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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**PRESS RELEASE**

*Coalition of 160+ local officials, organizations, and academics call on Biden administration to overturn ban on local hire, create local jobs and fix economy*

***Demand comes as a report reveals that local hire creates opportunities for marginalized workers***

March 2, 2021—Elected officials, community groups, advocates, and academics from 24 states have signed a [letter](#) calling on the Biden administration to swiftly remove the ban on local hire, which forbids cities and states from using local hire policies to specify geographic preference for job creation in any procurement process funded with federal dollars.

For years, local officials, labor unions, and community groups have made the case for overturning the ban: arguing that connecting infrastructure projects with good jobs for local workers is not only something that communities desperately want, but something that would bolster regional economies.

The coalition's letter to the Biden administration urges the president to overturn the ban on local hire, arguing that local hire is a critical policy to create good jobs, strengthen local economies, and build back better from the pandemic.

Along with its letter, the coalition is highlighting a [new report](#) that evaluates data from the Local Labor Hiring Pilot, a program to evaluate the impact of local hire on cost and competition launched during the Obama-Biden administration. The data conclusively shows that local hire can be used on infrastructure projects without decreasing competition or increasing bid prices. The report also reveals extensive societal and economic benefits of local hire in creating jobs for local residents, especially for marginalized workers.

Signers of the letter include the cities of Alexandria, VA, Birmingham, AL, Chicago, Los Angeles, Madison, WI, Seattle, Syracuse, NY, King County (WA), Miami-Dade County, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department, North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU), and numerous others.

***Below are a series of statements from public officials and advocates who support the removal of the ban:***

"Local hire programs are a powerful tool to bring together states, localities, community groups, and labor organizations to expand access to high-quality infrastructure jobs for underrepresented, struggling workers," said **Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer**.

"Investing in infrastructure will be key to rebuilding our local economies coming out of this pandemic, and use of local hire on those infrastructure projects will ensure even wider benefits to communities, especially communities of color and low-income communities that have been hardest-hit by job loss during this crisis and historically left behind and disadvantaged. I have worked closely with local leaders in places like Syracuse and with labor to advocate for local hire with the Biden Administration and will continue to join efforts with Senator Gillibrand, Representative Bass, and the wide coalition of support for local hire to push for key policy changes that make local hire a priority in federal infrastructure spending."

“When a new infrastructure project is started in South Los Angeles, it should be our community who gets the first shot at the new jobs associated with completing the project. We need to be doing everything we can to embrace job-growth in our neighborhoods, especially as we fight against COVID-19. This is a common-sense step for our government to make it easier for companies to generate jobs in the very counties and states where their transportation projects are located. Communities shouldn’t have to wait for infrastructure projects to be finished to benefit from the investment,” said **Karen Bass, U.S. Representative for California’s 37th congressional district.**

“As we work to recover from the COVID-19 crisis, investing in infrastructure projects to rebuild communities and create high-quality local jobs will be key,” said **U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.** “Enacting a federal policy to ensure that jobs go to people in the community where the project is located will not only improve equity for workers, it will help rebuild local economies better and stronger. This is especially true for communities of color that have suffered from harmful infrastructure projects and disinvestment. I applaud Jobs to Move America for their leadership on this issue and I will keep working in Congress to repair our nation’s infrastructure while raising wages and labor standards, strengthening unions, investing in American manufacturing, and creating new opportunities for hard working Americans.”

“This new Jobs to Move America report is yet more evidence that empowering state and local governments to optimize their procurement strategies to include local hiring incentives can not only create jobs for residents, but also results in projects that attract widespread competition from contractors,” said **U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth.** “The time has come to eliminate an outdated, burdensome, one-size-fits-all federal regulation that dictates to state and local governments how they should run contracting competitions in their local communities.”

“Investing in our transportation networks is about more than creating a sustainable way to get around—it’s a down payment on a new generation of prosperity in our own communities,” said **Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.** “Expanding local hire would ensure our taxpayer dollars translate into good-paying jobs for Angelenos, lift up our most vulnerable residents, and build an economy that works for everyone.”

“Creating local hiring on major public infrastructure projects will be transformational for the City of Syracuse. Our community is bisected by an aging highway viaduct that has robbed people in its path of opportunity and negatively impacted the City,” said **Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh.** “With work on this \$2 billion-plus project about to begin, having the ability to put local people on the job will help right wrongs done decades ago and put people and families in Syracuse on more solid footing for the future.”

“We need every tool available in the toolbox to provide good-paying jobs for the residents of Birmingham. Research shows us that removing the prohibition on local hire will end bureaucratic hurdles and enable investment that will create jobs in our city to strengthen our workers, our families and our tax base,” said **Mayor Randall L. Woodfin of Birmingham, Alabama.**

"Across the United States, infrastructure projects are being designed, built and managed in underserved communities by people who live outside of those communities or who aren't reflective of a community's demographics," said **LA Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington**. "This is why Metro is steadfast in its support of local hiring provisions on federally funded transportation projects. We want to give residents who live in the community where projects are being built an opportunity to design and build their own infrastructure."

"I am extremely happy to join with my colleagues to urge the Biden administration to remove the federal restrictions on local hiring and make sure that we continue to experience and celebrate the kinds of success stories that will result in much needed economic opportunity and growth in those disadvantaged communities that we all serve," said **Chicago Transit Authority President Dorval R. Carter, Jr.**

"Jobs to Move America's study and calling for the elimination of local hire restrictions on federal infrastructure projects both validate and strengthen the mission of Syracuse's I-81 big table. That's why we are here today in support of this national effort. It is time that we acknowledge the historical harm caused by infrastructure projects in our nation, and to also in turn use future projects to repair the immense damage caused by said harm," said **Deka Dancil, President of the Urban Jobs Task Force**.

"Local hire programs can open doors, change lives and uplift communities. Union apprenticeship programs are some of the most effective training programs connected to career pipelines with well paying jobs in high-demand sectors. Together, local hire and the labor movement can strengthen communities and right historical wrongs by increasing access to the highest quality job training and family-sustaining, union jobs," said **Liz Shuler, Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO**.

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