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AGC of America
THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA
Quality People. Quality Projects.



June 7, 2012

The Honorable John Kline
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support H.R. 4297, the Workforce Investment Improvement Act of 2012

Dear Representative Kline:

On behalf of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), I am writing in support of H.R. 4297, the "Workforce Investment Improvement Act of 2012," which will help reform the nation's job training system by strengthening employer engagement in state and local workforce decisions, as well as giving states and localities more flexibility. A strong and skilled workforce is vital to the nation's economic recovery.

AGC is the nation's largest and most diverse trade association in the commercial construction industry. AGC's 32,000 members include 7,000 general construction contractors, 12,000 specialty contractors, and 13,000 suppliers and service providers, in a nationwide network of 95 chapters. AGC represents both union and open-shop contractors in the building, highway, heavy industrial, and municipal utility sectors of the construction industry.

The construction industry is made up of predominantly small employers. In the past, many employers in the industry have had trouble connecting with local workforce investment systems or workforce investment boards (WIBs) due to the structure of the boards and types of training offered locally. However, H.R. 4297 will strengthen the presence and participation of employers on WIBs, and this increased participation by employers will be a welcomed change to the construction industry. Local employers can ensure local job training will address workforce gaps and better fit local population needs.

The construction industry has many unique workforce demands that differentiate it from other industries. Currently, the industry has the highest unemployment rate of any industry and continues to suffer depression-like conditions. As the economy recovers, baby boomers retire, and the construction industry sees a renewed need for a strong and skilled workforce, H.R. 4297 will be a step in the right direction to offer unemployed construction workers - as well as workers displaced from other industries and veterans - a vital path to the training necessary for them to become a part of the nation's future economic well being.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Shoaf
Senior Executive Director
Government Affairs