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The Construction Employers of America (CEA) issued the following statement on the Department of Labor's plans for a proposed rule to update the regulations that implement Davis-Bacon and Related Acts:

The Construction Employers of America (CEA) applauds the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) for moving to update and modernize federal prevailing wage protections on federal and federally assisted construction projects under the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBA).

The DBA prohibits contractors and subcontractors on federal and federally assisted projects from paying construction workers less than the locally prevailing wage. It seeks to prevent the federal government from undermining local economies and their predominant local employment and training practices by reflecting local conditions. This results in wage protection for workers and promotes a level playing field for contractors by ensuring competition for government contracts is based on merit, not on who can assemble the cheapest workforce.

It has been over 40 years since the Department last undertook a comprehensive review of the DBA regulations. Over this time, there has been significant erosion of the DBA's regulatory framework, which has undermined the Act's intent of providing wage protections for workers and a level playing field for contractors. This attrition has led to out-of-date wage surveys and incorrect wage rates, thus making it more difficult to compete for government contracts — especially for contractors who provide their employees with middle-class wages and benefits and invest in their workforce.

While CEA looks forward to reviewing and commenting on this proposed rule, it is long past time that federal prevailing wage protections be revised to reflect the significant changes that have occurred in the economy and the construction industry over the past four decades.

Our member firms understand the merit in a public procurement policy that encourages employers to provide a skilled workforce with quality wages, benefits, and training. We offer the DOL our support for its long-overdue efforts to update prevailing wage standards and continue to ensure that federal and federally assisted construction projects are carried out by a well-trained, highly skilled and productive workforce.

ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYERS OF AMERICA

The CEA is made up of seven construction employer associations that represent construction firms that utilize union craftworkers. Collectively, our 15,000 signatory contractor members adhere to the highest standards and provide superior wages and benefits — including health insurance, pensions, and worker safety investments — to the approximately 1.4 million workers they employ. They are committed to working to strengthen the construction industry and provide opportunities for top-quality construction workers to learn and maintain the skills they need to deliver highly productive, quality workmanship. Their efforts provide the best value to project owners while earning high-value compensation and benefits for themselves, their families, and their communities.

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International Council of Employers of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
FCA International
Mechanical Contractors Association of America
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The Association of Union Constructors