

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 3, 1998

Vice President Albert Gore, Jr.
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Vice President:

We are writing to express our strong support for fair and open competition in awarding federal construction projects to qualified bidders, and our tremendous alarm about the new "union-only" policy that you proposed at the recent annual meeting of the Union of Building and Construction Trades. This effort is deeply troubling for all Republicans and Democrats who have worked to ensure that the days of preferential federal contracting do not return.

By recommending Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) that limit competition, you are ignoring the public will. The American people overwhelmingly oppose union-only rules for federal projects. In the most recent poll, 72 percent of the American public and 62 percent of union households rejected union-only agreements on federal construction projects. The American people know that these new regulations will increase the cost of highway projects and delay badly needed road and transit improvements. These delays will invariably cost Americans their lives.

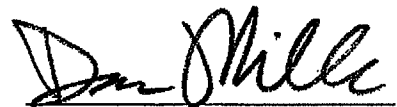
Both union and nonunion contractors oppose the monopolization of federal construction projects by any group. These agreements deny union contractors the right to negotiate collective bargaining agreements and require wage rates or fringe benefits that exceed prevailing market rates. In fact, many studies have shown that wages under PLAs could be more than 20% higher than the area's prevailing wage. The government should not further complicate these important private transactions.

America's dynamic economy is premised on robust competition with little government intervention. Your own effort to "reinvent government" was designed to force the government to serve constituents better. The Project Labor Agreement proposal at the Department of Transportation seems wholly inconsistent with these important principles. We therefore urge you to abandon this effort and preserve the fair and open competition that protects American taxpayers as well as union and nonunion contractors throughout the United States. We respectfully request that you respond to our concerns by Tuesday June 9, 1998.

Sincerely,



Vince Snowbarger [KS-3]
Member of Congress



Dan Miller [FL-13]
Member of Congress

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Jim Talar

Jim Blakey

Pete Hoekstra

Tom DeLay

John Boehner

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Ernest Istook

John E. Peterson

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Ch. Ward

Jane A. Gibbons

William L. Jenkins

Vernon J. Ehlers

Samuel J. Alshof

David McIntosh

Anne M. Northrup

Bob Lutz

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Jim Ryan

Mr. Shultz '99

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Steve Barrett

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