



Press Release:

IKEA Violates IWAY within first 24 hours of election campaign!

June 23, 2010- Danville, Virginia. It only took IKEA 24 hours to violate the ILO Freedom of Association Convention, its Global Framework Agreement with Builders and Woodworkers International, (BWI), and thus its own IWAY.

The Machinist Union filed for a secret ballot election on Monday June 20, 2011. The workers wished to have hourly non-supervisory workers in the bargaining unit. Swedwood within 24 hours intervened in the union's election process and refused to accept their workers request to self determination. Instead, Swedwood is demanding to include about 30 "Team Captains" who are responsible for discipline, and making recommendations for hiring and firing. In many industrialized democracies, the employer has no role in determining who is in the union.

"It is ironic, that Swedwood who has claimed they want to allow everyone to decide for themselves whether to be in the union or not, decides immediately that it will force 30 Team Captains to be in the union. There is only one reason for Swedwood to demand that Team Captains be in the union that is to influence the outcome of the election." According to William Street, Director of the Woodworkers Department. "The IWAY states:

IKEA supports each co-worker's right to freedom of association and does not express any preference within the institutional and recognised co-worker associations. We respect the rights of our co-workers to join, form or not to join a co-worker association of their choice without fear of reprisal, interference, intimidation or harassment.

I guess this doesn't apply to the Swedwood workers who do not wish to associate with Team Captains or the Team Captains who do not wish to associate with the union. It will be interesting to hear how Swedwood will defend taking choice away from workers to decide who they want in their own union. The IAMAW is ready to represent all workers and if Team Captains want a union for themselves we are more than ready to offer them the opportunity. But Swedwood has no business interfering in the choice of the hourly non-supervisory workers to have a union of their own choosing."