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Contact: Terry O'Neill, Executive Director  
(415) 296-7629  
toneill@nelahq.org

## **The National Employment Lawyers Association Applauds Bill To Restore Access To America's Civil Justice System**

(Washington, DC) – The National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA) applauds the leadership of Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Representatives Hank Johnson (D-GA) and Jerry Nadler (D-NY) in introducing the Forced Arbitration Injustice Repeal Act (FAIR Act) which will end the insidious corporate practice of forcing workers and consumers to address disputes in secret, one-sided arbitration proceedings.

The FAIR Act will open the courthouse doors and restore workers' access to America's civil justice system. Among other things, the FAIR Act will make it unlawful for employers to impose arbitration on workers, unless the worker knowingly and voluntarily agrees to arbitration *after* a dispute arises or pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.

Terry O'Neill, NELA's Executive Director, stated, "Forced arbitration is a system that was intentionally developed by corporate America to avoid accountability and circumvent laws that were enacted to protect working people. Workers who are forced to address disputes in private arbitration are denied fundamental fairness, due process, and transparency that are part of any court proceeding, while employers avoid public accountability." O'Neill added, "Congress enacted legislation to protect workers from wage theft, workplace harassment, and discrimination on the job, but forced arbitration prevents harmed employees from accessing a court to enforce those laws. The FAIR Act is long overdue for all of America's workers. NELA urges Congress pass the FAIR Act without delay."

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*The National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA) is the country's largest professional organization of lawyers who represent individual employees in cases involving employment discrimination and other disputes with their employers. NELA advances employee rights and serves lawyers who advocate for equality and justice in the American workplace. NELA provides assistance and support to lawyers in protecting the rights of employees against the greater resources of their employers and the defense bar. It is the country's largest professional organization exclusively comprised of lawyers who represent individual employees in cases involving employment discrimination and other employment-related matters. NELA and its 69 circuit, state, and local affiliates have more than 4,000 members around the country.*