

Business Leaders Support Workers' Rights and a Fair Economy

Business leaders from around the country recognize the important role unions can play in restoring balance to our faltering economy. These employers, investors, and academics see unions as a way to achieve long-term economic growth and stability.

Employers Support Unions as Part of Economic Recovery

The members of Business Leaders for a Fair Economy, a national group of employers, entrepreneurs, and business leaders, know that good-paying jobs create demand for the goods and services they provide, and support strengthening workers' rights to form unions as a core part of our nation's economic recovery.

“I believe that in these tough economic times we need solutions that protect workers and support long-term growth and sustainability for American businesses. It does not have to be an either/or scenario. I personally can attest you can be a responsible employer that respects workers' rights and have a thriving, profitable business accountable to its stakeholders.”

Roger Smith, *Chair, Business Leaders for a Fair Economy, President and CEO, American Income Life Insurance Company and National Income Life Insurance Company*

“The right of workers to earn a decent, living wage is a cornerstone of the American ideal, and integral to the success of any strong company. Our potential for growth is a direct result of the mutual respect we share with our employees, and the unions that support us.

Richard Larkin, *President and CEO, Larkin Enterprises, Inc.*

“We need to maintain a strong working middle class. If we don't have a strong working middle class, my business isn't going to exist.

Darren Horndasch, *President, Wisconsin Vision*

Investors See Protection of Workers' Rights as an Investment in Our Future

An international coalition of 36 institutional investors managing \$757 billion across the global economy recently began an initiative to ask every S&P 100 company how they protect and enhance workers' rights for their U.S. employees. These investors argue that constructive and positive labor relations are crucial to a company's lasting success.

“As investors, we believe constructive labor relations are essential for improving productivity, efficiency and workplace safety.

Steven Heim, *Senior Vice President and Director of Social Research and Advocacy for Boston Common Asset Management, LLC*

“As long-term investors, we want companies to create value in a sustainable way. Constructive labor relations can be a positive influence on productivity, foster trust and loyalty, and help attract and retain skilled staff.

Ian Greenwood, *Chair of the U.K.-based Local Authority Pension Fund Forum*

“It is critical to protect and support the best employers in America who treat their employees well with fair wages, healthcare and retirement security. These employers who embrace their employees' unions have to compete every day with those companies that sell workers short with substandard wages and no benefits.

Jack Marco, *Chairman, Marco Consulting Group*

Business Scholars Make the Case for Unions in Today's Economy

Concerned about growing inequality and the disappearing middle class, leading business school academics are speaking out in support of policies that are both good for business and rebuild our economy. As these academics point out, many successful businesses find benefits in labor-management partnerships, including lower turnover, higher productivity, and an enhanced capacity for innovation.

“There are many businesspeople who understand the economy is increasingly out of balance, and that unionism counts as an important remedy. The middle class is losing ground as top managers make astronomical salaries and workers' wages remain flat. The economy suffers from a deficit of purchasing power. Society is less democratic. It is time for socially conscious business leaders to take a stand for a more balanced economy and defend workers' freedom of association.

David Jacobs, *Associate Professor of Labor and Human Resources, Earl Graves School of Management, Morgan State University*

“The evidence is clear that laws that fail to protect workers' rights are also a serious drag on wage and productivity growth and make true labor-management cooperation impossible. Real action to support workers and their workplaces should be treated as the catalyst for an economic recovery that is broadly shared and sustainable.

Thomas A. Kochan, *Co-Director, Institute for Work and Employment Research, MIT Sloan School of Management*