# North America's Building Trades Unions

NORTH AMERICA'S
BUILDING TRADES UNIONS
*Value on Display. Every Day.*

## A 21st Century Infrastructure for a 21st Century Economy

*For the purpose of promoting robust job opportunities and economic advancement for our members and our contractor partners, North America's Building Trades Unions and its affiliate members support a robust, broad based infrastructure investment agenda for the 21st Century*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU), along with its fourteen affiliated unions representing nearly three million skilled craft professionals in the United States and Canada, supports a broad based, aggressive investment strategy to meet our infrastructure needs and provide for sustained job opportunities for our members. NABTU strongly believes that in order for the United States to achieve its maximum economic potential in the 21st Century, the U.S. must have an infrastructure system that provides the foundation for a dynamic 21st Century economy. This strategy calls for: greater investment in physical infrastructure; a modern permitting process to ensure timely project delivery; and the preservation and expansion of labor standards.

Specifically, NABTU and its affiliates call for:

-***Addressing the funding mechanism of the Highway Trust Fund*** to achieve long-term stability, either through increasing the user fee or moving toward a Vehicle Miles Traveled based system

- ***Increase funding for our nation's airport infrastructure*** through the Airport Improvement Program and other existing funding streams which provide critically needed funding for the planning and development of public-use airports across the United States

-***Increased funding for water projects*** through existing programs by fully funding WRDA and WIFIA, as well as increasing funding for both the Safe Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds

- ***Increased investment in public buildings*** by providing for energy retrofits of federally owned public buildings and grant programs for school construction

- ***Strengthen our energy infrastructure*** through increased investment in nuclear power and the creation of an Energy Infrastructure Finance and Innovation program modeled after TIFIA and WIFIA

-***Increased investment in public infrastructure through innovative financing mechanisms*** such as Public-Private Partnerships and a National Infrastructure Bank

-***Preserving Labor Standards*** that strengthen the construction workforce with the consistent application of Davis-Bacon and preserving the use of Project Labor Agreements in federal procurement

According to the most recent scorecard from the American Society of Civil Engineers, the infrastructure in the United States received an overall score of D+, requiring a capital investment of $4.5 trillion by 2025 [i]. However, as our physical infrastructure deteriorates and policy makers continue to shortchange investments that number is surely to grow as the cost of maintaining and rebuilding our infrastructure systems become more expensive.

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> *"The Congress shall have power…To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes"*
>
> Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
> U.S. Constitution

# Investing in American Infrastructure

All categories of infrastructure, including roads and bridges, aviation, public buildings, energy, waterways or transit, currently face a severe investment shortfall, which in turn is hampering economic growth. By investing in our highway and transit systems, policymakers could inject badly-needed middle class jobs into the economy. For example, recent estimates have stated that for every $1 billion invested in highway and transit systems alone, policy makers could create 13,000 jobs.[ii] As many of those jobs are filled by Building Trades members, they also come with healthcare and retirement benefits which are the basis for a middle-class standard of living for these workers and their families. By making these critical investments, not only are we choosing to strengthen the infrastructure needed to maintain long-term economic growth, but we as a nation are making the conscious decision to invest and grow the middle-class.

## Surface Transportation Systems

Since the founding of our nation, the federal government has played a key role in building and maintaining public infrastructure. As our nation grew from an agrarian society to an industrial superpower, our infrastructure has witnessed both dramatic change and exponential growth. In the 19th century, our road infrastructure was restricted to post roads; today we have a national network of nearly 164,000 miles comprising the National Highway System, which forms the backbone of a near four million mile interconnected road network[iii]. The challenge is that, after years of careful building and sustained investment, our commitment to road infrastructure - and all other kinds - has been cut back to the point where today our road and bridge systems are antiquated and crumbling. Overall, this lack of investment has had dramatic economic

consequences. In our urban areas alone, congestion caused Americans to travel 6.9 billion extra miles, buying 3.1 billion gallons in extra fuel, resulting in a traffic tax of $160 billion in 2014[iv]. Furthermore, population growth in urban and suburban areas coupled with demographic changes has made expanded transit options a growing necessity.

Over the last decade, increased uncertainty brought about by short-term policy extensions, coupled with decreasing revenues into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF), have eroded the ability to adequately address our once-proud Interstate Highway system. This was somewhat rectified with the 2015 enactment of a five-year surface transportation reauthorization, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which authorized approximately $305 billion for highway and transit projects. While NABTU supported passage of the FAST Act, the law did not address the structural deficiencies within the HTF, and did not provide the level of funding to meet the demonstrated need

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> *-American Society of Civil Engineers*

For those NABTU members engaged in the heavy/highway construction industry, surface transportation policy, or lack thereof, has a direct impact on their ability to find work and complete sufficient hours to maintain their health and retirement benefits. As such, NABTU members remain heavily engaged with other stakeholders and elected officials at all levels of government to push for continued long-term investment and advocate for policies that bring about the structural change needed to the funding mechanism on which these programs are dependent.

Accordingly, NABTU supports various efforts to raise revenue in order to increase base-level funding to highway and transit programs and remains a strong proponent of a vibrant user-fee system.

Specifically, NABTU supports:

-*Raising the highway user fee and indexing the fee to inflation*–In 1993, the federal highway user fee was set at 18.4 cents a gallon. Since that time, as a result of increased fuel efficiency and reduced consumption of gasoline, the revenue generated for the HTF by the user fee has dwindled. As a result, transfers from the General Fund have been periodically necessary to meet HTF expenditures. The recently enacted FAST Act required nearly $70 billion in General Fund Transfers to meet the authorization levels in the bill[v]. In order to cease the necessity of General Fund Transfers, NABTU supports raising the user fee and indexing the fee to inflation.

-*Vehicle-miles Traveled (VMT) based user fee*–As vehicles continue to become more fuel efficient, receipts into the HTF will diminish in relation to the amount of fuel drivers will need to travel. As such NABTU supports the further exploration and development of a Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) based user fee system, which would ensure that all users of the National Highway System fairly contribute to its operation and maintenance. A VMT system also would provide the resources to expand the system where appropriate. Appropriate rates must be

enacted to ensure the HTF is self-sustaining.

Aviation

The overall economic impact of the civil aviation industry on the US economy is tremendous. In 2012, civil aviation represented 5.4% of GDP, contributing $1.5 trillion in economic activity and supporting 11.8 million jobs[vi]. In order to meet increased demand and continue these positive economic impacts, our nation will need to make a concerted effort to invest in our airport infrastructure.

In its 2015 capital needs survey, *Airport Capital Development Needs, 2015-2019,* Airports Council International – North America, determined the total estimate of airports capital development needs through 2019 to be $75.7 billion, adjusted for inflation, or $15.1 billion annualized[vii].While there has been continued, and justified, focus on upgrading the U.S. air traffic control system to NextGen, investment in our nation's airports is equally important. NABTU members have called for increased funding to allow for greater investment to strengthen our nation's airports.

-*Increase funding to the Airport Improvement Program* – The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) provides critically needed funding through grants for the planning and development of public-use airports across the United States. NABTU strongly supports increased funding authorization for the AIP program to meet the needs of critical airport infrastructure projects.

- *Flexibility in the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC)* –The PFC is used by airports to make critical infrastructure upgrades. The PFC has not been raised in more than a decade. NABTU members call on Congress and the Administration to allow more local control over setting the PFC. NABTU members believe airports should be able to determine the PFC based upon their own local needs.

Water

American businesses and consumers depend on our nation's inland waterways system, spanning nearly 12,000 miles of commercially navigable channels with approximately 240 lock sites, to move hundreds of millions of tons in cargo on an annual basis. The food we eat and the fuel sources that power our vehicles all travel this system before reaching a final destination. In order to properly maintain this vast network, Congress periodically authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to carry out various water resources development projects, the most recent authorization being the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014.

Included in WRRDA is the authorization for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA). Modeled after the successful TIFIA program, WIFIA will provide low-cost, long-term loans that will be used to finance (and reduce the cost of) water infrastructure projects, which could lead to accelerated investment in these critically needed water projects. Authorized projects include clean water and drinking water projects, as well as projects traditionally associated with the WRRDA bill, such as navigation and flood mitigation. By leveraging federal dollars, local communities can attract investment and accelerate water infrastructure projects that create jobs for NABTU members.

While a significant investment is needed to upgrade our nation's waterways

transportation network, additional investment is also needed to upgrade and maintain our nation's drinking water systems, as Flint, MI and other cities have shown in dramatic fashion. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) fifth national assessment of public water infrastructure needs, the United States currently needs approximately $384 billion in capital improvements through 2030 [viii]. However, as many cities rely on pipes that are nearly a century old, this estimate could be considered conservative. Other estimates indicate restoring existing water systems near the end of their life span while simultaneously expanding the system to meet expected population growth could cost at least $1 trillion over the next 25 years[ix].

-*WRRDA*– NABTU supports fully funding WRRDA, which provides critical economic benefits to the nation and will have a direct-employment effect on the construction industry. By fully funding WRRDA, we ensure much needed improvements to the nation's ports, locks and damn infrastructure and flood mitigation projects can move forward in a timely manner, strengthening our inland waterway transportation network. Inland waterways are a critical and vital component of our interconnected transportation system, and fully funding these projects will increase economic competitiveness and spur economic growth.

- *WIFA* –NABTU supports fully funding the WIFIA program under WRDDA. This program will allow for low-cost, long-term loans that can be used for clean water and drinking water projects across the United States.

- *Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)*–Of the $384 billion in identified capital needs, $42 billion is attributed to projects subject to Safe Drinking Water Act regulations [x]. For Fiscal Year 2016, approximately $863 million was appropriated for projects under the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund[xi]. To meet the $42 billion need over the next 25 years, DWSRF funding would need to double. NABTU supports and calls on Congress and the Administration to reverse the current trend of decreasing annual appropriations and substantially increase funding to the DWSRF to a level that would meet presently identified critical capital needs while allowing flexibility to federal, state, and local government to address unforeseen contingencies.

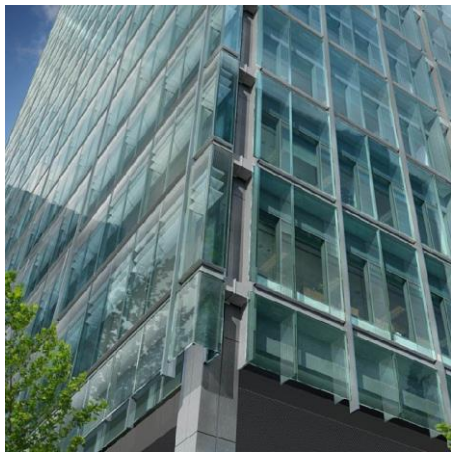
-*Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)* –NABTU strongly supports the CWSRF, which funds a variety of water quality projects through low interest loans across the United States. NABTU supports a robust long-term reauthorization of the CWSRF.

-*Exempt from state volume caps tax-exempt facility bonds for water and wastewater infrastructure*–The volume cap for tax-exempt facility bonds, or private activity bonds (PABs) in 2015 for each state was equal to the greater of $100 per capita or $301.52 million. However, as the nature of many water and wastewater facility projects are long term in nature and carry a significant cost, the cap effectively impedes the use of PABs as a financing mechanism for water and wastewater facility projects, with approximately 1% of PABs issued to water and wastewater projects[xii]. PABs are clearly underutilized in the construction of such projects. NABTU supports the exemption of water and wastewater facilities from state volume caps in order to speed delivery of

critically needed water and wastewater facility projects while generating tens of billions in private investment.

Public Buildings

Our infrastructure needs do not solely exist in the realm of transportation. The needs of our public buildings, from federal buildings to local schools, have been neglected for far too long and this neglect also has detrimental economic consequences. In fact some states, such as California, have billion dollar school construction backlogs. While there is a broad desire to ensure that no child goes to a school that is crumbling, unfortunately that still remains commonplace. At a time when government budgets are required to make priorities, we must all be able to agree that the safety of schoolchildren is one of the highest.



*The work NABTU members perform on energy retrofit projects across North America, such as the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building, is a critical component in achieving a more energy efficient future.*

Aside from strengthening the quality of public buildings through new construction, NABTU members work on various energy retrofit projects across the United States. As buildings account for nearly 40% of U.S. energy consumption [xiii] , these projects, while providing good paying jobs to NABTU members, have the capacity to reduce overall domestic energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Advances in insulation technologies as well as finishing technologies have improved energy efficiency outcomes, and must be supported.

*-Federal Funding for School Construction* – NABTU calls for the creation of a direct grant program to address the backlog of K-12 school construction initiatives across the United States. Such initiatives should include the construction of new facilities, as well as the renovation of existing structures. Furthermore, such grant program should allow not more than 20% of funds to be used for construction or renovation at accredited public colleges and universities, as well as community colleges.

*-Federal Building Energy Retrofit* – The federal government has a real property portfolio of roughly 900,000 buildings and structures. Furthermore, in 2009, agencies reported an excess of 45,000 underutilized buildings, which cost the taxpayer over $1.6 billion annually in associated operations costs[xiv]. While this a real challenge in energy consumption and general property management, this also presents a great opportunity to deploy new and existing energy efficiency technologies at a mass scale. This, in turn, could greatly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save the taxpayer millions, if not billions, in long-term energy savings, particularly with better insulation and advances in glazing technologies. NABTU calls on Congress and the Administration to direct the General Services Administration to divest its portfolio of underutilized properties and redirect the saved operations costs to retrofitting utilized buildings. In the near term NABTU calls on the Administration to utilize the existing budget neutral Energy Saving Performance

Contract and Utility Energy Service Contract Authority to retrofit federal facilities. Furthermore, we urge Congress to provide additional funding over the next 15 years to fully retrofit the federal real property portfolio.

Energy

There is no mistaking that the United States is currently in the throes of an energy revolution. With increased production of renewable energy and clean energy sources such as natural gas, the U.S. is slated to be a major producer of energy sources for years to come. Whether it is working on the pipelines carrying clean natural gas to market, the energy grid that delivers electricity to our homes, the nuclear facilities that generate our electricity, or the work done to generate energy efficiency savings, NABTU members are heavily invested in working towards securing our energy future.

Andrew Harrer/Bloomberg

*NABTU members, such as those working at Limerick Generating Station, are committed to a strong, safe, nuclear energy future.*

However, there is much that can be done to strengthen the infrastructure that is necessary to ensure our energy security. And that infrastructure is vast. Our transmission, storage, and distribution (TS&D) infrastructure includes 2.6 million miles of interstate and intrastate pipelines, over 400 natural gas storage facilities, and more than 640,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines [xv], and the cost associated with maintaining and strengthening our TS&D network is significant. For instance, in 2008 the Edison Foundation Institute for Electric Innovation estimated that the United States would need to invest roughly $880 billion by 2030 for transmission and distribution infrastructure [xvi], and the Department of Energy's Quadrennial Energy Review estimated the cost of replacing the cast iron and bare steel pipes in our gas distribution network would cost $270 billion[xvii]. While seemingly daunting, there are steps that we can take to move forward with building the energy infrastructure of the future.

*-Greater Investment in Nuclear Energy* –Economic, reliable, stable electricity is the lifeblood of our economy, a critical ingredient of prosperity for companies big and small, and for many cities and rural areas. A key part of that system is nuclear electricity. There are several critical initiatives that need to be considered to enhance the continued operation of our existing nuclear fleet and to encourage further investment.

NABTU encourages the administration to support policies that allow for the full recovery of nuclear costs in all markets and remove the regulatory and operational impediments to the full implementation of Title XVII. Further, while the PTC and ITC have been instrumental in expanding renewable, clean energy sources such as wind power, a slight modification of the tax code can truly spur green energy deployment on a mass scale. NABTU supports similar tax incentives to spur investment in nuclear energy.

*-Energy Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program* –NABTU calls on Congress and the Administration to pass legislation that would create an Energy Infrastructure Finance and Innovation

Program, modeled after the TIFIA and WIFIA programs. The program would provide low-cost, low-interest loans to upgrade our national energy infrastructure. Eligible projects would include projects related to transmission, storage, and distribution, such as pipeline replacement and electrical grid modernization.

Infrastructure Preservation

One of the greatest challenges facing American infrastructure is the fact that much of it is at, or closely nearing, its life-cycle. For those structures that are not yet at the point, it is incumbent that technologies be explored that will extend their life-cycle, without threatening structural integrity. Furthermore, new construction projects should provide for the use of infrastructure preservation technologies to prevent corrosion and structural deterioration. This is especially important on bridges, where a bridge collapse literally threatens lives.

-*Expanded Use of Coatings for Corrosion Protection* –NABTU supports the expanded us of coatings, particularly on bridges, to protect against corrosion. The application of such technology will increase safety and can extend the life-cycle of the structure. Furthermore, this could lead to cost savings by reducing maintenance costs over the long-term.

Financing the Infrastructure of the Future

With federal funding sources limited, it is incumbent that policy makers seriously consider innovative financing options for public works projects that would increase the use of private capital on infrastructure systems. We are committed and willing to invest our own capital in such projects, putting our own members to work in the process. However, the use of private capital in public infrastructure projects must not be allowed to be an avenue through which labor standards are circumvented, and NABTU is, and will continue to be, vigilant in ensuring public infrastructure projects, regardless of funding or financing source, maintain strong labor standards.

Specifically, NABTU endorses:

-*National Infrastructure Bank and Regional Infrastructure Financing Authorities*–NABTU supports the creation of a National Infrastructure Bank. This newly established Bank would be able to leverage public and private capital for projects of national significance. Such projects could include, but would not be limited to, energy projects, transportation projects, telecommunications projects, or environmental projects.

-*Public Private Partnerships (P3s)* – NABTU supports the use of P3s to spur private capital investment in public works projects, where appropriate. P3s can play a vital role in speeding delivery of public assets, and their use should be fully explored as a matter of public policy. NABTU and its affiliated members are willing to invest our own pension funds in public infrastructure projects. By investing our own pension capital, we are able to put our members to work with our own monies, while at the same time creating an asset of public benefit. However, NABTU calls on Congress and the Administration to ensure that P3s on federal projects maintain high labor standards to ensure that public works projects to not undercut local labor markets. Furthermore, in order to provide project sponsors with confidence that the program will provide

reasonable, predictable and affordable access, enabling legislation must be highly specific to address the many discretionary issues at the program agency, OMB, and Treasury that frequently impede a transparent and well-functioning program.

*-Dedicating repatriated corporate tax revenue to infrastructure*–There has been increased discussion about dedicating a portion of revenue collected from repatriated corporate earnings towards infrastructure. While various rate levels have been proposed, NABTU supports the broader policy goal of using repatriated revenue to fund infrastructure projects. Accordingly, NABTU members call on Congress and the Administration to: [1]determine a final rate at which repatriated earning will be taxed; and [2]dedicate revenue to infrastructure projects.

*-Incentives for Mechanical Insulation Installation* –Mechanical insulation encompasses all thermal, acoustical and personnel safety requirements for mechanical piping and equipment and Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) applications. Mechanical insulation is a proven energy efficiency technology and emission reduction technology that improves personnel safety and operating costs. NABTU supports the creation of tax incentives targeted toward expanding installation of mechanical insulation technologies in the private sector

# A Modern Permitting Process

The complexity of the process by which federal permits are issued is of great concern to NABTU and its affiliates. By some estimates, a six-year delay in starting construction on public works, including the effects of unnecessary pollution and prolonged inefficiencies, costs the nation over $3.7 trillion[xviii]. This is unacceptable, and frankly, unsustainable.

In order to break ground on infrastructure projects, we first need to acquire the necessary permits. Unfortunately, businesses seeking to undertake major capital projects often must run the gauntlet of numerous separate agency reviews and approvals. That process is plagued by a lack of coordination, few deadlines, insufficient transparency, and litigation exposure as long as 6 years after securing required approvals.

This is why North America's Building Trades Unions are pleased that the recently enacted five-year surface transportation reauthorization, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, included language that is based upon the NABTU endorsed *Federal Permitting Improvement Act*. Inclusion into the surface transportation bill of this commonsense bipartisan provision will provide greater certainty; streamline the process for approval of major capital infrastructure projects, and will keep our members at work and ensure further expansion of much-needed employment opportunities in the construction industry.

# Standards

NABTU members have, for over 100 years, fought for the highest labor standards in the construction industry. These standards help ensure NABTU members comprise the highest trained, highest skilled, safest and most productive construction workforce in the world. These standards also help ensure that as a result of having such highly trained, highly skilled, safe and most productive workforce, careers in the various crafts of the building trades provide a stable and proven path to the middle-class. A middle-class that

has literally built our nation –that has built our communities.

Prevailing Wage

At the core of construction industry labor standards is the prevailing wage, both at state and federal levels. A prevailing wage is the average hourly wage, benefits, and overtime, paid to a worker of a specific craft within a defined geographic area, without regard to union membership. Under prevailing wage laws, contractors are required to compete on the basis of who can best train, best equip, and best manage a construction crew – not on the basis of who can provide the cheapest construction crew. This also ensures that the government, acting as the owner, does not artificially drive down wages in a local area by requiring bids to be accepted that offer the least expensive labor cost, undercutting local market wages in the process. Furthermore, by ensuring a highly trained and skilled workforce is present, project owners can ensure greater productivity, oftentimes leading to reduced costs resulting from the reduction or elimination of project delays, and rework from less skilled labor.

The craft workers who receive a prevailing wage have greater paycheck security, which allows them to reinvest in their communities through the purchase of goods and services, as well as the payment of taxes. The recirculating of monies into local communities benefits the community at-large with stronger, more vibrant businesses, as well as greater tax revenues that can be invested in schools or other public services.

-*Consistent Application of Prevailing Wage Standards*–NABTU members support the prevailing wage at the state and federal level. NABTU members remain strongly opposed to any attempts to weaken prevailing wage laws at the federal, state, and local levels. At the federal level, NABTU members support the consistent application of the Davis-Bacon Act and related statutes, which would ensure that projects receiving assistance from the federal government should be subject to prevailing wage standards.

Project Labor Agreements (PLAs)

A project labor agreement (PLA) is a pre-hire collective bargaining agreement that establishes the terms and conditions of employment on one or more construction projects and were first used on the big public works projects of the 1930s. Grand Coulee Dam, Hoover Dam, and Shasta Dam –all were built using PLAs. The simple solution to these complex construction projects was to put all workers under a single, umbrella contract that applied only to the specific project. Since then, scores of large and complex projects, both public and private, have or are being built across the nation successfully using the PLA model, such as Kitsap Naval Base, Cove Point, LAX Airport, and the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement.

PLAs are used widely in the private sector. Companies such as Toyota, Exelon Corporation, and Southern Company utilize this tool to ensure the timely delivery of high-quality construction projects. **NABTU and its affiliates believe strongly that the federal government should have the ability to use the same tools used in the private sector to deliver high-quality construction projects.**

There is no substantial evidence that PLAs decrease the number of bidders on a project, or increase the costs of construction projects. In fact, the efficient management of these projects has saved taxpayers and

investors billions of dollars. As such, construction users increasingly favor PLAs because they reduce some of the uncertainty inherent in large-scale construction projects.

Timely construction of projects requires substantial numbers of workers from many crafts possessing skills and qualifications vital to its completion. PLAs ensure a steady flow of highly trained construction labor. The positive impact of a trained workforce extends beyond the integrity of the project and also has positive implications for the safety culture on site. Recent data show that safety input is greater on PLA projects. Often, PLAs include language establishing labor/management committees that deal specifically with safety and health issues.

PLAs can also be used to meet various social needs. Today, many building trades councils across the country are structuring PLAs to include what are known as "Community Workforce Agreements," or CWAs, in order to build ladders of opportunity into the skilled construction trades for local residents, women and veterans. PLAs with Community Standards, and Contractors who assent to work under these agreements, acknowledge that workforce diversity, development of local workers for construction careers as well as the timely completion of projects without delay, with skilled workers and agreed-upon procedures, is of benefit to Contractors and owners. These are critical needs in light of projected skilled manpower shortages.

*Open in 2008, Nationals Stadium was built using the PLA model which ensured work opportunities for residents of the District of Columbia*

In communities across the US, Building Trades Council leaders and their signatory contractor partners are employing apprenticeship readiness programs (ARPs) in order to recruit and train a more diverse group of apprenticeship candidates, who will take advantage of the new apprenticeship opportunities created by the apprenticeship utilization provisions written into PLAs. The goals of the Building Trades ARPs are to increase the number of candidates for apprenticeship across all crafts; to increase the diversity among apprenticeship candidates by recruiting women, people of color and veterans; and to increase the retention rate among apprentices by providing them with a deeper understanding of both the industry and the role of craft unions in construction. In 2015, the Building Trades 100+ ARPs had approximately 1,000 young people successfully complete the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum, the standardized curriculum used in the ARPs. The Building Trades' ultimate goal is to place every one of the candidates into the registered apprenticeship system. In sum, the Building Trades and their partner contractors administer more than 1,600 training centers nationwide, with a collective annual budget of well over $1 billion dollars funded by collective bargaining. This investment makes this training infrastructure, the foundation of the unionized construction industry, one of the largest privately funded education systems in the entire nation.

The key factor that drives the Building Trades entire workforce

development system is jobs - particularly infrastructure jobs. For it is employment demand from infrastructure construction that provides a strong foundation for American economic growth, and which also empowers the Building Trades to bring to bear their hundred plus years of experience in providing ladders of opportunity to middle class jobs with good pay and family stabilizing benefits to all American regardless of gender, race, color or creed.

*-Flexibility in the use of Project Labor Agreements in Federal Contracting*

Currently, there is no federal mandate in federal procurement that requires the use of PLAs, and NABTU members have not advocated for such a mandate as not all projects are created equal. However, there have been some efforts to effectively ban the use of PLAs at the federal level. NABTU members believe procurement officers must have the ability to use a PLA **when such use makes sense and ensures the efficient delivery of the project**, and oppose efforts to prohibit their use.

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