



North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU) recommends the following policy proposals to provide support for not only the industry's workforce but also the investors and businesses that finance projects and employ millions of men and women across the country. The full recovery and survival of the industry from COVID-19 is based on the federal government enacting and implementing these sensible and targeted policy proposals as soon as possible.

SECURING WAGE COVERAGE FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

It is highly likely that all, or a significant portion of, the upcoming construction season will be missed due to COVID-19. This will mean zero hours for millions of construction workers. This is to say nothing of the workforce, who will be laid off, that is responsible for maintaining existing infrastructure throughout the rest of the year. The issue is that none of these men or women have paid sick leave and regardless, it is short term solution. A long-term solution is necessary for workers in this industry who are now, or will be soon, left without a paycheck for an indefinite amount of time. To that end, NABTU has a series of proposals to not only amend HR 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, but also expand the unemployment insurance program.

- Expand unemployment insurance per the attached proposal

- In HR 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act
 - An employee's FMLA leave for COVID-19 should be in addition to their existing grant of FMLA leave and vice versa
 - To ensure construction workers are eligible for FMLA, they must qualify for it whenever they work, and not be subject to a 30-day employment requirement.
 - Most construction contractors employ workers in the single digits. However, there are more than several that employ them by the thousands. Regardless of the size of the company, construction workers must be guaranteed paid sick leave/FMLA as the bill outlines.
 - The bill needs to be changed in order to uniformly provide leave to care for a domestic partner who is ill or quarantined due to coronavirus.
 - The FMLA portions of the bill allow an employer to provide the initial 14 days of leave as unpaid. The employee, however, can elect to substitute for unpaid leave any accrued vacation leave, personal leave, medical or sick leave. However, this does not include "paid sick time" as established in the latter part of the bill. An employee should be allowed to apply their paid sick time to the first 14 days of unpaid leave.

PROTECTING HEALTH COVERAGE

Millions of construction workers receive affordable, accessible and quality coverage from funds specifically designed for them and their employers in the construction industry. Job losses from worksite shutdowns and illness are already putting a strain on Taft-Hartley health and welfare funds. It is imperative for their continued operation that financial support is afforded to them. To that end, NABTU proposes the following financial assistance from the federal government:

- To reinsure all claims over \$1 million regardless of whether they are related to COVID-19 and prescription drug claims over \$500,000
- To cover all costs associated with FMLA provided during the emergency or to sick leave during the emergency

- Direct financial assistance covering all missed contributions into the funds by employees due to their absence from work.

PROTECTING RETIREMENT THROUGH PENSION FUND RELIEF

Over 10.4 million Americans rely on multiemployer pension and annuity plans for their retirement benefits. Protecting these plans from this pandemic means protecting these working families from economic dependence and financial instability. To that end, NABTU proposes a relief through the relaxation of funding rules, as well as massive infusion of federal dollars directly to multiemployer pension funds and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC).

JOB CREATION THROUGH MASSIVE INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Jobs, jobs, jobs. The success of the industry's recovery from this pandemic will be centered on exactly that. To that end, NABTU proposes the following:

- **Massive and immediate cash infusions into traditional core infrastructure programs, dispersed as grants, in the following areas:**
 - Surface transportation
 - Water, sewer, and water resources
 - Energy infrastructure
 - Housing and telecommunications
 - Public schools
- **Immediate increase in Corps of Engineers funding to build hospital capacity.** The Corps of Engineers, working with the building trades, has the capacity to swiftly and safely increase the hospital bed capacity in areas hardest hit by COVID-19
- **Immediate investments in the 16 critical physical and virtual infrastructure sectors identified by the Department of Homeland Security as well as projects of regional and national significance such as Gateway.** We cannot afford to have a major infrastructure failure at this time, and investments in these sectors will help to prevent one.
- **Flexibility to investors**
NABTU supports making it easier for businesses and investors to obtain loans as this is key to stabilizing and protecting the long-term health of job creation in the construction industry.
- **Expansion of bonding**
NABTU supports the expanded use of bonding to raise revenue to make such massive investments. Vehicles such as raising the volume cap on Private Activity Bonds, and the creation of Move America Bonds, both of which have been introduced in both Chambers, would provide much needed resources in order to meet this massive mobilization.