

May 26, 2011

The Honorable Jerry Brown, Governor
State Capitol
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

Please veto SB 104 (Steinberg): Labor Representatives: Elections.

SB 104 would allow field laborers to organize unions by submitting a petition to the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, with cards signed by a majority of a farm's employees under the urging and scrutiny of union organizers. In other words, SB 104 would eliminate secret-ballot elections, one of the nation's most hallowed protectors of our freedoms.

Under current law, union organizers may go onto farms and explain their belief in the merits of union membership to the workers. If 50% of workers sign cards, a secret ballot election is called to determine if union representation will be established. That is what Robert Kennedy, Cesar Chavez and you sought 36 years ago when the Agricultural Labor Relations Act was enacted. It is the same system that has worked well on California farms and in all other industries since the National Labor Relations Act was passed in 1938.

By denying field laborers the fundamental right to secret elections, SB 104 would eliminate the safeguards that protect them from coercion and intimidation by over-zealous union organizers. There would be no assurance that the cards signed in the presence of the organizers would convey the employees' free, uncoerced and personal choices.

OCTax assumes that you would NOT sign a bill that would eliminate voting booths, voting machines, mailed ballots and other privacy protections that enable most of us to fill out our ballots secretly, away from the scrutiny and urging of partisan officials. But that's exactly what your signature on SB 104 would do our state's field laborers. Please veto SB 104.

Sincerely,



President, Orange County Taxpayers Association

cc: Senator Steinberg; Orange County Legislative Delegation