

# Michelle Miller

**Cocktail Server**

**Borgata Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City, NJ**

**Congressional Forum on the Employee Free Choice Act**

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Good morning, Congressmen. My name is Michelle Miller. I live in Atlantic City with my husband and two children. I have been a cocktail server and member of UNITEHERE! Local 54 for ten years. I currently work at the Borgata Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City.

In 2003, I volunteered to talk to workers who were hired at the Borgata. I wanted the workers at the Borgata to enjoy the job security, health benefits and annual raises I enjoyed as a Local 54 member. The Borgata allowed us to talk to workers at the hotel. We had a table at the hotel entrance where workers were free to talk to us and sign authorization cards to form a union. Management did not make any negative statements against the union, force anyone to attend anti-union meetings, or otherwise attempt to thwart their employees' right to form a union.

In fact, in contrast to some of the other workers on the panel who were fired for trying to form a union, I was hired while trying to form a union. Managers were so impressed by my enthusiasm while talking to the workers that they offered me a job at the Borgata.

Over 75% of the workers signed authorization cards and the union was certified. The whole campaign only took six weeks and within 3 months we had a first contract, which provides superior wages, 100% employer-paid healthcare, and a pension with retiree health benefits.

After hearing the other workers on this panel, I cannot tell you how shocked and appalled I am by their stories. Our organizing campaign had none of the tension, confrontation, interference or pressure from our employer that I hear these other workers talk about. My coworkers and I were informed about the union, and given the opportunity to make a private choice about whether we wanted to join or not. I was not made to feel like I had to choose between voting for a union and being disloyal to my employer; or voting against a union and being loyal to my employer. It just seemed right to me that my employer would let me decide whether I wanted a union or not, and when a majority of the workers indicated that they did want a union, we got one. And unlike some of the others on this panel, in a matter of weeks, we had a contract - a good contract.

I understand the Employee Free Choice Act will allow all workers the opportunity to decide whether to join a union or not the same way we did at the Borgata. This should be an automatic option available to all workers.

I thank you for sponsoring the bill and urge you to fight to get it passed.