

PRO ACT HURTS MINORITY CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS

98% of African-American and Hispanic construction companies are non-unionized.

Minority-owned contractors and workers could be left behind if Biden's infrastructure bill includes the PRO Act.



"It is clear that the construction trade labor unions have been, and remain, a serious obstacle to the participation of minority contractors and workers in the construction industry." **Anthony Robinson, President of the Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund** ([Testimony to Congress](#), 9/22/2010)

"98 percent of Black and Hispanic construction companies are non-union shops. Thus, a Project Labor Agreement greatly limits the opportunities for Black and Hispanic firms whenever they are used. The possibility of Black and Hispanic labor is greatly suppressed also." **Harry C. Alford, President/CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce** ([Testimony to Congress](#), 9/22/2010)

Construction Unions Hurt Minority-owned Construction Businesses And Lack Diversity **Most minority-owned construction firms are non-unionized – construction unions are still predominantly white.**

"Minority-owned construction firms, which are more likely to be small, also describe difficulties receiving bank loans, breaking into long-established networks and competing on price with larger white-owned firms that can do the work for cheaper because of economies of scale. Moreover, they say, most minority-owned firms are not unionized even as many major projects require companies to use union labor... And McCraley noted minority-owned firms that want to hire mostly people of color have a harder time doing so through unions that are still predominantly white." ([Star Tribune](#), 9/14/20)

Union labor crowds out minority-owned construction businesses and lowers African-American employment. "There have been rouses of diversity pre-apprenticeship training programs during the past twenty years but no increase in diversity at the apprenticeship to journeymen levels. The higher incidence of union labor in the construction industry, the lower African American employment will be realized. This is constant throughout the nation. Also, and equally important, the higher use of union shops brings a correlated decrease in the amount of Black-owned businesses being involved on a worksite." ([NBCC](#), 5/25/17)

Trade Unions Have A Diversity Problem

Union facing class-action lawsuit from African-American members over claims of workplace discrimination. "Pipeliners Local 798 faces a new class-action lawsuit that claims Black members were denied promotions that were given instead to less-qualified white coworkers. The Pipeliners union is a powerful force in pipeline construction. With more than 8,000 members it works on pipeline construction projects across the country and has been a vocal supporter of the Keystone XL." ([NPR](#), 1/19/21)

Minority members of construction union received less than 15 percent of union work and subjected to racial slurs by supervisors. "Minority members of Local 542, particularly black unionists, say they have heard white supervisors throw around phrases like 'worthless n*****' on job sites, just like in the Old South. In just the last six months, they say, a black operator found a noose hanging from his crane while working at a local power plant... However, Local 542 minority members only receive around 15.5 percent of the union's total hours worked, says Danese.... Minority members tell PlanPhilly there's a widely held belief that the black and Latino members of Local 542 recently have been systematically removed from jobs in favor of white members." ([WHYY](#), 7/25/17)

Report finds "appalling diversity statistics" in trade unions and apprenticeship programs predominantly white. "Activists called it a 'No Labor Day' event, gathering with unemployed Black men and women Monday as they unveiled appalling diversity statistics in a new report that turns a spotlight on systemic racism within trade unions, specifically, those operating in Illinois... Based on U.S. Department of Labor statistics from 1999-2018, the CBUC report finds apprenticeship programs of 62 Illinois trade unions remain mostly white — five of them completely segregated; 15 with less than 20% persons of color; and 13 with 20 to 30% persons of color." ([Chicago Sun Times](#), 9/7/20)

Census data found African-American union workers make 20 percent less than their white counterparts. "In New York City, Census Bureau numbers found that Black union workers make \$5.74 less per hour on average than their white counterparts — or 20 percent less. At full time, that's a difference of \$11,500 a year... Construction unions appear to prevent minority workers from getting the best-paid gigs." ([New York Post](#), 12/22/15)