

Vote No on SB601

Talking points for SSMRC members when contacting their representative.

- SB601 is a threat to every working man and woman in this state and not having prevailing wage protection will erode the quality of life thousands of Arkansas craftsmen and their families.
- Prevailing wage assures fair bidding among contractors, fair wages for skilled craftsmen, quality construction for the public and saving taxpayers millions of dollars in cost overruns.
- SB601 will undermine the quality of work done on critical public construction projects such as buildings, roads, and bridges. That affects the safety of the workers and the safety of the citizens using these facilities.
- No prevailing wage also negatively affects funding for professional skills training for local construction workers. A lack of training means a lack of job opportunities for Arkansas workers. Specifically, military veterans are at heightened risk, because they often rely upon prevailing wage laws to help them secure a career that will support themselves and their families once they leave the service.
- Most contractors who hire Arkansas residents oppose SB 601: This group of significant job-creators within the Arkansas construction industry supports the prevailing wage system as it exists and are opposed to its repeal. They rely on prevailing wage laws for a host of protections that keep their companies in viable, which then supports the local economy and keeps working families employed. If it is repealed, Arkansas companies will suffer – and so will their employees. This is true regardless of whether the contractor is big or small, union or non-union, Republican or Democrat, urban or rural.
- By equalizing labor costs, prevailing wage laws guarantee that contractors can't compete primarily on who cuts the most corners on labor. Instead, prevailing wage means contractors compete on such qualities as productivity, safety record, and management abilities. Research shows these factors reduce taxpayer costs by even more than what would occur simply by paying workers less.
- Prevailing wage keeps local hands on local projects, which keeps local funding in our local economy.
- In Arkansas an absence of prevailing wage will:
 - lower the share of Arkansas workers with employer-based health insurance, while increasing the share who rely on Medicaid and uncompensated care
 - increase the number of Arkansas workers who will not have adequate retirement income
 - increase the need for public assistance to provide food, clothing, shelter and education for their families.
- The bottom line is, prevailing wage helps keep local men and women working and providing for their families. It supports our state's companies and our communities. Repealing this law is a serious mistake. Senate Bill 601 should be defeated, for everyone's sake.