



CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

Seeking Justice for All

Assembly approves bill defending worker legal rights

AB 465 ensures “forced arbitration” clause isn’t a condition of employment

SACRAMENTO (May 14, 2015) – The California Assembly approved a bill Thursday backed by the Consumer Attorneys of California that would protect the legal rights of California workers who face the prospect of being forced to sign arbitration agreements as a part of employment.

AB 465, authored by Assemblyman Roger Hernandez (D-West Covina), will ensure that important employment rights and procedures can be waived only by the voluntary consent of employees in writing. These waivers, including waiving the right to trial by jury and requiring the use of arbitration to settle disputes, eliminate significant guarantees of fairness and due process that are cornerstones of the American civil justice system.

These clauses are often buried in the fine print of employment applications and employee handbooks. As a result it is nearly impossible for an employee or prospective employee to evaluate and make an informed choice about how a dispute will be resolved before a dispute exists.

Employers frequently require agreement to such waivers, including mandatory arbitration, as a condition of employment, meaning Californians will not be hired unless they give up their right to resolve employment claims in a court of law. AB 465 would ensure these waivers of rights cannot be made a condition of employment.

“When claims are settled behind closed doors in arbitration, we all lose,” said CAOC President Brian Chase. “AB 465 will ensure that workers do not face coercion from an employer that forces them to sign away their rights to resolve disputes in a court of law.”

AB 465 is sponsored by the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs’ attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers in cases involving personal injury, product liability, environmental degradation and other causes.

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