The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) was established in 1935. It is the enforcement agency for the National Labor Relations Act, the principal labor law safeguarding private-sector workers’ rights—their rights to join together to improve their wages, benefits and treatment on the job. The board has five members nominated by the president. They serve five-year terms. The five board members and the general counsel are confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?
The NLRB protects private-sector workers in the American workplace. Under the law, workers have the right to join together to improve their lives at work, and it is illegal for employers to retaliate against workers—regardless of whether they are in a union—for exercising these rights.

But a recent radical decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit has thrown our system of labor law enforcement into chaos. The NLRB’s past rulings and future actions now are under a legal cloud.

HOW WE GOT HERE
When President Obama took office, the NLRB had just two members. In April 2009, President Obama nominated three people to serve on the NLRB—two Democrats (Mark Pearce and Craig Becker) and one Republican (Brian Hayes). Senate Republicans filibustered Becker’s nomination, but in March 2010, President Obama recess-appointed Becker and Pearce to the NLRB. In June, the Senate confirmed Pearce and Hayes.

The NLRB has faced relentless attacks from congressional Republicans—threats to cut its budget, threats to weaken its enforcement powers, and threats to curtail workers’ rights.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Contact your senators today! You can reach them through the Senate switchboard at 888-264-6154.

Urge your senators to confirm the full bipartisan package to the NLRB as soon as possible. They need to hear from you so they understand the importance of protecting workers’ rights.