

**Statement of Mike Ivey  
Materials Handler  
Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation**

**Gaffney, South Carolina**

My name is Mike Ivey, and I appreciate the opportunity to share with the committee my experiences under an abusive card check organizing drive which is still ongoing after four and a half years.

Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation (FCCC) in Gaffney, South Carolina, has employed me for approximately seven years. We are a non-union facility and more than the majority of employees are extremely proud of that fact. The problems we have started in the fall of 2002.

During contract negotiations for their union facilities, the UAW and Daimler Chrysler Corporation reached a card check agreement to allow the UAW to try to organize their non-union facilities. This agreement prevents FCCC from doing anything positive for their employees, or discussing the situation with the employees. This agreement also allows the union to recruit and pay FCCC employees at this facility to handle their card check system.

The card check system consists of coercing employees to sign a card for the union. If enough cards are signed, 50% + 1, then the facility is considered to be a union facility. In this process of obtaining the needed signatures, there are a lot of untruths told.

Early on, the employees for a non-union FCCC signed and submitted a petition which clearly states that they want no union representation at this facility. More than seventy percent of all employees signed this petition. The UAW and Daimler Chrysler Corporation received these petitions with no response, nor any halt in the card check drive.

In April of 2003, the CEO of Daimler Chrysler promised the employees of FCCC a wage increase at a plant wide meeting. In August of 2003, when the time came to make good on that promise the union threatened a lawsuit against Daimler Chrysler if the wage increase was implemented. They feared that if

employees got the wage increase they had long been promised, it would reduce support for the union. We obtained free legal aid from the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, and only after we filed charges at the National Labor Relations Board, did the union allow the pay increase.

Employees are told at off-site meetings that signing a card only certifies that they attended the meeting. Employees are also offered a free t-shirt if they sign a card. What they are not told is that these cards are a legally binding document, which states that the employee is pro union -- thus placing the union one step closer to their goal of complete control of the employees' workplace life without the employee even realizing it.

In the work place, the employees running the organizing campaign for the UAW are relentless in trying to get the employees to sign union cards. This has created a hostile work environment, with employees who once were friends who are now at odds with each other.

The employees who are not in support of the Union should have the right to go to work and not be harassed every day. This harassment has been going on more than 4 years with no end in sight. Faced with this never-ending onslaught, we employees feel that the UAW is holding our heads under water until we drown.

In April 2005, the UAW obtained the personal information of each employee. It wasn't enough that employees were being harassed at work, but now they are receiving phone calls at home. The UAW also had Union employees from other facilities actually visit these employees at their homes. The union's organizers refuse to take "no" for an answer. If you told one group of organizers that you were not interested, the next time they would send someone else. Some employees have had 5 or more harassing visits from these union organizers. The only way, it seems, to stop the badgering and pressure is to sign the card.

Moreover, in many instances, employees who signed cards under pressure or false pretenses later attempted to retrieve or void this card. The union would not allow this to happen, telling them that they could not do so.

After four and a half years of trying to organize our facility, the majority of employees are still against the Union by roughly a 3 to 1 ratio.

We feel that the aggressive behavior of UAW organizers will only escalate in 2007. All the union Freightliner facilities are facing major layoffs in the coming months. We expect the UAW to turn up the heat at our Gaffney facility to make up for the dues revenue shortfalls at the union facilities.

I understand that some members of Congress would like to mandate this abusive card check process for selecting a union so that employees everywhere will go through what we continue to experience. Rather than increasing this coercive practice, Congress should ban it.

Everyone in public office is elected by secret ballot vote. Please give us a chance in our work place to make the decision on representation in the same manner.