



Fair Arbitration Now

Forced arbitration stacks the deck against consumers and workers. It's time we even the scales.

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Fair Arbitration Now Coalition Applauds President Obama's Executive Order to Protect Workers' Civil Rights

WASHINGTON, DC—The White House has taken a very important step in protecting the rights of workers, according to the Fair Arbitration Now Coalition, which was formed to protect consumers, employees, homeowners, and the elderly from forced arbitration when businesses violate their rights. Yesterday afternoon, President Obama signed the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive Order mandating that companies with federal contracts worth \$1 million or more may not require their workers to submit to forced arbitration for discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, sexual harassment, or assault claims. We applaud the President's bold move to strengthen the enforcement of our civil rights laws.

For a number of years now, and with the blessing of a slim majority of the Supreme Court, corporations have been inserting forced arbitration clauses into the fine print of often non-negotiable contracts to strip workers of the right to hold them accountable in court if the company discriminates against them, violates equal pay laws, cheats them out of wages, or subjects them to unsafe working conditions. Forced arbitration does not provide important procedural guarantees of fairness and due process that are the hallmarks of courts of law. Workers who sign forced arbitration clauses as a condition of employment often don't know they've signed away their legal right to resolve their disputes in court until it is too late.

This executive order will allow workers who may have been sexually assaulted or had their civil rights violated by federal contractors to take back their rights and get their day in court. As President Obama noted in his remarks, there are 28 million Americans who work for federal contractors covered by the executive order, approximately one-fifth of the workforce. For these workers, this is a significant victory.

But we still have miles to go in the fight to end forced arbitration. We call on members of Congress to pick up where the White House has left off. The Arbitration Fairness Act of 2013 (AFA) [S.878 / H.R.1844], would prevent the enforcement of forced arbitration clauses in all civil rights, employment, antitrust, and consumer disputes.

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For more information about the Fair Arbitration Now Coalition, visit www.fairarbitrationnow.org.