



April 15, 2020

The Honorable Donald Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors, a national construction industry trade association with 69 chapters representing more than 21,000 members, it is an honor to be part of the Construction industry group for your Great American Economic Revival, and I look forward to working with the White House and our industry on this important initiative.

To provide critical guidance during this difficult time for our nation, we surveyed industry leaders, strategic partners and supply chain members to provide insight on the government's current response to the ongoing pandemic and how we can best restore the economic strength of the entire country, while helping workers and companies rebuild as quickly and safely as possible.

On behalf of our workforce, we thank you for your leadership during this unimaginable moment in time. Prior to this pandemic gripping our nation, the construction industry was on its way to a record construction spend of more than \$1.3 trillion. The team you have assembled and the actions taken during your time in the White House reflect your understanding of what it takes to ensure employers are able to maintain the employment of their amazing workforce. We also appreciate the administration's willingness to reach out to industry leaders and health experts to ensure that we come out of this crisis stronger.

Throughout this crisis, timely guidance from the White House and our federal agencies has ensured that construction remains an essential service in many of our states and local communities. This has been vital to the construction industry as contractors will be needed to safely build, expand and maintain hospitals and health care facilities to care for COVID-19 victims safely, retrofit existing structures for emergency use, modify manufacturing facilities due to increased demand for medical supplies and provide new transportation corridors for people and materials.

The quick bipartisan work under the leadership of your administration to enact the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the \$2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act helped to ensure that many of our businesses had the funds needed to maintain operations and keep staff on payroll. The Internal Revenue Service, Small Business Administration and the quick actions by our financial sector have enabled the swift and effective implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program.

Many construction companies have already received these vital funds into their accounts, which allow them to survive and keep their vital workforce as we help to keep the essential infrastructure functioning across the United States. According to SBA, as of April 13, construction companies have had 114,838 loans approved for nearly \$34 billion.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have also been essential collaborative partners for the construction industry, helping us deliver work safely. We appreciate the ongoing research and education surrounding the virus and the constant guidance and flexibility in enforcement as we all try to create the conditions to deliver construction safely while supporting the essential infrastructure of our country.

Looking forward, we are hopeful that Congress is quickly able to secure much-needed additional funding for the Paycheck Protection Program to provide our small businesses with the liquidity and resources needed to remain in business and provide pay and benefits for hardworking Americans. Expansion of the PPP should also ensure that companies are able to provide more than the eight weeks of payroll currently authorized and use these funds to cover mortgages and other required payments—it is critical that our workers have offices and jobs to return to once the spread of the virus is effectively contained.

Ensuring the safety of our construction workforce is also vital to a strong recovery and a safe and healthy workplace. Until a vaccine or effective treatment for COVID-19 is discovered, readily available and widely used, testing for the virus will be vital for our employers and workers, and will ensure confidence in our commitment to provide a safe work environment.

ABC members are committed to the safety of our workforce and continue to implement the important safety and health measures recommended by experts and administration officials. Through practicing social distancing in the workplace, requiring new personal protective equipment and changing processes to limit human touch activities, we can provide a renewed sense of safety and security for all in our industry to achieve a safe, productive workforce in construction. As we continue to learn more about this virus and additional guidance is provided, we are committed to adapting to these new requirements to support the safety of hardworking Americans and ensure jobsites can be run safely and effectively in this new environment.

Current ongoing construction work deemed essential is using up inventory, and to ensure there is enough PPE, hygiene resources (handwashing stations, sanitizers), construction products and building equipment, the manufacturing supply chain must re-open to its full capacity. It will be problematic to get the industry back into full construction mode if the supply chain does not open sooner.

While the federal response to this crisis continues, many in construction are looking towards the light at the end of the tunnel and the eventual recovery of our economy. One of the main issues discussed to aid in the nation's recovery has been enactment of a substantial infrastructure package to address the much-needed repair and modernization of our nation's transportation infrastructure.

The White House's Legislative Outline for Rebuilding Infrastructure in America, issued in 2018, can serve as a base for this plan moving forward. This outline established some fundamental principles that would create the conditions for infrastructure projects that would create the most value for the country—funded appropriately and designed and built efficiently and effectively.

A significant investment in federal construction accounts and programs will also ensure that essential infrastructure is maintained during this public health crisis, helping to sustain economic activity and accelerating economic recovery efforts after the immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have passed.

The many benefits of infrastructure spending arguably outweigh the costs. Every \$1 billion in extra construction spending on infrastructure generates an average of at least 3,300 construction jobs, and future generations will reap the rewards of strategic infrastructure investments in schools, water treatment plants and energy production, which have been found to improve quality of life, the environment and opportunity for all Americans. A Business Roundtable report found that every dollar invested in infrastructure creates \$3.70 in economic growth over 20 years.

While we do not yet know the full impact that this health crisis will have on our country, we applaud you and our congressional leaders for the unprecedented initial response to maintain businesses that will hopefully prevent a larger economic collapse and save millions of Americans their jobs.

I look forward to continuing to discuss these important issues with your administration and thank you for your leadership in getting our nation's construction industry and workforce safely back to work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Bellaman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Bellaman  
President and CEO