

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS



815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

ARLENE HOLT BAKER
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

(202) 637-5057



February 4, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the millions of American workers producing iron, steel, and manufactured goods in the United States, the AFL-CIO urges the Senate to include strong domestic sourcing provisions in any jobs bill that invests in infrastructure. Doing so would ensure that more Americans are put back to work, maintaining and creating jobs here in the United States producing the iron, steel, and manufactured goods this country needs as we repair and modernize our infrastructure.

In his State of the Union address, President Obama stated that “jobs must be our number one focus in 2010.” With national unemployment continuing at ten percent, maintaining and creating jobs clearly is the most pressing issue facing the nation.

The statistics are even more daunting for manufacturing: our economy has lost 2.1 million manufacturing jobs since December 2007 and 5.5 million manufacturing jobs since October 2000. In a recent Today-Gallop poll, when Americans were asked what should be done to create more jobs in the United States, the number one response was to “*keep manufacturing jobs in the United States.*” This can be achieved by making substantial investments in infrastructure spending for our highways, transit, sewer and water systems, schools, and clean energy infrastructure.

Americans want taxpayer dollars to be used to purchase domestic-made manufactured goods when funding these infrastructure projects. Indeed, support for Buy America is nationwide. A poll conducted by Harris Interactive found that 84 percent of Americans favored Buy America requirements in the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*. Further, more than 500 local, state, and municipal governments have passed Buy America resolutions pledging to ensure that U.S.-made materials are used to the fullest extent possible when state or local government receives federal funding for infrastructure projects under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

There is a good reason why Buy America is so popular: it works. A 2009 report by the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM), *How Infrastructure Investments Support the U.S. Economy: Employment, Productivity and Growth*, reveals that about 18,000 new jobs are created for every \$1 billion in new infrastructure spending. Even more impressive, employment in manufacturing can increase by as much as 33 percent when sourcing of domestic materials is maximized through Buy America rules, according to that report.

On December 16, 2009, the House of Representatives passed the *Jobs for Main Street Act of 2010*, which included substantial investment and strong domestic sourcing provisions. We urge the Senate to do the same and show the American people that creating good manufacturing jobs is a priority when spending taxpayer dollars for infrastructure projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Samuel', written in a cursive style.

William Samuel, Director
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT