

CASTLE CONCRETE CORPORATION

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

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OUR FREEDOM AND PLA's

I moved with my family from Puerto Rico to live in Connecticut 25 years ago. This was not an easy decision; it took us a lot of investigation, research and then planning. We were very impressed with the reports of this state related to its economy, education resources, jobs market, public services, environmental issues, cost of living, and freedom (being Latinos, this one issue was a most). Compared to other States, the choice to move to Connecticut became a "no brainer". I still believe firmly in this.

Not too long later, I founded a construction company: Castle Concrete Corp. We have been in business for 21 years. At present, we have a labor force of approximately 35 employees. I run this Corporation with the assistance of my two sons; we also have seven supervisors and our office staff. More than half of all of our employees have been working in "Castle" for more than 12 years, some of them 15. Their loyalty is one of our most foundations. The majority of our Annual Payroll expenses have been used in State Construction Jobs, meaning Minimum Prevailing Wages. In the past we had participated in the construction of more than ten large jobs for the CT. State Universities. We are an open shop company; we all feel pride for it.

It is a high and great respect and admiration what our workers and I feel for the union construction workers, having worked together with many of them many times. Their dedication, experience and skills are to be acknowledged. We don't believe that one group is better or worse than the other, we believe that we are just different; our approach to how we do our business is the only thing that makes us different.

Organized and open shop workers are, in many ways, very similar. First, we love our work; the things we make with our bare hands are a motive of pride. We are proud artisans. Our sweat smells the same, our strong hands with so many scars and callous are the same; the mark that the plastic band of our safety hats leave in our front head is the same on each one, we carry the same heavy tools. We are simple human beings, but when we grab a hammer, a saw, or a shovel we use them with strength and passion. We feel good about it; we give the best of us. Every week day, the first humans hitting the streets in our towns are the construction workers; sometimes we are the last ones to return home. It takes a lot of sacrifice and real dedication to do our work. We all love to bring our children to the finished jobs were we had worked to show our work off. How many times do we say: "You see that beautiful building; I built that one with the guys". We all treasure our families, deeply. We want to provide them the most we can, that's why we work so hard. We were born to do this.....we are equals.

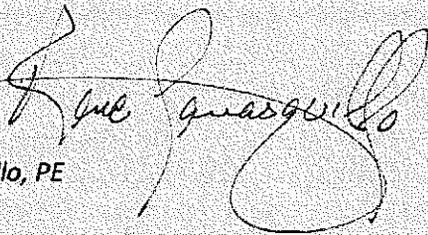
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As equals, we all shall be entitled to have and enjoy the same rights. In particular, the sacred right to work and to be able to support our families is one of the most important ones, being one of the most foundation of our Freedom. If our right to work is altered or limited, we lose part of our freedom. If we are not allowed to work we will not be able to support our families, being forced then to depend on the State. Our possibilities to prosper will be restrained. Our beloved children's future will be in jeopardy; their chances for having good education, health services, housing, living standards, food, recreation, etc. are to be greatly decreased. Losing our right to work equals to lose our freedom.

The Constitution of our great Nation promise Freedom to all its citizens, not to the union workers only. When a public construction job opens to the industry for bidding, and only the union companies are entitled to go for it, the open shop workers lose their sacred right to work automatically. This action violates the non union workers rights and freedom. Its takes the rights that belong to all the workers as equals and give it to a very small minority only (21%, to be exact) among them. This will be like a father telling his children that they are prohibited to go and play on certain public park, because it is reserved for a certain family only. That's wrong.

We know that a great majority of the construction workers in this State are not union, that's our choice, and we have the freedom to do so. The fact that we are the vast majority among them does not entitle us to limit the rights of our union coworkers. We will never even think to do such a violation against them; we respect them enough for never causing so much pain upon this workers

The elected leaders that will take in consideration to make these construction jobs PLA's ones have to remember and keep in mind who voted for them. They need to acknowledge the fact that among their constituents there are many construction workers, being the majority of them open shop ones. They need to realize that their sacred obligation is to serve all the citizens as equals, not a mere minority among them. Creating PLA's in these future sites will constitute a violation to this obligation. Please be fair and allow all the parties interested in these new jobs to have the same rights and freedom to participate and compete as equals...It is not only that it is good for business, but good for all. It is a matter of the principle of protecting Freedom



Rene Carrasquillo, PE

Presidente

Castle Concrete Corp., Northford, CT.