah Chamber and their great conference team for hosting the ICCE Fall Conference in September. Once again, we had the opportunity to visit another great place in Iowa and network with one another.

As I was trying to gather my thoughts for this newsletter to you, I have been thinking it needs to be positive and upbeat. With the challenges we are facing in Iowa with disaster recovery and the conditions in America, I am concerned about our Chambers and their continued support of our organizations as they "tighten their belts" to keep in business. With that said, I know you are all thinking about value...the value we provide for our investors in our own Chambers and the value of continued participation and support of ICCE.

In our own Chamber, we are brainstorming "value-added" ideas for our investors and invite you to do so as well. Then, please attend the next ICCE Conference in February in Des Moines and share some of these ideas with your fellow ICCE attendees during our roundtable discussions. I believe this exchange of ideas on this topic is one of our most important missions to keep our organizations alive and well. Also, one of the greatest ICCE benefits is the networking opportunities not only at conferences but through our listserv.

As we go through this economic slowdown, remind yourself and your boards that the services and resources we provide to our investors are important to the viability and sustainability of our organizations and our communities. Reassessment and adjustments are just part of daily life and it is no different in the Chamber world. Tough times mean it is time to step up marketing efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your ICCE President. Please feel free to contact me, Sara Mentzer, or any of our board members if you have ideas for us to better meet your needs as an ICCE member.

Best Regards,
Linda Washburn, Glenwood Area Chamber of Commerce
ICCE 2008-09 President



Linda Washburn at ICCE Fall Conference

Card Check – Federal Legislation

Reprinted from the ACCE Government Affairs Newsletter (email) – September 2008

Card Check is probably the one policy issue looming on the horizon that all business organizations need to be concerned about. For those who missed the workshop on Card Check and other emerging employee/employer relations issues at the Convention in Pittsburgh, here is a quick overview of this important issue.

The Employee Free Choice Act, better known as Card Check, is proposed federal legislation that would drastically alter labor relations in America. In particular, Card Check would change the procedures used for union organizing, allow for binding arbitration during first contract negotiations, and sharply increase penalties on employers for unfair labor practices committed during union organizing drives.

Background:

Traditionally, union organizing has been done through secret ballot elections. A union will ask workers at a facility to sign cards indicating an interest in an election. Once 30% of workers have signed, the union can ask the Federal National Labor Relations Board to hold a secret ballot election. Both sides have a chance to make their case to workers during the campaign period, which on average lasts about 40 days. If more than 50% of workers voting choose the union, the union is certified and the employer must begin collective bargaining.

Under Card Check, a union would be certified based only on signatures. Union organizers would ask workers to sign a union authorization card. Once a bare majority had signed, the union would be certified and the employer would have to begin collective bargaining. There would be no secret ballot election - in fact, once more than 50% of workers had signed cards; it would be illegal to hold such an election.

Potential Impact:

Card Check would fundamentally alter the well-established process for union organizing. Since cards would be signed in public, union organizers, coworkers and possibly even the employer would know who had signed a card and who had refused. This raises the distinct possibility that workers would be subject to harassment and coercion. Also, some workers might not know that a union organizing campaign was underway, and would only find out after the union was certified. At that point, it would be illegal to have a secret ballot election even if workers wanted one. Employers might also be unaware an organizing campaign was underway, and would not have an opportunity to present their position to workers.

Under Card Check, collective bargaining would have to commence within 10 days of union certification. If the employer and the union fail to reach an agreement after 120 days, negotiations would enter binding arbitration before a federal arbitration panel. Binding arbitration provides no incentive for either side to bargain productively. In fact, it gives each side incentive to take the most extreme position possible.

Card Check would also raise penalties on employers found to have engaged in unfair labor practices during union organizing drives, but would not raise penalties on unions.

Current Status:

In 2007, Card Check passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 241-185. The bill had a slim majority of support in the Senate, but fell to a filibuster on a 51-48 vote. It is unlikely the bill will come back up for a vote this year. However, Card Check is the number one priority for organized labor and is expected to be atop the legislative calendar in 2009. A great deal will depend on the 2008 congressional elections.

Chambers of commerce should pay close attention to this issue because it could have serious ramifications on businesses nationwide.

ICCE Fall Conference 2008

What a great event hosted by the Decorah Chamber with assistance from the Oelwein and Cresco Chambers. The conference committee put in countless hours to ensure information packed days with some networking mixed in. Pictures and conference handouts are available on the ICCE web site, www.iowachamber.net/schedule.

Thank you to our Gold Sponsors:

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ICCE Membership Information

As Linda discussed in the President's letter, membership in ICCE is as important to our state as local business participation in our local chambers. We are only as strong as our membership. The ICCE fiscal year runs from March 1 through the last day of February of the following year. This allows for multiple upcoming opportunities for you as a member.

For one, attend the ICCE Annual meeting as part of the Winter Conference February 19-21, 2009 in West Des Moines. This conference will be hosted by the Urbandale Chamber with assistance from many local chambers in the Des Moines area. We thank Tiffany Menke and her staff for hosting what will be another great conference for ICCE members.

Membership dues are paid annually based on the ICCE fiscal year. Dues invoices are sent the first part of February and due April 1. The Board will discuss dues at their retreat in Ames November 11-12. If you have any ideas or issues you would like to add to the Board agenda please email me that information at smentzer@cedarrapids.org.

If you have an interest in serving on the ICCE Board please contact the ICCE office. We anticipate one opening this year based on three-year board terms. The opening will depend on which ICCE Board member moves to the Executive Committee.

The ICCE directory, while also live on the ICCE web site is formatted for a printed version and posted on the ICCE web site shortly after membership dues are finalized. This is typically the middle of April. This document allows ICCE members to see the history of the organization as it relates to past presidents, conference locations, awards and organization contact information. With a new web site due by year's end this will be an exciting time for ICCE! Are you registered on the ICCE listserv? This is one of the most utilized membership benefits of the organization.

ICCE Board 2008-2009

President- Linda Washburn, Glenwood/Mills County Chamber

President-Elect – Karla Thompson, Dyersville Area Chamber

Secretary/Treasurer – Robin Anderson, Mason City Chamber

Past President – Bob Justis, Greater Cedar Valley Chamber/Cedar Falls & Waterloo

Central Region

Shar Pardubsky, Greater Des Moines Partnership
Eve Doi, Ames Chamber

Eastern Region

JoElla O'Connell, Dewitt Chamber
Brent Willett, Fairfield Area Chamber

Western Region

Angie Stein, Red Oak Chamber
Vicki Mallory, Algona Area Chamber

At Large

Jennifer Gruelke, Hampton Area Chamber

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY



ABI Contacts:

Leisa Fox, Vice President Membership, 515.235.0575

Jackie Paul, Member Programs Coordinator, 515.235.0572

Iowa Manufacturers “*Caught in the Middle*” of Globalization

Senator Chuck Grassley and author Richard C. Longworth set to speak at Annual ABI Manufacturers Luncheon

Des Moines, IA – September 30, 2008 – Learn how Iowa manufacturers are “Caught in the Middle” of globalization and what companies can do to embrace, rather than fight, the rules of today’s global village.

Native Iowan Richard C. Longworth, author of “*Caught in the Middle: America’s Heartland in the Age of Globalism*” keynotes the 105th Iowa Association of Business and Industry’s gathering of manufacturers. Longworth will share his view on the Midwest’s challenges and opportunities in a global environment. The event will conclude with a panel discussion on Iowa manufacturers thriving in a global economy, in globalization related to Iowa companies.

Who: Remarks from Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley (R)
Iowa’s Reality: Dena Szymula, Manpower, Inc. of Des Moines
Keynote Speaker: Richard C. Longworth, author of “*Caught in the Middle*”
Panel discussion – Iowa’s Companies Embracing Globalization:

- Robert Yancey, Turbine Fuel Technologies/Goodrich Corp.
- Mark Hanawalt, United Equipment Accessories, Inc.
- Roger Hargens, Accu-Mold LLC

What: 2008 ABI Manufacturer’s Luncheon

When: 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 16, 2008

Where: Forte Conference & Banquet Center
A Division of inPlay
615 3rd St.
Des Moines, IA 50309
Parking onsite. Additional ramp parking one block South.

Cost: Early-Bird Rates through September 30th:
ABI Member Rate - \$75
Non-Member Rate - \$100

Rates Oct. 1 or later:
ABI Member Rate - \$100
Non-Member Rate - \$125

How to Register: Visit the [Web site](#) to register online.
Or call [Dorothy Willson](#) with ABI at 515-235-0568

ICCE and Partners Calendar of Events

ICCE Winter Conference '09

February 18-20, 2009
Marriott Hotel
West Des Moines

MACE 2009

April 29-May 1, 2009
Okoboji, IA

US Chamber Small Business Summit

May 11-13, 2009
Washington, DC

ICCE Winter Conference 2010

February 17-19, 2010
Marriott Hotel
West Des Moines, IA

US Chamber Invested Leaders Institute Conference

March 25-27, 2009

[InterContinental Hotel](#)

Chicago, Illinois

US Chamber Institute Program

Upcoming Early Enrollment Deadlines:

Winter Institute.....December 1, 2008

Midwest and Southeast Institute.....May 1, 2009

West and Northeast Institute.....June 5, 2009

2009 Sites and Dates

[Winter Institute | January 4-8, 2009](#)

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

[Midwest Institute | June 7-11, 2009](#)

University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

[Southeast Institute | June 21-25, 2009](#)

University of Georgia, Athens, GA

[West Institute | July 12-16, 2009](#)

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA

[Northeast Institute | July 26-30, 2009](#)

Villanova University, Villanova, PA