

OVERVIEW

The construction industry provides good, well-paying jobs to American workers every year. To qualify for many of these jobs, however, workers need high-quality, flexible skilled training. Such training can lead to a lifetime career opportunity in a lucrative field.

However, faced with economic stress, an aging workforce and an insufficient pipeline of new workers, the construction industry is anticipating a critical shortage of skilled craft employees. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the construction sector is projected to grow twice as fast as the average for all industries, estimated at 1.6 million jobs between now and 2022.

ABC SUPPORTS

- Increased skilled training opportunities, without discrimination based on labor affiliation.
- Continued modernization of the federal apprenticeship law known as the Fitzgerald Act of 1937, which was enacted at a time when labor unions dominated the construction market. As a result, federal and state laws and regulations tend to favor the union style of apprenticeship programs and do not accurately reflect merit shop apprenticeship programs.
- Career and technical education (CTE) programs that provide motivated students interested in learning a trade with a course of study that combines industry-driven hands-on craft training in a real world environment with core academics and classroom learning.
- Craft training that results in an industry-recognized and nationally portable credential, which will achieve a safe, skilled and reliable construction workforce for the 21st century.
- Legislation that will strengthen and streamline employment opportunities and improve the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
- Legislation that ensures access to WIA-funded programs by all employers and employees (regardless of union affiliation) and increases employer involvement in the process.

ABC OPPOSES

- Inconsistent actions that conflict with the goal of expanding job training opportunities by denying workers the fundamental right to choose to train and work in the merit shop sector of the construction industry.

BACKGROUND

ABC's formal apprenticeship programs are registered with the appropriate federal and state government agencies and meet all federal and state requirements, including employer-sponsored classroom instruction and on-the-job training.

ABC works closely with NCCER, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) education foundation created in 1996 as The National Center for Construction Education and Research. Led by ABC National and ABC members, NCCER was developed by more than 125 construction CEOs and various association and academic leaders who united to revolutionize training for the construction industry. Sharing the common goal of developing a safe and productive workforce, these companies created a standardized training and credentialing program for the industry. This on-going, multi-million dollar investment in training illustrates NCCER's commitment to the future of the industry. Since its inception, the program has evolved into curricula for more than 60 craft areas. NCCER, headquartered in Alachua, Fla., is affiliated with the University of Florida's M.E. Rinker, Sr. School of Building Construction.

Increased skilled training is vital to the future of the construction industry. ABC will continue to work to ensure construction companies' training needs are addressed.

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