



News Release

ABC URGES PRESIDENT OBAMA TO PRESERVE OPEN COMPETITION ON FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

Contact: Gail Raiman, (703) 812-2073
Gerry Fritz: (703) 812-2062

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) today issued the following statement by 2009 ABC National Chairman Jerry Gorski, president of Gorski Engineering, Inc., Collegeville, Pa., urging President Barack Obama to preserve Executive Order 13202 barring federal agencies from requiring union-only project labor agreements on federal and federally funded construction projects:

“We need to heed President Obama’s remarks in yesterday’s historic inaugural address calling for investment in our nation’s infrastructure that will help rebuild America’s roads, bridges and schools. President Obama tempered those same remarks with his warning that those ‘who manage the public’s dollars’ must also ‘spend wisely’ and ‘reform bad habits,’” Gorski said.

“With those principles in mind, President Obama can ensure that federal dollars are being administered responsibly by maintaining the principles of open competition in awarding federal and federally funded construction projects, as is required by Executive Order 13202. This directive has fostered a federal procurement environment for construction contracts rich with free and open competition without costly and discriminatory government-mandated, union-only project labor agreements.

“Repealing Executive Order 13202 undoubtedly would harm small and women- and minority-owned construction businesses. The National Black Chamber of Commerce President Harry Alford recently said, ‘a project labor agreement is a license to discriminate against black workers.’ These businesses, their employees and all construction craft workers deserve to be included in federal contracting opportunities,” said Gorski.

Meanwhile, Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) offered an amendment (S.A. 34) to the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 (S. 181) being debated in the U.S. Senate. The measure would codify into law Executive Order 13202 and permanently protect taxpayers from costly and discriminatory union-only PLA requirements on federal and federally funded construction contracts. ABC strongly supports this legislation.

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