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**ABC of Metro Washington Issues Statement After Appeals Court Upholds D.C.'s First Source Law**

BELTSVILLE, Md., March 14, 2023 – The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) of Metro Washington has issued the following statement, in response to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals’ ruling that ABC Metro Washington did not have standing to challenge the amended First Source Act of 2012.

“We share the District government’s focus on creating meaningful career opportunities in the construction industry for District residents,” said Dan Bond, President and CEO of ABC of Metro Washington. “With that said, we are disappointed with the decision to dismiss our challenge to the First Source law, a ruling which will slow the delivery of many vital projects that will benefit residents across the District.”

As of February 2012, the First Source law, which ABC of Metro Washington appealed, requires 51% of all new hires on construction projects assisted by the District government to be District residents.

The lower court’s decision, which ABC Metro Washington appealed, held that the District’s First Source law would be illegal in every single state, but was upheld based on the judge’s opinion that the District is not a state but rather an “arm of Congress,” whose citizens do not enjoy protection under the Privileges and Immunities Clause of the Fifth Amendment.

On a practical level, the First Source requirements strictly limit the pool of skilled workers who are available to build the residential and commercial projects needed to accommodate the District’s growth. The District government does not hold itself to these same residency requirements for its own employees and could not function as a government if it did. Unfortunately, the First Source residency requirements, while well-intentioned, are equally unworkable in the construction industry and impact the delivery of needed projects.

“At a time when tens of thousands are on D.C.’s affordable housing waitlist, we hope the District government will realize that First Source makes it harder to build the housing that residents need,” Bond said. “This well-intentioned law has created an unintended consequence: First Source makes it harder to find affordable housing. District residents get priced out of the city, and then they have a harder time finding a job in the city they didn’t want to leave in the first place.”

ABC of Metro Washington is fully committed to providing training and employment opportunities to District residents. Through its CORE program, ABC of Metro Washington’s CraftMasters Training Academy has trained hundreds of aspiring trade workers to join the construction trade workforce. Since its formation, CraftMasters Training Academy has trained thousands of workers through CORE, craft and apprenticeship programs and has helped place these workers in industry positions.

ABC CraftMasters is working to expand these CORE workforce development programs to increase the amount of new trade workers for the construction industry significantly in the near term.

“Our members are fully committed to training tradespeople and providing meaningful employment opportunities to District residents,” Bond said. “We know the District government shares that commitment, and we look forward to discussing ways we can accomplish our mutual goals together.”

In light of the court’s decision, ABC of Metro Washington urges the Mayor and D.C. Council to commit to expanding real and substantive craft training, apprenticeship and safety training programs, which will expand the pool of qualified workers needed to comply with the amended First Source Act.

ABC of Metro Washington is also committed to working with the District’s Department of Employment Services to collaborate on increasing training and employment opportunities for District residents.

“We can build the housing and commercial projects our great city deserves, without sacrificing employment opportunities for District residents,” Bond said. “We look forward to working with D.C. leadership on a path forward that creates good jobs, while protecting the major construction projects that our world-class city needs.”

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**ABOUT ABC OF METRO WASHINGTON:** Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is a national construction industry trade association representing more than 21,000 members nationwide. ABC of Metro Washington was the second chapter in the nation, chartered in 1958, and ranks in the top 10 chapters nationwide.