

Anti-union ABC is a shell when it comes to construction

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — A top anti-union lobby, Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), which proclaims itself as the national voice of nonunion construction companies, actually represents a small share of U.S. contractors, a new study shows.

The study by National Labor College political scientist Thomas Kriger also reveals some ABC members aren't even contractors. They include a florist in Jacksonville, restaurants in Texas and Oklahoma, 44 Chevy dealerships and 59 banks.

"ABC is an 'Astro-Turf' Washington Beltway political advocacy group with a well-funded PR and lobbying

machine," Kriger said during a presentation at the recent AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades legislative conference in Washington, D.C.

ABC is notorious for its anti-union stands. It vigorously lobbies to kill the Davis-Bacon Act, which mandates the Labor Department set locally prevailing wages for federally-funded construction projects. And ABC strenuously opposes project labor agreements. PLAs set standards — like grievance procedures and work rules — for projects.

ABC garnered headlines recently when presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney got its

endorsement after a speech blasting PLAs and unions.

Kriger concluded ABC, which boasts 23,000 members, is a "shell organization" that does little of its own research, instead sending right-wing talking points to its members.

Among his other findings:

- ABC's membership equals 0.03 percent of all construction contractors. Its maximum density in any state is 6 percent. In 46 percent of the states, it has fewer than 1 percent of contractors.

The report shows the Oregon ABC chapter with 94 members, of which only 60 percent are contractors, or 0.1 percent of contractors in the state.

The percentages in Washington are similar, with only 61 percent of its 649 chapter members contractors, or 0.8 percent of all contractors in the state.

- The non-partisan Construction Users Roundtable reported joint labor-management apprenticeship training committees, with union participation, turned out 351,000 apprentices from 2002-09, in an industry that is hitting an age crunch. ABC's programs turned out 19,000 apprentices over the same period. The Roundtable recommends contractors hire union-management-trained apprentices.

- ABC's membership includes 673 insurance brokers, the 44 car dealers

and the 59 banks. It also includes a party rental firm, the Florida florist, and the restaurants.

"ABC's low-road strategy for labor relations and employment has had a detrimental impact on the construction industry and on our society as a whole," as lawmakers have catered to its lobbyists, the study says. "In the industry today, there are too many low-skill, low-wage jobs, where working men and women receive minimal training. ABC's aggressive advocacy of the low road contributed to growing inequality."

A copy of the full report is available at www.knowyourabc.com.

...3 unions sponsor homeless camp

(From Page 1)

Mubarak says the needed excavation would be prohibitively expensive because the lot is considered to be of archeological interest, with artifacts from its Chinatown past buried beneath it. Also, he says, there would have to be a driveway, and tents would have to be 10 feet apart, drastically reducing the camp's capacity.

BDS also says the doors which make up the camp walls violate city code because they are over 6 feet high and the property owner has not applied for a building permit or Historic Design Review approval.

Fines of \$641 a month began Jan. 1, and doubled after three months. Caron said the property owners owe \$1,335.51, and have paid \$3,907 so far.

But Mubarak said it's Right 2 Dream Too that's paying the fines, under its agreement with the owners, and the money is coming out of the camp's food fund. Hence a sign that went up recently on the corner: In bold red letters, it says "Commissioner Dan Saltzman is effectively taking the food out of the mouths of the homeless." [BDS is one of the bureaus assigned to Commissioner Saltzman.]

"Everyone has a right to express

their opinion," was Saltzman's reply, relayed by his adviser Matt Grumm. Brendan Finn, Saltzman's chief of staff, said the commissioner's office is supportive of Right 2 Dream Too, but the city's complaint is against the landowner, who has had other disputes with the City dating back to operation of an adult bookstore at the same site, now demolished. Finn said the City can't treat the landowner differently than anyone else, where enforcement is concerned.

Right 2 Dream Too supporters have been calling on Saltzman and Portland City Council to drop the fines and let

the camp remain. They point to other cases where the City relaxes the rules: Portland has a camping ban, but waives it once a year for people who camp out the night before the Rose Festival's Grand Floral Parade.

"When our union was fighting budget cuts at the City of Portland, Right 2 Dream Too showed up to every action to help save our members' jobs," said Wesley Buchholz, Executive Board member of Laborers Local 483. "When I learned that the City fines them every month for violating the camping rules, I knew it was our turn to support them."

Labor-management alliance launches 'Should Be Made in America' drive

The Alliance for American Manufacturing has launched a campaign to call out infrastructure projects which use foreign-made materials — paid for with tax dollars. American manufacturing has been in decline, and nationwide one out of every 12 workers is looking for work, while the United States spends money on foreign-made products.

"Should be Made in America" is starting with the Bay Bridge, stretching from Oakland to San Francisco. Two massive billboards raise awareness about the Chinese steel used in the bridge's construction. The State of California, under Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, turned down federal money to help pay for the bridge, to avoid federal "Buy American" laws and hire a Chinese firm.

Learn more and sign up for updates about the campaign at www.ShouldBeMadeInAmerica.com.



NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS

(International Standard Serial Number 0894-444X)
Established in 1900 at Portland, Oregon as a voice of the labor movement.

4275 NE Halsey St., P.O. Box 13150,
Portland, Ore. 97213
Telephone: (503) 288-3311
Fax Number: (503) 288-3320

Editor: Michael Cutwig
Staff: Don McIntosh, Cheri Rice

Published on a semi-monthly basis on the first and third Fridays of each month by the Oregon Labor Press Publishing Co. Inc., a non-profit corporation owned by 20 unions and councils including the Oregon AFL-CIO. Serving more than 120 union organizations in Oregon and SW Washington. Subscriptions \$13.75 per year for union members.

Group rates available to trade union organizations.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID
AT PORTLAND, OREGON.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICE: Three weeks are required for a change of address. When ordering a change, please give your old and new addresses and the name and number of your local union.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
NORTHWEST LABOR PRESS, P.O. BOX 13150,
PORTLAND, OR 97213-0150



Carpenters, Electricians, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floorcoverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Millwrights, Painters, Elevators, Plasterers, Family

Need Financing For Your
Summer
Toy?



RV's, boat's, jet ski's,
or motorcycles?

IBEW & United Workers FCU
has very competitive rates & terms!

Apply online, over the phone,
or in office.

We can help you enjoy the warm
weather with the peace of mind that
comes from having a loan from
someone you trust—your Union
Credit Union.



9955 SE Washington Street
Portland, OR 97216

(503) 253-8193 * (800) 356-6507
www.ibewuwfcu.com

Carpenters, Electricians, Laborers, Glaziers, Sheetmetal Workers, Floorcoverers, Bricklayers, Cement Masons, Roofers, Asbestos Workers, Millwrights, Painters, Elevators, Plasterers, Family