



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 25, 2009

Contacts: Brian Turmail
(703) 459-0238, turmailb@agc.org

WASHINGTON WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE PAY AND WORK DECISIONS FOR NORTH CAROLINA'S CONSTRUCTION FIRMS IF "CARD CHECK" BILL PASSES
NORTH CAROLINA'S CONSTRUCTION WORKERS TO LOSE ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE WORK TERMS OR VOTE IN PRIVATE UNDER EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

CHARLOTTE, NC – North Carolina's construction firms and workers will see dramatic and detrimental impacts if "Card Check" legislation currently being debated in Washington were to become law, the Associated General Contractors of America announced today.

The association noted that the legislation includes requirements for government-appointed arbitrators to impose terms of employment for workers in the union and managers aren't able to reach a deal within 120 days. The prospect of having Washington officials making key choices for the state's construction companies would have chilling effect on an industry where 90 percent of the companies are small businesses, an official with the association added.

"When you look at the job they've done with some of the nation's largest companies, it's hard to imagine what will happen when Washington starts making vital decisions for North Carolina's small, local construction businesses," said Stephen P. Gennett, president and CEO of the Carolinas chapter of the association. "If this bill becomes a law, a lot of people are going to think twice before risking their financial future on starting a construction business."

Gennett, who made the announcement at an equipment repair shop in Charlotte, noted that over 20,000 construction workers in North Carolina are currently out of work. "The last thing construction workers need is fewer construction companies," he added.

He added that the legislation would deny North Carolina's almost 240,000 construction workers the right to a private vote to decide whether to join a union. He noted that the right to a private vote was established for America's workers more than seven decades ago to protect them from intimidation and reprisals from employers or union officials.

Mr. Gennett said that some of the nation's most successful construction companies are union shops. But he noted those companies are able to negotiate pay and work terms directly with their unions. He added that with the "Card Check" legislation, those decisions would likely be made by federally-appointed arbitrators instead.

Fortunately for the state's construction workers and businesses, North Carolina's two Senators, especially Senator Kay Hagan, have the power to stop "Card Check" from ever becoming law, Gennett said. He noted that the association was asking both of them to vote against the law and against any efforts to limit debate in the Senate on the legislation, known as a cloture vote.

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