



News Release

Pennsylvania Restaurant Association and National Restaurant Association Praise U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter's Opposition to Union Card Check Bill

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(Harrisburg, PA) – The Pennsylvania Restaurant Association and the National Restaurant Association today thanked U.S. Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) for his announcement of opposition this afternoon to union card check legislation, the Employee Free Choice Act (S. 560), which would effectively deny American workers their right to a federally protected private-ballot election to decide unionization and force binding government arbitration for contracts on businesses, including small businesses and restaurateurs, 120 days after unionizing. Sen. Specter announced his opposition both to the legislation and to a parliamentary cloture vote that would force action on the bill.

"On behalf of Pennsylvania's restaurants and all food and beverage employees in the Commonwealth, we thank Senator Specter for meeting and talking with us, for carefully weighing all sides of the issue, and for making a courageous decision to stand up and speak out against union card check legislation," said Patrick Conway, President & CEO of the Pennsylvania Restaurant Association. "Senator Specter's decision demonstrates his belief in the private ballot in the workplace, and his opposition to mandatory first-contract binding arbitration. The union card check bill would undermine the basic principle of the private ballot in America, and would subject workers to intimidation and coercion in addition to driving more employers and jobs out of business and offshore."

"Restaurateurs across the nation deeply appreciate Senator Specter's stand against the union card check bill," said National Restaurant Association Executive Vice President of Public Affairs Beth Johnson. "EFCA is a clear violation of employee rights, which would strip employees of the protection of a private-ballot election in determining whether or not to unionize, opening them up to coercion and intimidation. Further, once a workplace decided to unionize through this flawed process, the union and the employer would have 120 days to negotiate a contract before binding arbitration by a government arbitrator is forced on the business. As many restaurants continue to struggle in this very difficult economy, having a government arbitrator create the terms of employment for businesses is an unnecessary and harmful intrusion. We thank Senator Specter for listening to our members and his diligent leadership. It will not be forgotten."

The Pennsylvania Restaurant Association (PRA) is a statewide trade association representing and serving Pennsylvania's restaurants, eating and drinking establishments, and foodservice operations. More information on the PRA is available at www.parestaurant.org.

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Founded in 1919, the National Restaurant Association is the leading business association for the restaurant industry, which is comprised of 945,000 restaurant and foodservice outlets and a work force of 13 million employees. Together with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, the Association works to lead America's restaurant industry into a new era of prosperity, prominence, and participation, enhancing the quality of life for all we serve. For more information, visit our Web site at www.restaurant.org.

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