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LARRY CRAIG

NEWS RELEASE

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CRAIG VOTES TO RETAIN SECRET BALLOTS IN UNION ELECTIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig joined 47 of his colleagues today to defeat H.R. 800, the union card-check bill. Sixty votes were needed to end debate on the bill.

Had the bill passed, it would have eliminated secret ballot elections used by employees when voting on whether or not to join a union. Secret ballot elections are administered by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and have been an important part of protecting employees for over sixty years.

Under current law, if 30 percent of the workers signed a card indicating they were interested in joining a union, the NLRB would administer formal secret elections, which were put in place to protect employees from coercion and intimidation by union leaders and other employees. Had this bill become law, secret ballots would have been entirely done away with and the NLRB would have been required to recognize a union if 50 percent of employees signed a card, a process known as “card check.”

Craig addressed this topic in his weekly editorial column last week:

“Employees do, and should, have the right to organize without fear of retaliation or coercion. I have supported and will continue to support this.

“The national union leadership is struggling for life. They need the intimidation factor of looking over the voter’s shoulder in order to boost their ranks. Instead of intimidation, they should strive to better represent workers.

“Unfortunately, they want to strip workers they claim to represent of a basic right – a right Americans are dying for in Iraq. My only regret when I voted ‘no’ on this bill was that I didn’t have purple ink to dip my finger in first.”