



July 1, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy and Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors, a national construction industry trade association with 69 chapters representing more than 21,000 members, I write to express opposition to H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act. ABC believes that an investment in America's infrastructure will be an essential part of the economic recovery of the country, but the path forward on infrastructure should be rooted in fair and open competition and equal opportunity—not anti-competitive mandates that would exclude many U.S. workers from rebuilding their communities. **ABC urges members to oppose this bill and the several anti-competitive provisions outlined below. This will be considered “KEY VOTE” for our scorecard on the 116th Congress.**

While ABC supports increased financing for infrastructure programs, we are disappointed that the bill excludes many critical priorities for the construction industry while implementing harmful policies that will be detrimental to our nation's ability to effectively and efficiently rebuild and modernize its infrastructure.

ABC has previously outlined its transportation and infrastructure priorities to members of Congress and the administration. They include reducing costly and ineffective regulations, increasing competition and educating and upskilling the construction industry's workers, all of which can help bring critical construction projects to market in a more economical and efficient manner. Unfortunately, those priorities are not reflected in H.R. 2.

Instead, this bill focuses on policies that support big labor organizations over our nation's small construction businesses, many of which are struggling to maintain operations due to the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis. The anti-competitive, one-size-fits all provisions included in this bill that would limit the eligibility of U.S. employers and their workforce for these critical infrastructure projects is not an effective way forward on addressing the much-needed modernization of infrastructure throughout the country.

Unfortunately, this bill ignores the largely bipartisan efforts included in the Senate infrastructure bills and instead excludes critical industry-led apprenticeship programs, encourages discriminatory government mandated project labor agreements and expands flawed, inflationary Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements on these critical projects. These provisions would exclude the overwhelming majority of America's construction industry professionals who are not affiliated with big labor organizations or educated in federal registered apprenticeship programs. The bill also includes additional measures seeking to limit the ability of qualified contractors to participate in rebuilding America's infrastructure.

At a time when small construction businesses are grappling with a severe recession, discriminatory provisions, additional costs and burdensome paperwork requirements would limit their ability to benefit from critical federal investment in state and local projects. Contractors cannot fairly compete to build and work on these taxpayer-funded jobs with anti-competitive measures that are included in the bill.

The enactment of a substantial infrastructure package to address much-needed repair and modernization of our nation's transportation infrastructure could be a substantial boon to the economy as we seek to recover from the ongoing health and economic crisis. If done appropriately, the many benefits of infrastructure spending arguably outweigh the costs. Every \$1 billion in extra construction spending on infrastructure generates an average of at least 3,300 construction jobs, and future generations will reap the rewards of strategic infrastructure investments in schools, water treatment plants and energy production, which have been found to

improve quality of life, the environment and opportunity for America's workers. A Business Roundtable report found that every dollar invested in infrastructure creates \$3.70 in economic growth over 20 years.

ABC would like to express our continued commitment to building taxpayer-funded projects with the highest standards of safety and quality. In audience with our 21,000 members, we would like to again express our opposition to the bill. We urge members the House of Representatives to vote no on H.R. 2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen Swearingen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristen Swearingen
Vice President, Legislative & Political Affairs