Mason Contractors Association of Connecticut

Senate Bill 350, An Act Codifying Prevailing Wage Contract Rates
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 5, 2020

The Mason Contractors Association of Connecticut (MCAC) is an association of commercial and industrial masonry subcontractors who aim to increase the usefulness and prestige of those engaged in the masonry construction business in Connecticut. MCAC employs the skilled craftsman and craftswomen of The Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Local 1 Connecticut and represent over 50 contractors in the State.

MCAC **supports** Senate Bill 350, which would codify in state statute what is already the practice in Connecticut for adopting prevailing wage rates as determined by the U.S. Department of Labor. The bill would protect the construction industry from any mismanagement in U.S. DOL or any attempt to artificially drive down wages. Additionally, it removes several inefficient and time-consuming requirements that add no value to the current process of posting the prevailing rates.

The U.S. Department of Labor determines the Davis-Bacon rates by conducting wage surveys, wherein it surveys the rates paid by contractors, by classification of work, and by certain geographic areas in every state. In Connecticut, the rates determined through collective bargaining eventually become the prevailing wage rate of pay. This means that, through the U.S. DOL's wage survey process, it is determined that the collective bargaining rate is the market rate. And further, it means that any construction workers performing work on a public project in Connecticut, which includes Davis-Bacon or Prevailing Wage provisions, are earning the collectively bargained rate.

The Connecticut Department of Labor must update the prevailing wage rates every July 1. U.S. DOL updates the rates to reflect any escalations or changes to a classification. Unfortunately, however, U.S. DOL is not always timely or reliable in updating their wage determinations, which has led to administrative delays within CT DOL and unnecessary confusion for contractors.

SB 350 would protect the integrity of Connecticut's prevailing wage law. It wouldn't expand prevailing wage protections into other areas nor arbitrarily raise wages. It simply protects the law as it is in practice today. More than half of the prevailing wage states in the nation accept the collective bargaining agreement rates when determining their prevailing rate.

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Additionally, the current method for processing prevailing wage postings is inefficient, time-consuming and prone to error.

Several construction industry organizations and bargaining units representing various building trades participate in a cumbersome process to adopt the prevailing rates. This wastes time and limited resources on the same process.

By removing the intermediary, SB 350 would eliminate lengthy, cumbersome, inefficient steps from the process. This would allow the organizations and bargaining units to work directly with CT DOL in a more efficient and effective manner.

Please contact Michael Thompson, Executive Director of MCAC, at (860) 413-9447, for additional information or any questions.