

# POLITICAL MEETINGS

Q:

We've heard there is a legislative measure that will be bad for business and bad for our employees. Can we hold a mandatory meeting to discuss the measure?

A:

As of January 1, 2010, employers may not require attendance at a meeting "if the primary purpose . . . is to communicate the opinion of the employer about religious or political matters."

Honoring diversity of opinion—religious and political—should be a workplace principle. The new statute does not appear to prohibit *sharing* information the employer genuinely believes may benefit the employees, but does prohibit *requiring* employees to participate in a political or religious discussion.

Keep in mind that unionization is a "political matter." That means a meeting to convince employees they don't need a union is prohibited.

Expect a challenge to this law on constitutional grounds (freedom of speech by employers), and preemption grounds (the National Labor Relations Act already restricts meetings related to unionization).

For now, the answer to your question is this: No, you may not require attendance at a meeting to discuss the legislative measure. Stay tuned...

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