



The Monitor

RAISING THE BAR BY MONITORING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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Anniversary of Capital Bill During COVID-19

Page 4

Workers Rights Constitutional Amendment

Page 5



The Monitor

RAISING THE BAR BY MONITORING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the Executive Director
PAGE 4

Legal Corner
PAGE 5

Focus on Indiana
PAGE 6

Tribute to William E. Dugan
PAGE 7

Focus on Illinois
PAGE 8

Construction Analyst Spotlight
PAGE 9

Focus on Iowa
PAGE 10

Contractor Spotlight
PAGE 12

COVID-19 & Stimulus Package
PAGE 13



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Illinois Water Crisis Update

By Michael Lingl

For the past twenty years, the III FFC has stood for raising standards in the construction industry and providing a level playing field for responsible contractors. The next step in advancing our mission is to raise awareness for our neglected water systems to ensure we are providing fresh water and treating wastewater and storm water efficiently. Going forward this will be a key component to our economic success.

In 2018 the American Society of Civil Engineers issued its infrastructure report card for Illinois providing a C- rating in the areas of drinking water and wastewater treatment. In short, this grade means our systems are “mediocre, require attention and are just above poor.” Other words and phrases used to classify our water systems include: “signs of deterioration, significant deficiencies, and increasing vulnerability to risk.” These are not phrases you want associated with your water supply.

Any solution to raising our grade will require advocacy and education regarding our water problems, as well as proposed solutions. The III FFC is stepping forward as an advocate for this issue in Illinois. Now we need to begin the critical process of educating legislators and public bodies in our state about the problems we are facing.

First and foremost, the age of most of our water systems is in the 50- to 100- year range. These water systems are outdated and designed for smaller populations than what our current systems can handle. Second, while water infrastructure is underneath us, we cannot live

by the mentality that these systems are out of sight, out of mind. Too often this is an afterthought in communities, but there are warning signs to look for.

For example, public bodies may experience outages or boil orders due to water main breaks. When most systems get to the end of their useful life, there will be more frequent local interruptions in the water service. A public body may have to consider raising their water rates. Local water rate revenue can only be used to pay for acquiring water or for water system improvements. Rate increases signify an increased cost of supplying water, which could mean deficiencies in the system or the need for improvements to the system. A community may experience flooding issues. Deficiencies in storm water removal or combined storm water or wastewater could be a culprit.

The III FFC is in the process of building a coalition of organizations and industries involved at all levels of the water systems process ranging from engineers, industry professionals, and public officials in order to educate public bodies. Our objective is to shed light on the problem and develop solutions at the state and federal level to fund the necessary projects to continue providing a clean water supply to the people of Illinois. As an organization, we plan to start providing educational seminars with presentations regarding all aspects of the problem. If you are interested in learning more about this issue, please contact the III FFC office.



LETTER
FROM THE
**Executive
Director**
Marc R. Poulos

By investing
in our
infrastructure
now, Illinois
is investing
in a strong
foundation
for a growing
economy.

Anniversary of Capital Bill in Midst of COVID-19

While COVID-19 has disrupted many industries throughout the United States, construction continues to be performed as an essential service. In March, Governor Pritzker and Governor Holcomb took decisive action to protect Illinois and Indiana residents from COVID-19 by issuing shelter-in-place orders requiring residents to stay at home until April 30, 2020. Illinois later extended the order until the end of May. Despite these orders, it's business as usual for the operating engineers as they were classified as essential workers performing critical work during the shelter-in-place.

In other news, Illinois is getting close to celebrating its historical Rebuild Illinois Capital Bill signed into law last summer on June 28, 2019. The bill was a historic win for Illinoisans by increasing the motor fuel taxes by \$0.19 cents per gallon for gasoline and \$0.24 cents per gallon for special fuels. These increases have proved to be effective with the state already collecting more motor fuel tax revenue than all of fiscal year 2019 alone. The bill also implemented both vehicle registration and certificate of title fee increases. Most notably, electronic vehicles no longer receive a discounted rate of \$35 every two years and electronic vehicle registrations were increased to match all other standard passenger vehicles in addition to a supplemental \$100 fee per year in lieu of paying a motor fuel tax.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has stated that it has no plans to suspend or delay infrastructure.

Likewise, IDOT has outlined a plan for the use of the increased transportation fees in their annual Multi-Year Program (MYP) in which the fiscal years 2020-2025 include \$23.49 billion in planned statewide transportation projects over the next six-year period.

The Rebuild Illinois Capital Bill also legalized sports wagering with one location officially launching on March 9, 2020. The law legalizes sports betting at specific locations including riverboats, casinos, horse tracks, sports facilities, and online. Legalizing sports betting is projected to help support vertical capital improvement projects throughout the state. While the rollout was sidelined by the COVID-19 outbreak resulting in subsequent cancellations of sports events, the state is still hopeful for a successful new industry once sporting events are active again.

Finally, in a March press release, Governor Pritzker and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced that \$80 million in Rebuild Illinois funds are now available to invest in public infrastructure and economic developments. Governor Pritzker stated the primary purpose of the bipartisan, historical \$45 billion capital plan is to create the foundation for fair and equitable economic growth across the state. By investing in our infrastructure now, Illinois is investing in a strong foundation for a growing economy.

WORKERS RIGHTS



Melissa Binetti
Counsel for the III FFC

Workers Rights Constitutional Amendment

This November, the nation will be voting in what is likely to be a momentous general election. On this day, Illinoisans will also be taking part in a momentous vote of their own. For one, Governor Pritzker proposed a “fair tax” amendment to the constitution that, if passed by referendum, will change Illinois’ flat tax system to one in which those who earn more, will be taxed more. This will likely not be the only constitutional amendment Illinois voters will see on their ballot.

Additionally, House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 37 (HJRCA 37) will put the “Workers’ Rights Amendment” on the 2020 general election ballot, giving voters the opportunity to ban so-called right to work (RTW) laws permanently.

Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act, passed in 1947, allows states to pass RTW laws that prevent unions from collecting dues from workers they represent by prohibiting “union security clauses” from being included in collective bargaining agreements negotiated between unions and employers.

A union security clause requires all workers in a bargaining unit to pay at least a fair share fee, if not full union dues, in exchange for the benefits they receive from union representation. When a state invokes 14(b) RTW laws, such clauses are outlawed and fair share fees are merely optional, thereby allowing some workers to freeload on the contributions of others.

House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 37 will put the Workers Rights Amendment on the 2020 general election ballot, giving voters the opportunity to ban right to work laws.

The reason a union must still provide representation to these non-payers, including bargaining for wages and benefits and negotiating certain contract terms, is because federal law imparts a “duty of fair representation” onto unions through Supreme Court interpretation.

The Workers’ Rights Amendment will prevent Illinois from enacting a RTW law, thereby ensuring that unions in Illinois are not unfairly

financially starved. Moreover, the Amendment will allow private parties to voluntarily choose to negotiate terms in a free market setting while keeping economic power in the hands of workers. Specifically, the Amendment prevents Illinois from passing a law “that prohibits the ability of workers to join together and collectively bargain over wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment through a representative of their choosing ...”

RTW laws have been enacted in 27 states and studies are clear that such laws have negative consequences, including lower pay, less retirement security, less educational assistance, less health insurance, more dependence on public aid, and more poverty.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has put working people in the spotlight, we need to make sure workers have the pay, benefits, resources, and protections they deserve. The Workers’ Rights Amendment is a major step in that direction.



Kara Principe
Counsel for the III FFC



Joseph Sweeney
Counsel for the III FFC



Myron Sutton
Regional Manager

FOCUS ON Indiana



Preventing Illegal Dumping in Indiana

It's no secret that illicit demolition, removal, and dumping practices can negatively affect legitimate contractors and our communities.

The illegal removal, dumping, or stockpiling of construction material or byproducts can be, and is, a serious problem. Certain communities have fallen victim to unethical contractors who defraud the system, underbidding legitimate competitors in the process, and taking away work and wages from compliant contractors and skilled craftsman. For many public bodies, there are the obvious public health and safety concerns for illegal dumping. If left unchecked, this can lead to further illegal dumping by other contractors looking to cut their own costs at the expense of the property value of neighboring areas. There are also significant costs associated with site clean-up when the debris is abandoned, a cost that could ultimately be borne by the community.

Unfortunately, these scenarios are far too common. In 2019, an Illinois contractor who had recently been awarded residential demolition projects by the City of Hammond was criminally charged with felony handling and storing hazardous waste without a proper permit. The contractor had accumulated large piles of municipal solid waste, household debris, used mattresses, broken furniture and approximately 800 used tires on a property in Gary. While Hammond awarded the demolition projects through a legitimate bid process, the City was totally unaware that the contractor would be improperly disposing of the refuse in a neighboring city and not a landfill. Significantly, although there were City regulations preventing this kind of activity, the property happened to be state regulated as a Class I Wetland that flows into the Grand Calumet River and is connected to Lake Michigan. Additionally, the City of Gary is fighting the illegal dumping of materials within its borders in what

has been described as one of the most significant challenges facing the City at the moment.

Experiences like this leave communities asking how they can ensure that they hire reputable contractors? Although the above-described scenarios are more commonplace than public bodies would hope, public bodies can take steps to ensure that they do not fall victim to unscrupulous contractors.

For the City of Hobart, it started with a concern over a contractor bidding on City projects who was reportedly stockpiling demolition waste on property within the City, rather than properly disposing the debris in a landfill. Significantly, this cost-cutting maneuver allowed the contractor to underbid competitors who were factoring legitimate waste disposal costs into their bids, and created liability down the road for the City, since it could ultimately be forced to burden the taxpayers with removal expenses.

But Hobart crafted a solution that was a simple, inexpensive, and effective. The City worked with the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting's (III FFC) legal team and policy experts to craft an ordinance that would protect the City and its taxpayers from facing the cost of debris removal, and mandate the safe disposal of all demolition debris. The ordinance requires that all demolition contractors provide evidence that they are properly disposing of the material in a landfill. The end-result for Hobart was the passage of a tailor-made ordinance at no cost to the City or taxpayers.

The III FFC strives to promote sound public policies that encourage public works contract awards to responsible contractors. If you are aware of a public body or community facing similar challenges or who would be interested in speaking about assistance with an ordinance or policy, please have them contact the III FFC.

III FFC Tribute to William E. "Wild Bill" Dugan

Former President-Business Manager Local 150



On January 11, 2020, the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting was deeply saddened with the news of the passing of William E. "Wild Bill" Dugan, former President-Business Manager of Local 150. Not only did Bill lead the Operating Engineers over a two-decade career, but it was his vision of bringing a fair contracting foundation to the Midwest that allowed the III FFC to be formed.

More than two decades ago, Bill became aware of states like California, Pennsylvania, and Washington implementing fair contracting foundations to ensure prevailing wage compliance. Bill sent agents to observe how these foundations benefited the labor industry and models utilized by other states. Other states utilized a model hiring from the ranks of law enforcement for their investigation skills to conduct prevailing wage investigations.

With this knowledge, the III FFC was officially formed on July 1, 1999 starting in Illinois and later expanding to Indiana and Iowa. Bill also brought on IUOE Local 150 Business Agent, Michael Quigley, as III FFC's first Executive Director to lead the Foundation until his retirement in 2006 when

III FFC's current Executive Director Marc Poulos took the lead. While the model formed under Bill has evolved from a reactive organization serving as watchdogs in the construction industry to a proactive organization, he would be proud of our organization. Today, we offer services that not just ensure compliance but educate the public on the importance of labor standards. Our organization's model has proved to be effective considering it has more than tripled its size since it was founded twenty years ago, demonstrating Bill's commitment to protecting labor standards in the Midwest.

As you may recall from previous issues, the III FFC celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. This celebration was a testament to the great work we have accomplished over the past two decades, but also the vision Bill had in implementing a fair contracting organization in Local 150's jurisdiction.

From where we started back in 1999 to now being recognized as a national leader in fair contracting, none of our successes could have been accomplished had it not been for Wild Bill's vision.

We would like to thank William E. Dugan for his vision in implementing a fair contracting organization in the Midwest and we continue to honor his vision through serving as a premier fair contracting organization.

From where we started back in 1999 to now being recognized as a national leader in fair contracting, none of our successes could have been accomplished had it not been for Wild Bill's vision.

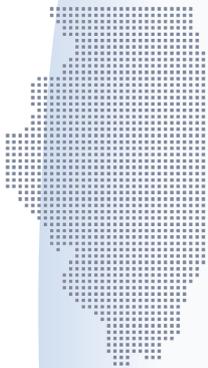
NorthPoint to Bring Union Jobs to Will County

By Jodi Frailey & Josh Weger



Jodi Frailey
Regional Manager

FOCUS ON Illinois

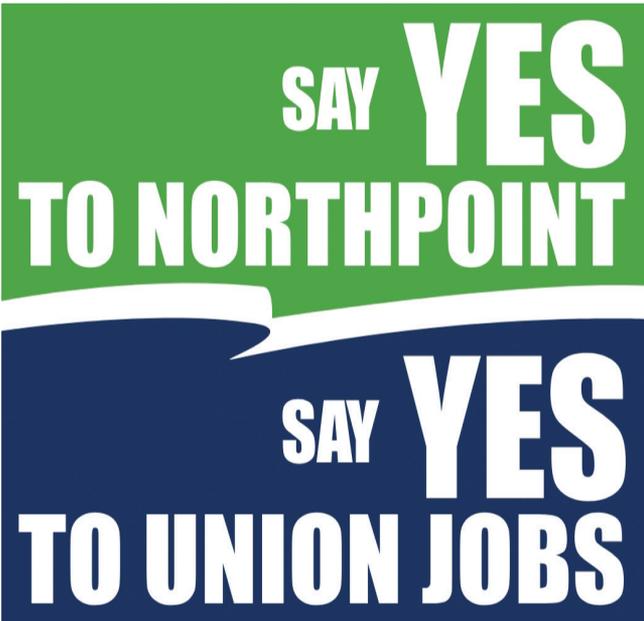


Will County, Illinois is one of the fastest growing counties in America. The 2000 census recorded the county's population at 502,255. Since then the population has increased 28% to 692,310. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) expects this explosive growth to continue. By the year 2050, the population will top 1,000,000. In addition, CMAP projects Will County will have the most job growth of any county in the region by 2050 with an estimated increase from the current number of jobs at 215,000 to over 360,000!

Will County is the largest inland port in the world. Annually, 3.5% of GDP, \$623 billion in freight value, and more than 3 million containers flow through the county. The county is at the center of growth and innovation for the US transportation, distribution and logistics industry. By any measure, Will County is a vital organ in the American economy.

In June 2017, a Kansas City based developer, NorthPoint, proposed a plan to build Compass Business Park, a 2200 acre, 12 million square foot distribution and warehouse facility in Elwood, Illinois. After several months of review, the Elwood village council rejected zoning for the project. Despite the setback, NorthPoint successfully petitioned the City of Joliet to rezone a 100-acre plot in the city from agricultural and residential to industrial. The plot is located on Joliet's south side near the 2000 acre plot NorthPoint has optioned outside Elwood. On April 17, 2020, the Joliet City Council voted 6-3 in support of the annexation of the roughly 2000 acre plot.

The Compass Business Park will bring an investment of \$1.2 billion to Will County. The plan includes a state-of-the-art warehouse, distribution, and light manufacturing facility just east of Illinois Route 53. This will be a major asset for the Joliet area that will create up to 1,600 construction jobs annually for several years and thousands of permanent full-time jobs. Addressing the regional transportation need to improve the flow of freight in the area, the proposal also includes a plan to construct,



at NorthPoint's expense, a dedicated closed traffic loop to reduce truck traffic on I-80, I-55, and local roads. Large scale projects such as these require skilled workers who are dedicated to their crafts. This is a wonderful opportunity to put our skilled local workers back to work, which will be a tremendous benefit to Joliet and Will County. Money spent on this project will be directly reinvested in the local economy when middle class income earners spend their hard-earned money on local businesses and services. This stimulates job growth in all sectors of the community.

A number of residents from adjacent Elwood and Manhattan have opposed the project, citing their objection to economic developments that could change the feel of their small rural communities. On the other hand, the project has enjoyed significant support from business, religious, and civic groups as well as everyday citizens throughout Joliet. The principles of economics make it clear that the economic and population growth of Will County has only just begun. The growth can be planned and carefully managed, but it will continue. Sometimes change and progress is difficult, especially for those who never wanted it. Today, Will County looks much different than it did 20 years ago. By the year 2050, it will look even more different. NorthPoint has developed a thoughtful and responsible plan for the Compass Business Park. The Compass Business Park will bring many union jobs to Will County and the III FFC looks forward to watching the progress of the NorthPoint project.

Thomas Haley

Thomas Haley joined the III FFC as a Construction Analyst in April 2018, briefly covering the entirety of Cook County. As the Illinois team grew, Thomas' responsibilities shifted to cover the southern portion of Cook County. Before joining the III FFC, Thomas worked on the front lines of the labor movement as a rank and file member. In 2007, he began working at the University of Illinois in the Facilities and Service Department, where he serviced the buildings on the University campus ranging from emergency response cleanup, different types of floor maintenance, and building security. Shortly after beginning his training at UIUC, Thomas signed his union card with the Service Employees International Union Local 73 Chapter 119. Throughout his career at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, Thomas was elected to Shop Steward in 2010 to represent his coworkers, then in 2012 was elected to both the Chapter Advisor Board and the Chapter Board of Trustees as Trustee B.

Along with these elected positions, Thomas also represented the membership on the team that undertook contract negotiations with the Administration at the University, culminating in a successful three day strike in March of 2013 which saw equitable whole dollar amount raises to its members, shift differentials, among other hard fought victories for the membership. Thomas stated, "One of the most powerful moments of my career in the Labor Movement was on the third day of the strike, being the Master of Ceremonies for the closing rally. Standing on the stone wall on the south side of the Illini Union and looking out across the Main Quad at approximately 300 fired up and active Brothers and Sisters of our Union was an honor I will always cherish." As the successful strike ended, the leadership of Local 73 asked Thomas to come on staff as an External Organizer and be based out of the Local Hall in Chicago.

At Local 73 as a staff organizer, Thomas underwent intense trainings at the International's D.C. headquarters where learning the steps in an effective organizing campaign are taught. Afterwards, Thomas worked with a variety of public entities throughout northern Illinois and northwest Indiana

as well as organizing a rally for the national fight for \$15 campaign that saw about 100 people come out for a living wage on a cold winter night. In May 2016, Thomas was promoted to Senior Organizer, after beginning the organizing drive of the adjunct faculty at the prestigious University of Chicago, who later voted overwhelmingly to form their own union

on campus. Thomas stated, "Watching the faces of faculty members at the vote count, many of whom have had to rely on some form of public assistance at some point while teaching at a top ranked university, is something I will always remember. Knowing they were going to get a chance to improve their and their family's lives, it was a powerful moment." Outside of his job duties as a Senior Organizer, Thomas was elected by his peers as the Organizing Department Staff Union Steward, and member of the Staff Union bargaining team.

Since joining the III FFC, Thomas has continued his interest in learning, finally finishing his associate degree in Political Science in 2018 after a long hiatus. Along with finishing his degree, Thomas has also participated in both drone operator courses offered at Local 150's Apprenticeship and Skill Improvement Program (ASIP), thus becoming one of the founding members of the III FFC's drone team. Recently he also gained his OSHA 30 certification from ASIP.

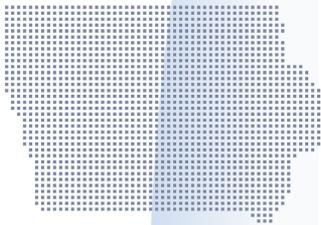


III FFC Hosts Successful Contractor Dinner



Andrew Waeyaert
Regional Manager

FOCUS ON Iowa



On February 26, 2020 the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting (III FFC) hosted its annual Construction Industry and Public Official Appreciation Dinner at Jumer's Casino in Rock Island, Illinois. The event was a great success with nearly one hundred attendees gathered to honor industry leaders in the construction industry.

The program was kicked off by Richard Steward, Senior Construction Analyst who served as Emcee. Richard welcomed attendees and introduced the Foundation's 20th anniversary video showcasing our accomplishments over the past two decades. Following the video, Marshall Douglas, Local 150 Treasurer discussed the important role the Foundation plays in educating and advocating for local responsible contractors. Next, III FFC Policy Director, Josh Weger provided a comprehensive overview of our organization and its role with contractors and workers in protecting local governments and taxpayers from the construction of poor-quality projects.

Following the speakers, the Foundation continued its awards program created last year to reflect on the extraordinary efforts made by our partners the previous construction year. Recognized for their commitment to high road construction, the Public Body Official of the Year was awarded to the Davenport Community School Board for passing procurement changes that consider a contractor's responsibility in areas of safety and compliance. Next, Taylor Ridge Drilled Foundations Inc. was awarded the Small-Sized Project of the Year Award for their work on the US Army Corps of Engineer's upper bullnose project at Lock and Dam 15. Next, the City of Davenport and



Photo of the L&D 15 Bullnose project performed by the Taylor Ridge Drilled Foundation.

Langman Construction were each presented the Large-Sized Project of the Year Award for their work on the Fairmont, Central Park Avenue to Lombard reconstruction project. This project was noteworthy for utilizing cutting age permeable paver construction to reduce stormwater runoff in an effort to promote sustainability by the city.

Finally, the Associated Contractors of the Quad Cities (ACQC) was selected to receive the Contractor of the Year Award. Over the past year, the ACQC, an association of Quad Cities based contractors has demonstrated leadership and effectiveness in communicating the needs of the local contractor community. The ACQC has been a solid partner with the Foundation in the formation of a Governmental Affairs Committee, which was hugely influential in last year's federal aid swap advocacy.

In addition to the awards presentation, the John Hass family from Valley Construction Company in Rock Island, Illinois was again recognized at the event for partnering with Black Hawk College's Highway Construction Careers Training Program to implement a trades scholarship. This year's John Hass Memorial Fund Award was presented to Sonia Shepard, a building trades apprentice. The award includes \$500 of specialty tools needed for students in an apprenticeship program.

Overall, our Annual Construction Industry and Public Official Appreciation Dinner was our best yet.



ILLINOIS ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

Prevailing Wage Laws Help Achieve the American Dream

State prevailing wage laws extend homeownership to more than 61,000 blue-collar construction workers across the United States. A new report, conducted by the Illinois Economic Policy Institute (ILEPI) and the Project for Middle Class Renewal (PMCR) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, finds prevailing wage laws increase the likelihood of construction workers owning homes.

Blue-collar construction incomes are an average of 5 percent higher in the states with prevailing wage laws. The study shows the regional effect of prevailing wage on homeownership is highest in the Midwestern states of Ohio, Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri, where strong prevailing wage laws boost blue-collar construction wages by more than \$2,000 per year, on average. In these states, rates of construction worker homeownership range from 64 percent to 75 percent— or between 10 and 21 percentage points higher than non-prevailing wage states.

Homeownership has long been a core principle of the American Dream for working families in the middle class. Construction workers have a 2 percent higher rate of homeownership and a corresponding 13 percent increase in the average value of their homes in states with prevailing wage laws. For African Americans in construction, the difference is even more pronounced— an 8 percent increase in homeownership and an 18 percent increase in average home values. In addition, prevailing wage increases construction worker housing wealth regardless of urban status— by 14 percent in cities, 17 percent in suburbs, and 7 percent in rural areas. State prevailing wage laws build housing wealth for all blue-collar construction workers.

Nationwide, the researcher found that state prevailing wage laws increase earnings of construction workers by \$5 billion, extend homeownership to more than 61,000 blue-collar construction workers, boost the value of the homes they own by more than \$42 billion, and increase annual property tax revenues for their local communities by over \$500 million. By boosting both incomes and homeownership for workers without four-year college degrees, state prevailing

wage laws reduce economic inequality between blue-collar workers and white-collar professionals, according to the study.

As more construction workers earn higher incomes and are able to afford homes, they also contribute more in taxes and strengthen local communities. As a result, state prevailing wage laws also grow local economies and support local investments in public education, infrastructure, and human services by generating millions of dollars in property tax revenue— including \$52 million each year in Illinois— for school districts and local governments.

Prevailing wage strengthens communities across the United States by growing the middle class and improving the homeownership rate among skilled construction workers. Ultimately, prevailing wage allows hardworking craft workers who build the nation's infrastructure to achieve the American Dream.

To read the report, "Prevailing Wage and the American Dream: Impacts on Homeownership, Housing Wealth, and Property Tax Revenues," please visit www.illinoisepi.org.

In total, state prevailing wage laws extend homeownership to more than 61,000 blue-collar construction workers and boost the value of the homes they own by more than \$42 billion.



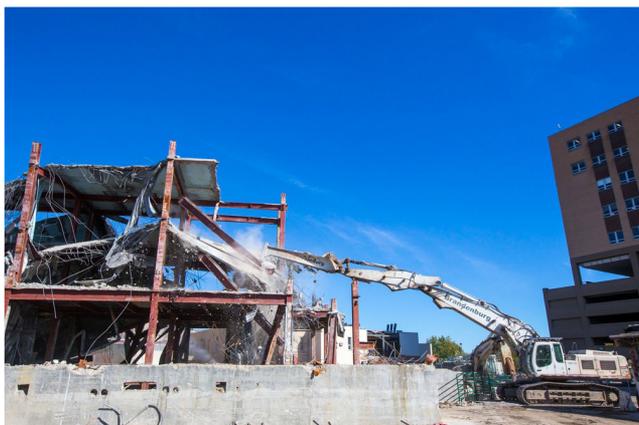
Brandenburg Construction- An Industry Leader

Established in 1968, Brandenburg Construction is known as one of the nation's premier firms specializing in demolition and environmental remediation, including asbestos abatement, hazardous material removal, soil remediation, asset recovery, and site preparation. Brandenburg Construction has six regional offices located throughout the United States, a staff in excess of 700 full-time permanent employees, and a fleet of equipment valued in excess of \$150,000,000.

Brandenburg Construction provides comprehensive asset retirement services for total plant closure as well as selective demolition designed to enhance the efficiency and profitability of ongoing operations. Associated services include, but are not limited to scrap management, environmental assessments, equipment salvage and rigging, electrical and mechanical utility construction and relocation.

In the commercial sector, Brandenburg Construction provides demolition services for building owners and the real estate development industry. The company specializes in projects which present challenging operational constraints and have developed a proven track record of completing these projects on time and without incident. Brandenburg Construction also maintains an engineering and estimating staff who provides diverse backgrounds and industry specific knowledge to design and implement exacting operational plans, which are responsive

to customer needs. In addition, Brandenburg Construction also performs extensive project assessment and planning to develop contract terms and specifications which address the unique requirement of each project. As a contractor, Brandenburg Construction is a total quality management company with ISO 9001 certification and is committed to providing a safe work environment for their employees and their customers.



With over fifty years of experience, Brandenburg has successfully completed countless projects ranging from the demolition of single-story structures to the total decommissioning of an entire industrial facility. Brandenburg completes over two hundred projects on an annual basis. Brandenburg has completed projects for a wide spectrum of

customers varying from small businesses to elite Fortune five hundred companies. These customers represent many industries including automotive, chemical, commercial, entertainment, industrial, institutional, mining, nuclear and fossil power generation, oil and gas, pharmaceutical and steel production. Brandenburg's proven track record, combined with an impressive safety program, has made the company the number one choice among the most demanding organizations.

The III FFC applauds Brandenburg on their reputation of being known for having the knowledge, expertise, and resources necessary to get any job done safely and efficiently.



Bi-Partisan Support for COVID-19 Relief

Congress to Help American Families and Small Businesses

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Congress has implemented legislation to provide relief during this unprecedented global pandemic.

First, on March 6, 2020, President Trump signed the Coronavirus Preparedness & Response Supplemental Appropriations Act (HR 6064), a \$8.3 billion supplemental spending package. The bill designates \$1.05 billion in grants to state and local governments to allow funds to be used to reimburse state and local costs already incurred. Notably, HR 6064 provided approximately \$2.2 billion to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to prevent, prepare, and response to COVID-19. The bill also provided funding to many other departments such as the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and much more.

The second round of relief for COVID-19 was passed on March 19, 2020 when the President signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (HR 6201), a

bill in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The bill is designed to establish paid sick leave, free coronavirus testing, expanded food assistance, unemployment benefits, and requires employers to provide additional protections to health care workers.

Finally, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security (CARES) Act- HR 748 was implemented on March 27, 2020 to support large and small businesses, industries, individuals and families, gig workers, independent contractors and hospitals. The passage of the roughly \$2 trillion bill is more than double the cost of the 2008 Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), and the 2009 American Recovery & Reinvestment Act. Under the CARES Act, individuals making less than \$75,000 per year receive \$1,200 and

married couples making less than \$150,000 receive \$2,400 with additional \$500 checks per child. For businesses, the CARES Act guarantees \$500 billion in subsidized loans and payroll retention incentives.

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Congress has implemented legislation to provide relief during this unprecedented global pandemic.

SPOTLIGHT



Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

Double Track Project Approved in Northwest Indiana

On January 27, 2020 price proposals for designing and building the South Shores Line planned West Lake extension came in a bit higher than expected. Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) President Michael Noland stated while the prices came in higher than expected there is room to negotiate. The NICTD Board determined that a consortium of two Chicago-based companies, F.H. Paschen and Ragnar Benson Construction had the best price and value proposal at \$664.2 million. The other bid was from the consortium group of Walsh Construction from Chicago and Herzog, a rail construction group from Missouri, which came in at \$792.6 million. President Nolan said there will be talks with the winning group before contracts are awarded later this year.

The NICTD Board of Trustees did approve construction agreements with the three municipalities through which the West Lake Corridor commuter rail will go through. Munster, Hammond and Dyer have set a template of cooperation as the agreements include the acquisition of municipal property and addresses other project related issues like utility relocations. Construction is scheduled to begin later this year with a scheduled completion date in 2020.

The new eight-mile line will run From Hammond to Dyer with a later extension to St. John, and trains will run as shuttles between Hammond and Dyer during off-peak hours. The alignment of the new branch leaves the old CSS&SB main immediately before the current Hammond station. Hence, the NICTD has decided to build a new station in Hammond to serve both branches. In fact, local contractors have already

been awarded over \$3 million in funding for demolition.

NICTD also announced on February 11, 2020, that the Federal Transit Administration had approved to enter final engineering for the Double Track project in Northwest Indiana. The need for the Double Track project was defined by State Representative Ed Soliday, 4th District to greatly reduce the travel on Indiana's busy highway 80/94. Along with helping a fast-growing community like Northwest Indiana to have access to mass transit.

Speaking with Rep Soliday, he mentions how this project started around 12 years ago working with U.S. Representative Visclosky. Rep. Soliday talked how important it was for him to make sure all partners, local, state and federal authorities all work together on the project. The project is projected to bring a number of good-paying jobs to the area.

Once completed the Double Track project will include over 26 miles of from Gary to Michigan City. The project includes installation of a second mainline track, improvements at five stations, expansion of parking lots for over 1,300 new parking spaces and 9 new platforms. Significant safety improvements will be made in Michigan City, where the rail will be separated from the roadway at 21 at-grade crossings will be closed. The project is expected to more than double the existing South Shore Line ridership and reduce travel times for all riders travelling east of Gary.

Combined, the Double Track Northwest Indiana and West Lake Corridor Projects are projected to attract approximately \$2.3 billion in private investment to northwest Indiana and result in over 6,000 new jobs and \$3 billion in economic impact by 2048.



NAFC Conference Update

By Josh Weger

Since our inception, the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting (III FFC) has been an active member of the National Alliance for Fair Contracting (NAFC), a national association of labor-management cooperation committees, fair contracting organizations, contractor associations, and labor unions committed to promoting fairness in public works construction contracting. Over the years, we have become a leading member of NAFC, helping shape its principles and agenda and forging best practices and policy innovations that have been adopted by many of our peers around the country. Our Executive Director Marc Poulos serves on the NAFC board of directors.

In 2016, the III FFC and the Illinois Economic Policy Institute (ILEPI) answered the call from NAFC to deliver a first of its kind exhaustive compendium of prevailing wage resources. Known as the Prevailing Wage Facts Toolkit, it contains all known academic studies, research, data, talking points, fact sheets, flyers, handouts, videos, op-eds, abstracts, and summaries. An exclusive NAFC members-only resource, the Toolkit has been an indispensable resource in battles fought by NAFC member organizations around the country to protect prevailing wage laws. Today the Toolkit is in its third edition.

In January, we were asked by NAFC to again take the lead on the creation of another sweeping compendium, a 50-state collection of legislation, ordinances, and policies encompassing the full spectrum of fair contracting subject matter. Specifically, the compilation will cover topics including prevailing wage, responsible bidding,

project labor agreements, economic development policy, employee misclassification and wage theft, and workforce development and apprenticeship. The plan is to collect the hallmark examples of these pieces of legislation, ordinances, and policies that reflect best practices across the country. The final product will serve as a playbook that NAFC member organizations can use to guide a legislative and policy agenda that maximizes market share for signatory contractors and hours for skilled craft workers.

A committee has been formed to guide the project that is chaired by NAFC Administrator Geoff Griffith and includes NAFC General Counsel Phyllis Payne, III FFC Executive Director Marc Poulos, and LIUNA International Representative Kevin Reilly. III FFC Policy Director Josh Weger and III FFC Legal Counsel Joe Sweeney are the lead researchers on the project.

NAFC has indicated that it views the III FFC as best suited to lead the project as we have numerous contributions to this kind of best practices collection. With more than 20 years in business, the III FFC is proud to be recognized by our peers as an elite FFC and a national leader in the field of fair contracting. We are honored to be enlisted by NAFC to create vital research products that can advance the entire fair contracting movement, and we are committed to creating new policy innovations that can be shared with and replicated by our partner FFCs across the nation. We look forward to reporting more on this project in future editions of *The Monitor*.



It's really quite simple.

Successful projects happen when Labor and Management share the same priorities. And when the highest priority is having a team of safe, well-trained workers on the jobsite, those projects are completed on time and on budget.

We're the Indiana, Illinois, Iowa Foundation for Fair Contracting.

We bring Labor and Management together to assist public bodies and contractors with OSHA, contract compliance and other contracting matters, while striving to secure work for responsible contractors.



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