

The Gateway-River City Times

Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) gives employees the right to:

- Form, join or assist a union
- Choose representatives to bargain with their employer on their behalf
- Act together with other employees for their benefit and protection
- Choose not to engage in any of these protected activities

NLRB Region 14 St. Louis, MO and Subregion 33 Peoria, IL



St. Louis



Peoria

Chairman Wilma Liebman: Forging a New Process

By Melissa Olivero, Subregion 33



Wilma B. Liebman

On January 20, 2009, Wilma Liebman was appointed as the 20th Chairman of the National Labor Relations Board by President Obama. Although she does not see herself as a trailblazer, Chairman Liebman is only the second woman to serve in this capacity since the creation of the Board in its current form in 1935. Chairman Liebman, a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, holds a B.A. from Barnard College in New York and a J.D. from George Washington University Law Center. She was first appointed to the Board on November 14, 1997.

In June, I had the distinct privilege of interviewing Chairman Liebman. Seeking a job in labor law, she came to work for the Board in Washington, D.C. as a staff attorney upon her graduation from law school in 1974. She says that working for the Board, "seemed like an excellent way to learn the field." Government service, she

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Complaint alleges Connecticut company illegally fired employee over Facebook post

A complaint issued by the NLRB's Hartford regional office on October 27 alleges that an ambulance service illegally terminated an employee who posted negative remarks about her supervisor on her personal Facebook page. The complaint also alleges that the company, American Medical Response of Connecticut, Inc., illegally denied union representation to the employee during an investigatory interview, and

maintained and enforced an overly broad blogging and internet posting policy.

An NLRB investigation found that the employee's Facebook postings were protected concerted activity, and that the company's blogging and internet posting policy contained unlawful provisions, including one that prohibited employees from making disparaging remarks when discussing the company or supervisors and another that

prohibited employees from depicting the company in any way over the internet without company permission. Such provisions constitute interference with employees in the exercise of their right to engage in protected concerted activity.

A hearing on the case is scheduled for January 25, 2011.

SUPREME COURT RULES THAT TWO-MEMBER NLRB LACKED AUTHORITY TO ISSUE DECISIONS



On June 17, 2010, in *New Process Steel, LP v. NLRB*, 560 U.S. ____ 2010 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the National Labor Relations Board was not authorized to issue decisions during a 27-month period when three of its five seats were vacant. The Board operated with two members from January 2008 to late March 2010, when President Obama recess-appointed two additional members. In continuing to issue decisions during that period, the two remaining members—current Chairman Wilma B. Liebman, a Democrat, and Member Peter C. Schaumber, a Republican—relied on Section 3(b) of the National Labor Relations Act as well as an opinion issued by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel, which concluded that "if the Board delegated all of its powers to a group of three members, that group would continue to issue decisions and orders as long as a quorum of the two members remained." The Board made such a delegation in December 2007 to a group of three members, which included Liebman and Schaumber, who, acting under that delegation, issued about 600 decisions. At the time, about 100 of the two-member decisions were pending on appeal before the federal courts; all such cases have now been returned to the Board for reconsideration with the majority of those having been reaffirmed by the new Board. Of the cases which were not pending at the time of the Supreme Court's decision, most had been previously closed under the Board's processes or are in some stage of compliance proceedings. Appeals of those cases are not expected. The Board's website, www.nlr.gov, has information on all 595 remanded cases for your review.

DID YOU KNOW that private employers subject to the NLRB's jurisdiction cannot maintain rules prohibiting employees from discussing their wages or other terms and conditions of employment?

BOARD RULES THAT UNION "BANNERING" IS PERMISSIBLE

On August 27, 2010, the Board ruled in three cases that "bannering" at a secondary employer was not coercive and does not violate the NLRA. The cases, involving the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local 1506, in Arizona, arose when union carpenters held 16-foot banners near establishments—two medical centers and a restaurant—to protest work performed for the owners by construction contractors that the union claimed paid substandard wages and benefits. Two of the banners declared "SHAME" while a third urged customers not to eat at the restaurant.

The Board majority, Chairman Wilma Liebman and Members Craig Becker and Mark Pearce, found that the bannering was not coercive and, therefore, not unlawful. Dissenting Members Peter Schaumber and Brian Hayes found that it was. The cases are *Eliason & Knuth, Inc.*, 28-CC-955, *Northwest Medical Center*, 28-CC-956, and *RA Tempe Corporation*, 28-CC-957, with a Board citation of [355 NLRB No. 159](#). The charges were filed in 2003, but vacancies at the Board delayed the decision-making process. To read the decisions, go to the Board's website, www.nlr.gov, and click on "Board Decisions."



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We would like to know if this Newsletter is helpful and informative. We would also like to know if there are certain topics, issues, Board decisions, or Regional practices that you would like to see addressed or discussed in future editions. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated and carefully considered. You may also contact the Outreach Coordinators if you would like to be added or deleted from our mailing list or if you would like to have a speaker for your group.

For Region 14, email Donald.Gardiner@nlrb.gov or call him at (314) 539-7766. For Subregion 33, email Melissa.Olivero@nlrb.gov or call her at (309) 671-7080.

BOARD ORDERS COMPOUND INTEREST, ELECTRONIC NOTICE POSTING



In a pair of decisions issued on October 25, 2010, the National Labor Relations Board adopted two new remedial policies: adding daily compound interest to backpay and other monetary awards and requiring many employers and unions to notify workers electronically of NLRB orders in unfair labor practice cases. The Board's stated goal was making Board remedies more effective and in line with current legal and workplace practices.

Going forward, interest on backpay and all other monetary awards will be compounded daily, following the evolving practice of other legal regimes including the Internal Revenue Code. The decision in [Kentucky River Medical Center, 356 NLRB No. 8](#), was unanimous.

Also, employers who customarily communicate with their employees electronically, either through e-mail or an Internet or Intranet site, will be required to post remedial notices the same way, in addition to posting a paper notice to a bulletin board. The same will hold true for union respondents who customarily communicate with their members electronically. The decision in [J. Picini Flooring, 356 NLRB No. 9](#), was 3-to-1, with Chairman Wilma Liebman and Members Craig Becker and Mark Pearce in favor and Member Brian Hayes dissenting. On both issues, the Board had sought briefs from interested parties in addition to the respondents. On the question of compound interest, amicus briefs were received from the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, the Service Employees International Union, and the AFL-CIO. On electronic notice posting, amicus briefs were received from the AFL-CIO, Service Employees International Union, the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Bodman LLP, and the Texas Association of Business.

The National Labor Relations Board is proud of its 75-year history enforcing the National Labor Relations Act, the primary law governing relations between employers and employees in the private sector. On July 5, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Act into law, stating that the law sought to achieve "common justice and economic advance." Starting in the Great Depression and continuing through World War II and the economic growth and challenges that followed, the NLRB has worked to guarantee the rights of employees to bargain collectively, if they choose to do so.

NLRB TRIVIA

(FROM THE 75th ANNIVERSARY WEBSITE)

Question: What were the laws involved, and what were the case-handling procedures, during World War II?

Answer: Under the War Labor Disputes Act of 1943, the Board was required to conduct secret strike ballots in situations in which employees were considering a strike. The employees voted on the following question: "Do you wish to permit an interruption of war production in wartime as a result of the dispute?" In each of the fiscal years that these ballots were conducted, a substantial majority of the unites voted to strike. The Board duty to conduct these votes was discontinued as a result of an appropriation rider in 1946.

Question: On what NLRB Regional Office does the sun first shine each day?

Answer: Region 20, San Francisco. The Honolulu Subregional Office, part of Region 20, has jurisdiction extending well across the International Date Line and as far west as the Northern Mariana Islands.



The Board has created a special website to commemorate the Act's 75th Anniversary:

<http://www.nlr.gov/75th>.

Board Denies Request for Review; Asserts Jurisdiction

In our last issue we reported that the Regional Director's Decision and Direction of Election in *Catholic Social Services, Diocese of Belleville*, Case 14-RC-12769, was pending a request for review by the Board. On August 27, 2010, the Board denied the Employer's request for review for the unit of residential treatment specialists and residential treatment aides. In the Order Denying Review,

the majority found that that the Regional Director properly applied *NLRB v. Catholic Bishop*, 440 U.S. 490 (1979) in asserting jurisdiction over the Employer, a not-for-profit corporation engaged in the operation of a childcare facility. Even assuming *University of Great Falls v. NLRB*, 278 F.3d 1335 (D.C. Cir. 2002) governs the Board's assertion of jurisdiction over religious, educational institutions, the Board

found that nonetheless it would conclude that it is appropriate to assert jurisdiction over the Employer. Member Schaumber, dissenting, would have granted review to consider the Employer's contention that the Employer's children's center is a religious organization over which the Board should not assert jurisdiction. Click [here](#) to see the Board's Order.

Region 14 Wrap-up

This section will highlight topics related to Region 14.



Board Rejects Supervisory Status Argument; Affirms Gissel Order

In [*American Directional Boring, Inc., d/b/a ADB Utility Contractors, Inc.*](#), 355 NLRB No. 172 (August 27, 2010), the Board considered the case reported at [353 NLRB 166](#) wherein the two-member Board found certain violations of the Act. Thereafter, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals denied enforcement. The Board found that the Employer, which is engaged in aerial and underground installation and maintenance of cable and fiber optics, violated the Act by discharging 13

union supporters. In doing so, the Board rejected the Employer's argument that the individuals who were discharged were statutory supervisors. The Board also affirmed the administrative law judges' findings that a category I *Gissel* bargaining order was warranted in light of the Employer's extensive record of unlawful conduct. (The Employer did not appeal the judges' findings that it violated the Act by: Impliedly threatening employees with job loss, futility, and closure; soliciting union supporters to quit their employment; impliedly threatening discipline for wearing Union pins; impliedly threatening reduction or loss of their bonus; threatening loss of insurance and retirement plan; threatening to subcontract more work; interrogating employees about their union activities and threatening unspecified reprisals because of their union activities; and creating an impression of surveillance.)

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Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. to
4:30 p.m.**

Region Finds Wall-to-Wall Unit Appropriate; Dismisses Petition

In *Environmental Quality Management, Inc.*, Case 14-RC-12785, Operating Engineers Local No. 513, AFL-CIO, sought to represent seven heavy equipment operators employed by the Employer, an environmental engineering and remediation contractor performing lead remediation work at primarily residential properties in Missouri. The Employer contended the appropriate unit would encompass all 18 employees including operators, laborers, laborer/operators, field technician, truck drivers and crew leaders. The Regional Director found that the appropriate unit should include three laborer/operators that performed operator duties for sufficient periods of time to conclude they were dual function employees. The Union did not desire to go to an election in any unit other than the petitioned-for unit. Accordingly, the petition was dismissed.

Board Denies Review; Union did not waive right to represent LPNs

In [Springfield Terrace LTD, 355 NLRB No. 168 \(2010\)](#), the Board rejected an employer's request for review, finding it did not raise any issues warranting review. The Board also found that the evidence did not establish that the union had waived its right to represent licensed practical nurses (LPNs) based on language in its current collective bargaining agreement with the employer. That contract covers nonprofessional employees.

The Board has

long recognized that parties to a labor agreement may waive certain of their rights, including some fundamental statutory rights. However, the Board will find such waivers only when they are clear, knowing, and unmistakable, whether predicated on a contractual provision or by conduct. *Northern Pacific Sealcoating*, 309 NLRB 759 (1992).

In the contract between the Union and the Employer, the Board found that the contractual

language did not satisfy the strict standard for finding a waiver of the Union's right to file a petition seeking to represent the LPNs as a separate bargaining unit (as opposed to adding them to the unit from which they were excluded).

The Regional Director had also found that the LPNs were not supervisors. The Board impliedly adopted that finding by attaching relevant portions of the Regional Director's Decision and by directing an election among the LPNs.

Employer Found to Have Unlawfully Withdrawn Recognition

In [Art's Way Vessels, 355 NLRB No. 192 \(2010\)](#), the Board rejected Employer's Section 10(b) defense. The Board instead held that the Employer unlawfully withdrew recognition from the Union, ceased honoring the collective bargaining agreement, and made unilateral changes. Specifically, the Board found that Employer's cessation of dues remittances did not put the Union

on notice that it had repudiated the collective bargaining agreement. The cessation occurred not because the Employer repudiated the collective bargaining agreement, but rather because all of the unit employees had quit.

The Board further noted that, because the Employer is located in Iowa (a "right-to-work" state) where it is unlawful to

require payment of dues or fees as a condition of employment, its cessation of and failure to resume dues deduction did not constitute an open and obvious sign of its unlawful conduct.

How did it Play in Peoria?

In a "play" on the words of the city's motto dating back to Vaudevillian days, this section will highlight topics related to Subregion 33.



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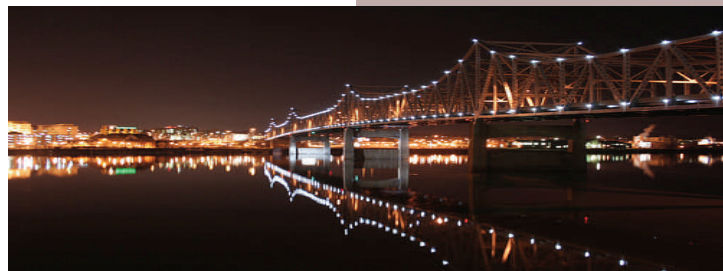
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Hours:

Monday through Friday

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



OUTREACH CORNER

06/18/10—St. Louis managerial staff spoke to law clerks of the federal district court in St. Louis on the history of the Act, its tenets, the structure of the Board and General Counsels' office, and the interaction between the Agency and the court.

07/14/10—St. Louis field and managerial staff spoke at a labor law breakfast series about Regional Office case processing.

07/28/10—St. Louis field staff spoke to Lindenwood University's General Dynamics-Collective Bargaining class about the NLRA.

09/04/10—Peoria field staff attended an annual LaSalle County, Illinois, Labor Day picnic, and spoke to some of the 200 plus attendees about workplace rights.

09/07/10—Peoria field staff

set-up a booth at Peoria's annual Labor Day celebration (attended by about 5,000 people), answering public questions about the Act and workplace rights.

09/28/10—St. Louis managerial staff spoke about the history of the Act and legislative changes at a Labor and Employment Relations Association seminar on arbitration. Field staff attended this event.

09/29/10—St. Louis managerial staff spoke at the International Institute about the Act and field office procedures.

10/14/10—Peoria field staff addressed 57 graduate students in the Employment and Labor Relations Division of Indiana University of Pennsylvania about day-to-day field office operations.



ASK the DIRECTOR



If you have a question or topic that you would like the Regional Director to address, please email us at Region14@nlrb.gov, call us at 314-539-7770, or write to us at Region 14, 1222 Spruce Street, Room 8.302, St. Louis, MO 63103. The Regional Director will respond to topics that are of interest to the general readership in the next Newsletter. For any questions of an individualized nature, the Regional Director will make every effort to respond to you directly in a timely manner.



FREE NLRB SPEAKERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR GROUP

Are you interested in having a representative of the Regional or Subregional Office address your group?

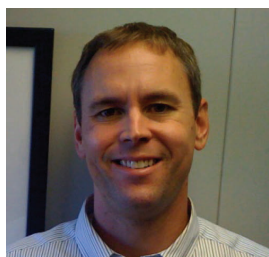
Members of the Regional and Subregional Office staff are available to make presentations before any group, including classroom groups, legal service clinics, or service agency staffs, as well as those members of the public that they serve. Speakers are available to cover a wide variety of topics, including the Act's protections, how the Region processes unfair labor practice cases and representation petitions, or any other NLRB topics of interest.

To arrange for a speaker and to discuss possible topics, please contact Outreach Coordinators Don Gardiner at (314) 539-7766 or Melissa Olivero at (309) 671-7080. You may also request a speaker through this link on the NLRB's website: http://www.nlrb.gov/about_us/speakers.aspx.



WELCOME ABOARD!!

Rochelle Balentine received a B.A. from New Mexico State University in 2006 and a law degree from Saint Louis University School of Law in May 2010. Rochelle was admitted to the Missouri Bar in September 2010 and has argued before the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Eastern District in a case involving the denial of unemployment compensation benefits. A Texas native, Rochelle currently lives in St. Louis Hills with her two rescued Chihuahuas.



In July 2010, Bradley Fink began working at the St. Louis Regional Office. Before coming to the NLRB, Bradley clerked for two years for the Honorable Judge Lawrence Hagel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims in Washington, D.C. Bradley is a St. Louis native with an undergraduate degree from Northwestern University and a law degree from St. Louis University. Prior to law school, he spent four years as a naval officer based out of Everett, Washington. Bradley is an avid runner and he completed his first marathon this spring. He is engaged to be married in March 2011.

Tiffany Miller has rejoined the staff of Subregion 33. Tiffany began her career with the Board in the Peoria office, but later spent years working in Region 7—Detroit, Michigan, and Region 22—Newark, New Jersey. Before joining the Board staff, Tiffany graduated from the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations at the University of Illinois. Tiffany is a native of Illinois and is happy to return to the Peoria area. Tiffany's husband and daughter returned with her to Peoria this summer.



Nate Strickler began working for the Board in the Peoria Subregional office in December 2009. Before coming to the Board, he worked for three years as a litigation associate at the law firm of Heyl, Royster, Voelker & Allen in Peoria. Nate is a Peoria native with an undergraduate degree in Sociology from the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, and a law degree from Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Before law school, Nate worked for three years at a public relations/advertising firm in Washington, D.C., specializing in social marketing. Nate and his wife have newborn twins and a big, fluffy Lab-mix dog.

Chairman Liebman (Continued from page 1)

says, is a wonderful opportunity, particularly for young lawyers, to learn a field of specialty. Working for the Board exposes attorneys to a broad range of issues and to parties with different interests and, thus, provides a wonderful learning opportunity, she observes.

Chairman Liebman believes that the Board continues to make a difference. "As a member of the NLRB, I feel that I am doing something that matters, and I feel privileged to have the chance to do it," she says.

Chairman Liebman believes that the Act, at its core, is a human rights statute. She explains, "the Act recognizes the right of workers to organize collectively, a form of freedom of association." The freedom of association and the freedom to engage in collective bargaining embodied in the Act are recognized around the world as core principles of democracy, she states. Chairman Liebman fully expects the Act, the collective bargaining system it establishes, and the labor movement itself to endure.

American employees, Chairman Liebman observes, may need the Act's protections more than ever. "Every day," she says, "I read the cases that come before us about working people who, despite the odds, despite the risks and obstacles, join together to improve life on the job. They work on assembly lines, in industrial laundries, on construction sites, and in mega-stores. They slaughter hogs, drive trucks, clean hotel rooms, and care for the disabled." Although these workers sometimes have unions to help them, other times they act spontaneously to help each

other. Chairman Liebman emphatically states that, "anyone who says that workers do not want, or need, some form of representation in today's economy is mistaken."

Chairman Liebman notes that, in the midst of plenty, inequality is rising. "Much has changed in our society since 1935 when Congress enacted the Act in the midst of the Great Depression. Much has changed since the 1950s and 1960s, when millions of Americans came to enjoy a middle class way of life through the collective bargaining system," she says.

In her years with the Board, Chairman Liebman has seen

"Today's labor laws were the product of tremendous struggle. We honor that struggle when we take the Act seriously, when we enforce it fairly and thoughtfully, and even when we point out its shortcomings."

significant changes in the dynamics of the American workforce. "Accelerated competitive pressures have certainly led businesses to look for greater flexibility in the employment relationship," she observes. Significantly, Chairman Liebman says, "employers seem to be using more and more part-time employees, temp workers, contract employees, and leased employees, and contracting out many ancillary functions." In her opinion, this has resulted in enormous flux and unpredictability in the employment relationship. She further observes significant volatility in the business world with the rise of consolidations,

restructurings, and mergers, and the dislocations that result for countless workers.

Chairman Liebman finds that this instability makes collective bargaining more important than ever. "The constant churning of jobs, technological change, the elimination of jobs, and creation of different types of jobs, causes tumult, which makes stable collective bargaining relationships very difficult. Enormous strains have been put on the system. Yet, the institution of collective bargaining is flexible enough to play a meaningful role in managing all of this change and allowing the parties to reach their own solutions," states Chairman Liebman.

Her term as Board Chairman has been marked by historic challenges. During a 27-month period that ended with the recess appointment of two members in late March 2010, the Board operated with only two members: Chairman Liebman and former Chairman and Board member Peter Schaumber. They decided nearly 600 cases on which they could agree. On June 17, 2010, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *New Process Steel, L.P. v. NLRB*, 560 U.S. ____ 2010 that the Board was not authorized to issue decisions when 3 of its 5 seats were vacant. In July 2010, three-member panels of the Board began considering about 100 cases pending in the courts when the Supreme Court issued *New Process Steel*.

Under Chairman Liebman's leadership, the Board has issued 315 decisions between October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010. Notably, about 182 decisions have issued since August 2010.

Several significant decisions

(Continued on page 9)

CLAUDE HARRELL NAMED REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF REGION 14

National Labor Relations Board Chairman Wilma Liebman and then-General Counsel Ronald Meisburg announced the appointment of Claude (Chip) Harrell as Regional Director of Region 14 effective February 28, 2010. A career employee who most recently served as Assistant to the Regional Director in Region 10 (Atlanta), Mr. Harrell succeeds Ralph Tremain. Mr. Harrell began his career as a field examiner in Region 9 (Cincinnati) in 1976. He was promoted to Supervisory Examiner in 1992, and moved to the Atlanta office in 2003.

Former-General Counsel Meisburg said of the appointment, "Chip Harrell is an excellent manager who brings considerable

expertise to his position as Regional Director in St. Louis. During his years with the Agency, Chip has acquired a well-deserved reputation for balanced case analysis, efficient management, and a deep appreciation and understanding of Agency practices and the law. His strong commitment to addressing the needs of the public will serve him well as he continues the tradition of excellence in Region 14."

Mr. Harrell graduated with distinction from the University of Arizona in 1976, with a degree in Public Administration. During the course of his career with the NLRB, he has been involved in numerous complex and difficult cases. He has served on national committees affecting Agency

policies and procedures, including the Representation Case Committee which substantially revised both pre- and post-election procedures, and the Field Quality Committee, which effectuates one of the General Counsel's principal goals—to maintain the highest quality of unfair labor practice and representation case handling procedures.

Please join the staff of Region 14 and Subregion 33 in extending a very warm welcome to Chip.



Chairman Liebman (Continued from page 8)

have been issued by the Board in recent months. The Board has adopted two new remedial policies: adding daily compound interest to backpay and other monetary awards; and requiring many employers and unions to notify employees electronically of NLRB orders in unfair labor practice cases. In addition, the Board recently found that a union practice of displaying large, stationary banners at the businesses of secondary employers (with which the unions were not involved in a primary labor dispute) was lawful and not coercive.

Chairman Liebman has mixed feelings about the controversy over the last year surrounding proposed legislation to amend federal labor law and the nomination of new Board members. "While rancorous, it is in some respects welcome because it has brought important labor issues back into the public eye," she says. Ideally, however, the controversy will lead to a more constructive, sober dialogue about these serious issues.

Labor law practitioners, she believes, will see a more dynamic approach to the law from the new Board, one that will, "make the law work better in a changed economy." She would also like to see confidence in the Agency restored. "Many stakeholders have avoided our processes, especially election processes, for years. I think a restoration of confidence will come through a combination of decision making and minimizing delays," she observes.

Another of Chairman Liebman's goals for the remainder of her term is to enhance public awareness of the Agency and the value of our work. She hopes that the Agency's current public outreach efforts will allow the Agency to, "tell our own story rather than have the story told for us" and in so doing better educate workers regarding their rights and employers their obligations.

Chairman Liebman has kind words for employees in the field. "I want to thank them all for their commitment and service to this Agency, and to the public, and their dedication to applying this statute in a meaningful way," she said. She recognizes that the controversy of the last few years has been difficult. Chairman Liebman says, "I want to thank everyone for staying with us through this difficult period." She also welcomes input from people who work for the Agency as to ways to make the Agency work more effectively.

"Today's labor laws were the product of tremendous struggle," she says. "We honor that struggle when we take the Act seriously, when we enforce it fairly and thoughtfully, and even when we point out its shortcomings." In this 75th anniversary year of the National Labor Relations Act, she still sees its significance. "The Act still has vital importance for our country, in supporting a democratic society and a fair economy," she says. "The basic values in the Act are as vital today as they were 75 years ago." But because the Act has gone over 60 years without any substantial revision "it is our responsibility to try to keep the Act dynamic and vital and make it work in today's changed economy."

*NLRB**Region 14 St. Louis, MO and**Subregion 33 Peoria, IL**Outreach Newsletter*

The **National Labor Relations Board** is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1935 to administer the **National Labor Relations Act**, which is the primary law that governs relations between unions and employers in the private sector. The statute guarantees the right of employees to organize and to bargain collectively with their employers, and to engage in other protected concerted activity with or without a union, or to refrain from all such activity.

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The Basics

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), charged with enforcing the NLRA, has two principal functions: 1) to determine through secret ballot elections whether employees wish to be represented by a union in dealing with their employers, called representation cases, and 2) to prevent and remedy unlawful acts by either employers or unions, called unfair labor practice cases. The Agency does not act on its own motion in either function. It processes only those charges of unfair labor practices and petitions for employee elections that are filed with the NLRB in one of its 51 Regional, Subregional, or Resident Offices. Region 14 covers the geographical area of Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois. Subregion 33 covers the Northern Half of Illinois (except for the Chicago area) and some of Iowa. If you have questions about a workplace problem, please call an NLRB Information Officer in the Office that covers the area where your employer is located. Information Officers are available by phone or by walking into Regional Offices during business hours. Our [website](http://www.NLRB.gov) is extensive and user-friendly, and it can give you additional information about filing charges and petitions with the NLRB and other workplace questions.

