



**NEWS RELEASE
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**VIRGINIA CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SUPPORTS LEGISLATION ENSURING FAIR AND OPEN
COMPETITION ON PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS**

DULLES, VA – On behalf of its 660 Virginia merit shop employers, Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC-VA) supports the Fair and Open Competition in Government Contracting Act (HB 33) introduced on Monday by Virginia Delegate Barbara Comstock (R-34th) and GOP Caucus Chairman Virginia Delegate Tim Hugo (R-40th). HB 33 prohibits Virginia and recipients of state funding or assistance from requiring or prohibiting contractors to enter into union agreements, such as a project labor agreement (PLA), as a condition of winning state and state-assisted construction contracts.

“This commonsense legislation will reduce costs, increase competition and create jobs for qualified Virginia businesses and their skilled local employees on state and state-funded construction projects,” said ABC-VA President Patrick Dean. “It will ensure Virginia’s infrastructure dollars are spent wisely and support projects subject to fair and open competition, which ultimately will benefit taxpayers by funding more construction projects and creating more jobs for Virginians.

“Unfortunately, unaccountable political appointees controlled by special interests have been steering taxpayer-funded construction contracts to their political supporters by mandating union-favoring PLAs on projects funded by the state,” said Dean. “This special interest favoritism has no place in Virginia.

“If enacted, this measure would prohibit state-assisted construction projects, such as Phase 2 of the multi-billion dollar Dulles Metrorail Silver line project, from mandating unwanted anti-competitive and costly PLAs on contractors,” said Dean. “Why should Virginia’s financial stakeholders pay for the majority of this project when the PLA mandated on the prime contractor by MWAA ensures discrimination against 96 percent of Virginia’s construction workforce – those who have freely decided not to join a union? Local workers will lose jobs to out-of-state union members given hiring priority via the PLA.”

“HB 33 simply ensures the government remains neutral with respect to a qualified contractor’s relationship with labor unions and gets the government out of the business of picking winners and losers through cronyism,” said Ben Brubeck, ABC National’s Director of Labor and Federal Procurement. “To date, 11 states have enacted similar measures, resulting in reduced costs, increased job creation and a level playing field encouraging robust competition from qualified nonunion and union contractors.

“HB 33 allows contractors to voluntarily enter into union agreements like PLAs,” said Brubeck. “Unlike a government-mandated PLA, it gives contractors a real choice, which can only increase competition and help taxpayers get the best possible product at the best possible price.”

Learn more about anti-competitive and costly PLAs and the Silver Line Metrorail controversy at www.TheTruthAboutPLAs.com.

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About ABC — Associated Builders and Contractors is a national association with 75 chapters representing more than 23,000 merit shop construction and construction-related firms with nearly two million employees. Founded in 1972, the ABC Virginia Chapter is the only association in Virginia dedicated to representing the interests of merit shop contractors. ABC VA represents all firms in the commercial construction industry equally. Membership represents the full range of contractors, from small family-owned subcontractors to global general contracting firms, as well as, materials suppliers and industry professionals. The ABC Virginia Chapter has offices in Chantilly, Richmond and Hampton Roads.