



ALABAMA UTILITY CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

TIM AYERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MARCH 2019

Director's Comments:



The Alabama Legislature convened in Montgomery on March 5th. As had been rumored, Governor Ivey issued a proclamation for a special session. This meant the continuation of the regular session would be postponed until later in the month so legislators could focus exclusively on the passage of the three-bill package that made up what was named the Rebuild Alabama Act.

Despite reports of opposition, the Rebuild Alabama Act passed and was signed into law only 5 legislative days from its introduction. This represents the minimum amount of time in which a bill can be passed. As a result, the state's tax on gasoline and diesel fuel will increase for the first time since 1992. The increase will be phased in over a three year period that when fully implemented is expected to generate an additional \$320 million a year to fund infrastructure projects.

However, I hope we haven't put the cart before the horse. At current workloads, most of our members are reporting extreme difficulty in finding qualified workers to hire. With the additional projects that will be coming as a result of the Rebuild Alabama Act, it is imperative that we focus serious attention on our workforce development efforts to train and bring new blood into the industry.

U.S. Congressman Bradley Byrne has been a vocal proponent for workforce training and technical education programs. We are pleased to have Congressman Byrne as our guest speaker at our April 18th Spring General Meeting in Montgomery. We expect a great turnout, and hope to see you all there.

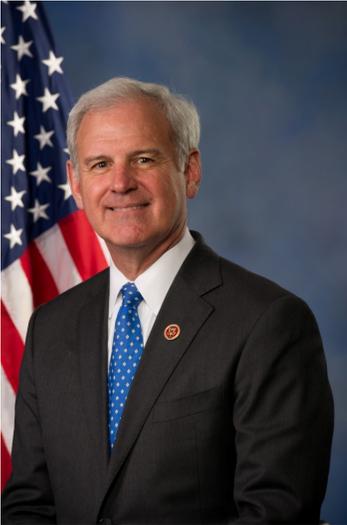
Tim

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News & Notes:

U.S. Congressman Bradley Byrne to Headline AUCA Spring General Meeting:



We are pleased to have Bradley Byrne as the guest speaker at the April 18th AUCA Spring General Meeting in Montgomery. Bradley Byrne is currently serving his fourth term in the U.S. House of Representatives and is running for U.S. Senate in 2020.

Bradley has committed much of his life to improving the quality of life for Alabamians dating back to his time on the State Board of Education, in the Alabama State Senate, and as Chancellor of Alabama's community college system. Throughout his career, Bradley has been a fierce advocate for a smaller government that works for the American people. In Congress, Bradley is known to fight for a stronger military, our veterans, Alabama's rural communities, Alabama's farmers and foresters, and Alabama businesses and workers.

AUCA Scholarship Program:

- AUCA will be awarding two (2) Scholarships worth \$1,500 each.
- Money will be paid directly to the College or Trade School of the applicant's choice.
- The Scholarship Committee will select the two winners from AUCA member company employees, or family members that apply before the April 30th deadline.
- Applications are available on the AUCA website:

<http://www.aluca.org/scholarship-program.html>

2019 AUCA Membership Dues Renewal

If your company has not submitted your membership dues renewal, please make arrangements to submit your payment by April 30, 2019. If dues are not received by this date, your company will be considered delinquent, and will not be included in the upcoming AUCA Membership Directory, or eligible for the Scholarship Program.

Should you have any questions, need another copy of the invoice sent to you, or wish to pay by credit card, please contact the AUCA office at (205) 582-9436.



News & Notes:

**“Charge the Hill” Legislative Awareness Day - March 5th
State House Building - Montgomery**



Tuscaloosa Area Lunch Meeting - March 27th



State Senator Gerald Allen, Chairman of the Alabama Senate Transportation & Energy Committee provided an update on the current 2019 Legislative Session, and the recent passage of the Rebuild Alabama Act.



Alabama Legislative News:

The 2019 Alabama Legislative Session convened on Tuesday, March 5th in Montgomery. Governor Ivey delivered her "State of the State" address later that evening, and then issued a proclamation calling lawmakers into a Special Session to consider an increase in state fuel taxes to increase funding for roads, bridges and the state port in Mobile. As a result of the Special Session, the Regular Session was suspended until March 19th.

The Alabama Special Legislative Session lasted five days and saw the passage of the three-bill package (HB1, HB2, and HB3) that made up the Rebuild Alabama Act, which was immediately signed into law by Governor Ivey. As a result, the state's tax on gasoline and diesel fuel will increase for the first time since 1992, by 6 cents a gallon after August 31, 2019 followed by an additional 2 cents a gallon on October 1, 2020 and another 2 cents on October 1, 2021. Beginning in 2023, it will be adjusted according to a national highway construction cost index, but can change by no more than a penny every two years.

When fully implemented, the 10 cent per gallon increase is expected to raise an additional \$320 million a year to fund road construction and maintenance projects. The companion Accountability/Oversight bill (HB1) that passed specifically stipulates how the money collected can be spent. Governor Ivey was quoted as saying "Every penny that is raised through this new resource will be scrutinized, will be accounted for for infrastructure only, period." The Alabama Department of Transportation will get 67 percent of the money, counties will get 25 percent and cities 8 percent.

The 2019 Regular Session resumed on March 19th, and the House and Senate have now met for 4 of the allotted 30 Legislative Days and introduced 288 and 173 bills respectively. The Legislature is currently adjourned for Spring Break, and will resume work in Montgomery on Tuesday, April 2nd.

Sunset Bills pertaining to the continuation of the Licensing Boards for General Contractors and On-site Wastewater have advanced through the House and now move to the Senate for consideration. We are still awaiting the introduction of a bill for Underground Utility Damage Prevention, which is pending review by the Legislative Reference Service.

We will continue to update our members on the status of these bills, as well as any newly introduced bills of relevance, throughout the remainder of the Legislative Session.

Remember to check our weekly "Legislative Pipeline" email report for continuous Legislative updates

Upcoming AUCA Event:

AUCA Spring General Meeting & Golf Tournament

Current Event Sponsors:

(Additional sponsorship opportunities available - deadline is April 12th)

Corporate Sponsors:



Hole Sponsors:

Slaughter Construction Company
BenSource Employee Benefits
Alabama 811
Unit Fiber
R.T. Crowe & Associates



AUCA 2019 Spring General Meeting & Golf Tournament

Thursday, April 18, 2019

Arrowhead Country Club

50 Ocala Drive Montgomery, AL 36117

General Meeting & Buffet Lunch - 11:30 a.m.

Golf Tournament - 1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start

Low Country Shrimp & Crawfish Boil

(Immediately Following Golf Tournament)



General Meeting & Buffet Lunch

Guest Speaker: U.S. Congressman Bradley Byrne

Cost: \$20/Person

(Included with Golf Registration or Corporate Sponsorship)

Attend the statewide General Meeting, enjoy a southern buffet lunch and then hear a great presentation from our distinguished guest speaker.

11th Annual Golf Tournament

4-Person Scramble Format

Cost: \$600/Team or \$150/Individual

Complete attached registration form and return ASAP.
Hole and Corporate Sponsorship opportunities available.
Sign up now before the event fills up!



Low Country Shrimp & Crawfish Boil

Cost \$20/Person

(Included with Golf Registration or Corporate Sponsorship)

Come out to our after tournament Low Country Shrimp & Crawfish Boil. Enjoy networking, plus a Silent Auction to bid on your favorite team's sports memorabilia items.



APRIL 18, 2019 - EVENT REGISTRATION FORM



To register, please complete this form and return to the AUCA office by fax or email.

A copy of the registration form should also be submitted with payment.

Registration Deadline is April 12, 2019

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

GOLF TOURNAMENT



4-PERSON TEAM - \$600



INDIVIDUAL - \$150

Includes: Lunch, Golf/cart, goodie bag, beverage tickets, prizes, and Low Country Boil

- 1.) _____
- 2.) _____
- 3.) _____
- 4.) _____

- Handicap: _____
- Handicap: _____
- Handicap: _____
- Handicap: _____

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



CORPORATE SPONSOR - \$250

Includes: Company logo on event signage and promotional materials, and admission for one (1) company representative to General Meeting & Low Country Boil



HOLE SPONSOR - \$100

Includes: Name recognition on hole signage and may set-up tent on course to network with golfers and distribute company prizes or literature during tournament

GENERAL MEETING

General Meeting Lunch: \$20/Person x Quantity () = \$ _____

LOW COUNTRY SHRIMP & CRAWFISH BOIL

Low Country Boil: \$20/Person x Quantity () = \$ _____

PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE OR ON DAY OF TOURNAMENT! Return form and payment to:

Alabama Utility Contractors Association

P.O. Box 383185

Birmingham, AL 35238-3185

Phone: (205) 582-9436

Fax: (205) 582-9155

Email: tim@aluca.org

To pay by credit card, please contact the AUCA office at (205) 582-9436.

Workforce Development Training:

Provided by HB NEXT

Avoiding Friendly Fire on the Job:

Understanding the Risks Posed by an Undertrained Workforce

When budgets get tight -and let's face it, most of us have experienced that crunch at one point or another- we naturally start looking for ways to curtail our spending and to eliminate those expenses we deem non-essential, or, just unnecessary altogether.

Nothing triggers the need for a detailed analysis of a company's finances quite like a blown budget, or, an unexpected loss of revenue / profit can. In construction, budgets are often tight; and, as a result, decisions have to be made frequently that force leaders to make difficult choices between multiple necessities that, of course, are not exactly budget-friendly.

So, what happens then?

Historically (in times of lesser economic prosperity), safety and training-related expenses have been among the first line items on a budget to undergo some type of change. Sometimes, those changes are small, insignificant... Other times, change can represent a total departure from the spending allocated to those expenses and expenditures which are generally considered essential to a construction company's day-to-day operations. In an industry that suffers from hundreds of fatalities -and even more injuries- annually, can companies really afford to short-fund their budgets for safety and training? Well, surprisingly, the answer is yes; and, depending on who else you ask, the answer is also a resounding NO.

Training in the construction industry can be both economical and budget-friendly; but it is rarely inexpensive for companies to train their employees. When considering the cost of hiring a certified or credentialed trainer, productivity loss (from the workers being out of the office or field) and the cost of paying employees to physically attend training, a company sometimes has to decide whether that safety course is an immediate must-have; or, if maybe it can wait for a while. And, until disaster strikes, that's (normally) a safe gamble. Until it isn't...

An undertrained workforce is a potentially unsafe workforce.

In an economic climate where time equals money, construction companies have the exceedingly difficult challenge of meeting intense budget and scheduling demands, while keeping everyone safe; and, without cutting any corners on quality or compliance.

While many of the construction trades offer thorough and ongoing task training for their workforce -



Workforce Development Training:

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which includes some trade-specific safety- that training is often, unfortunately, not focused on compliance with the safety regulations applicable to our industry. This sometimes leads to companies adopting a false sense of security with regard to the training they offer to their personnel. Because turnover in the industry can often force the need for a new associate's training to be fast-tracked, companies will often pair new laborers with technician or journey-level craftspeople to help those new associates get 'up to speed'. A common result of crash-course training such as this, is that associates will learn the 'what' and 'how' of their tasks and responsibilities; but will often neglect -until later- to learn the 'why'. And, in construction, not knowing the 'whys' behind a task can be potentially dangerous; and sometimes, even fatal. The buddy system, while proven successful over time, does have limits to its effectiveness as it relates to educating around accident prevention. Quite simply, you can't be effectively prepared to manage hazards that you haven't been trained to recognize, avoid, or eliminate.

Ignorance of the rules is never an acceptable excuse.

While many knowledge gaps can be addressed for workers by spending time with and observing a skilled technician or journeyperson at work, there must be some formal, structured classroom training to supplement and reinforce the training offered on-the-job. As the old saying goes: if it isn't documented, it didn't happen. In the case of unsafe acts / conditions that lead to injuries or fatalities on the job, a lack of job or task-specific knowledge resulting in the harm (or, death) of a worker can be ruinously expensive for a company that is otherwise financially healthy. As many companies are recognizing this and are starting to be proactive in providing essential training for their employees, many companies are still training their employees reactively; and, only when faced with suspended work or legal action, do they really start taking it seriously.

Beware of (and, supportive of) the Newly-Hired Employee

New employees -often being eager to please, and, to demonstrate their value to a company- can inadvertently help or harm a company with their individual level(s) of training (or, lack thereof). Most of us know what it feels like to be asked a question that we don't know the answer to; but at the same time, not wanting to appear unknowledgeable in front of a group of our peers and/or superiors. And because of this fear, with the nod of a head, many of us at some point in life, have openly proclaimed our knowledge of an unfamiliar task, topic, or rule as if we've known it for years. It a bad habit that unfortunately can be exhibited by new employees and seasoned employees alike.

People seldom seek opportunities to be publicly identified as someone who doesn't know what most everyone else in the room already knows. This can be tolerated somewhat in low-risk environments



Workforce Development Training:

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(take classrooms, for example) where the likelihood of danger to a person's life or health is not high. In construction, there are potential dangers to life and health at seemingly every turn. Consider confined spaces in construction, which is largely considered a safety-sensitive topic. In a classroom, if an instructor asks a trainee if they know what constitutes oxygen-rich and oxygen-deficient in a confined space -and that trainee replied, "yes", but truthfully, did not know- regardless of whether that trainee knew what those terms meant, there's a good chance that their life or health wouldn't be threatened in that classroom due to their lack of knowledge with regard to confined spaces. Now, let's say that same trainee goes to work the next week, and is asked by his or her supervisor to enter a confined space on a job site. Let's also assume that this trainee still does not have a clear understanding of how oxygen levels in a confined space affect entry requirements; but, being eager to please, jumps right in the confined space to perform his or her work without testing or ventilating the atmosphere prior. A traditional four-function calculator might be insufficient in helping your Safety Director compute the different ways things could go wrong in that scenario... See the difference?

In conclusion, untrained or undertrained workers can be as much of a danger to themselves, as they are to the people around them. New associates who learn things the wrong way, may end up becoming leaders in your company who teach others to do the same. The couple to few thousand dollars a company might save in foregoing training for their associates will pale in comparison to the potentially several thousand to millions of dollars a company may stand to pay out, in OSHA penalties and legal settlements following a major injury or fatality that occurred on their watch. Responses in a court case such as, "I didn't know" or, "I was never told about that", are more likely to significantly harm one's legal defense, than they are to help it. Try seeing what reaction you might get from a compliance officer, prosecutor, judge, or parent of a child that died on your job, when you claim ignorance or attempt to rationalize why you never sufficiently trained your personnel. Or, you can choose to be proactive-



HB NEXT provides customized OSHA and EPA compliance software, consulting, inspection and training services. With over 400 years of experience in multimillion dollar projects, our staff is instrumental in building strong foundations in field management.



Clean Water Construction Coalition Report

From Bob Briant, Jr. - Chairman CWCC & Sante Esposito - Key Advocates

“WATER QUALITY PROTECTION AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2019” INTRODUCED

On March 6th, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Chair of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment Grace Napolitano (D-CA), Representative Don Young (R-AK), and Representative John Katko (R-NY) introduced the bipartisan Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2019 to address America’s crumbling wastewater infrastructure and local water quality challenges. This bipartisan bill, if signed into law, would meet a long-standing Coalition priority, more than doubling the Clean Water SRF (CWSRF). Primarily, the bill would authorize \$20 billion in Federal grants over five years (\$4 B / year would be more than double the current FY appropriation of \$1.6 B) to capitalize State CWSRFs. These funds provide low-interest loans and additional loan subsidizations (e.g., principal forgiveness and negative interest loans) to communities for wastewater infrastructure.

In addition to the CWSRF funding, the bill:

- Authorizes an additional \$900 million for grants to municipalities to capture, treat, or reuse combined and sanitary sewer overflows or stormwater.
- Authorizes \$1.5 billion over five years for grants for State water pollution control agencies to implement State water pollution control programs.
- Provides \$600 million over five years for Clean Water pilot programs (including Federal technical assistance and/or grants) for watershed-based or system-wide efforts to address wet weather discharges, to promote stormwater best management practices, to undertake integrated water resource management, and to increase the resiliency of treatment works to natural or man-made disasters.
- Authorizes \$375 million in grants over five years for alternative water source projects under section 220 of the Clean Water Act, including projects that reuse wastewater or stormwater to augment the existing sources of water.

Key Advocates worked with the sponsors and was asked to sign on as an early supporter. See: <https://transportation.house.gov/committee-activity/water-quality-protection-and-job-creation-act> for a full list of supporters. If you click on the Coalition’s name in the list of supporters it takes you to our support letter. A copy of the CWCC letter of support is attached to this report for your convenience.



Clean Water Construction Coalition Report

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"WATER" COMMITTEE / SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Key Advocates reports that the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (Clean Water SRF and Alternative Water Source Program), Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (D-CA-32) was elected Chair of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee. Congressman Bruce Westerman (R-AR-4) is the Ranking Member.

On the House Natural Resources Committee (WIIN Grant Program), Congressman Jared Huffman (D-CA- 2) was elected Chair of Water, Oceans and Wildlife Subcommittee. Congressman Tom McClintock (R-CA-4) is the Republican Leader.

On the Energy and Commerce Committee (Safe Drinking Water SRF), Congressman Paul Tonko (D-NY-20), a strong Safe Drinking Water SRF supporter, was elected Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Subcommittee. Congressman John Shimkus (R-IL-15) is the Ranking Member. Staff assignments are still in progress. Lastly, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR-3) (National Water Trust Fund), sits on the Ways and Means Committee (new revenues).

On the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water SRFs and the Alternative Water Source Program), Senator Kevin Cramer, (R-ND) was elected Chair of the Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife Subcommittee. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) is the Ranking Member. Senator Martha McSally (R-AR) was elected Chair of the Water and Power Subcommittee. Senator Cortez Masto (D-NV) is the Ranking Member.





March 4, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Don Young
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace P. Napolitano
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Katko
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio, Chairwoman Napolitano, and Representatives Young and Katko,

On behalf of the Clean Water Construction Coalition, an organization with 28 chapters in 22 states, employing over 11,000 people and committed to securing much-needed funding for the Nation’s clean water, I am pleased to convey our support for the enactment of the “Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act.” The problems facing the Nation’s water infrastructure are evident. But, so too are the solutions, as evidenced by this bipartisan effort. Accordingly, we commend Full Committee Chairman DeFazio, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee Chairwoman Napolitano, and Congressmen Young and Katko for their vision and leadership. With its enactment, the “Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act” will authorize much needed funding for important water infrastructure projects, thereby supplying critical jobs, enhancing the economy, and ensuring that America’s ever-expanding population is serviced for years to come.

Water is a unique and precious resource that is necessary to sustain life--human, animal and plant. As such, it is important for agriculture, transportation, flood control, energy production, recreation, fishing, and municipal and commercial uses. Public opinion consistently and overwhelmingly supports making clean water a national priority and because most Americans believe that they are

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cleanwaterconstructioncoalition.org | P.O. Box 728 | Allenwood, NJ 08720 | Office: (732) 292-4300 | Fax: (732) 292-4310

Robert Briant, Jr. – Chairman

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* Steering Committee Member





March 4, 2019
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willing to pay more to get it. In addition, investments in water infrastructure have a well-documented record of success in job creation in that every \$1 billion invested in water infrastructure construction projects creates over 45,000 jobs.

An integral component of the Nation’s clean water program is the State Revolving Fund. The Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF) is critical to clean water efforts nationwide and is an extremely cost-effective program. It is also a flexible program, allowing states to choose from a variety of assistance options, including loans, refinancing, purchasing, or guaranteeing local debt and purchasing bond insurance. States can also target resources to their particular environmental needs, including contaminated runoff from urban and agricultural areas, wetlands restoration, groundwater protection estuary management and wastewater treatment.

Unfortunately, for too many years the CWSRF has languished without an authorization and much needed appropriations. The “Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act” goes a long way in addressing the former and providing justification for the latter. If this is the most we can do at this time, it is the very least that we must do. The Clean Water Construction Coalition enthusiastically supports and urges its enactment.

Sincerely,

Robert Briant, Jr.

Robert Briant Jr.
Chairman
Clean Water Construction Coalition

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Robert Briant, Jr. – Chairman

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* Steering Committee Member



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***AUCA IS A MEMBER-DRIVEN, NEEDS
FOCUSED TRADE ASSOCIATION CREATED
SOLELY TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE THE
UTILITY INDUSTRY IN THE STATE OF
ALABAMA.***

**We're on the Web !
www.aluca.org**

Please print out this newsletter to share with others in your company. And, if you are receiving this for the company owner, please print out a copy for him/her.

***Let AUCA Be Your Source For All Your
Training Needs***

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