



BUILDING TRADES NEWS

VOLUME 31, NO.3 LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTIES BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL, AFL-CIO  SUMMER 2026

UNION LABOR BUILDS THE FUTURE AT THE PORT OF LONG BEACH



Structural ironworkers install steel framing at the Port of Long Beach. Courtesy of the Port of Long Beach.

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LOS ANGELES
CA. Permit NO.
31327

BY SHAHRAD ARJOMANDI

The Port of Long Beach is one of the most important pieces of infrastructure in Southern California. Every day, ships, trucks, trains, cranes and skilled workers keep goods moving through the harbor and out to communities across the country. The Port describes itself as

a premier U.S. gateway for trans-Pacific trade, and it serves as a major economic engine for the region and the country. For the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council, that makes the Port much more than a gateway for cargo. It makes the Port a place where the future of the regional economy, the **SEE LONG BEACH PAGE 8**

NABTU LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE BRINGS LABOR LEADERS TO DC



Roland Gutierrez & Nate Brotton of UA Local 709, Doug Mangione of IBEW Local 441, Matt Carmichael, Joe Marshall, & Pete Wohlgezogen of UA Local 250, Xochitl Medrano of the District Council of Iron Workers of the State of California and Vicinity, Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano & Orange County Representative Andrew Gonzales of the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council.

INSIDE BUILDING TRADES NEWS



1 UNION LABOR BUILDS THE FUTURE AT THE PORT OF LONG BEACH

2 NABTU LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE BRINGS LABOR LEADERS TO DC

3 FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

4 LA/OC ENDORSED CANDIDATES SEE SUCCESSES UP AND DOWN THE STATE



6 UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICTS EMBRACE LABOR



11 HOW UNION LABOR FITS IN TO MEASURE ULA

12 OC LABOR FED'S GLORIA ALVARADO ON A PARTNERSHIP BUILT TO LAST



14 MIGUEL CONTRERAS AWARDS HONOR EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ERNESTO MEDRANO

BY DAVID WINFIELD

This April, the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council attended NABTU's 2026 U.S. Legislative Conference at the Washington Hilton in Washington, D.C. North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU) hosts the two-day annual conference, bringing together the best and brightest from around the country to discuss the future of America's construction workforce, energy development, infrastructure investment, and more.

NABTU represents more than 3 million skilled craft professionals in the United States and Canada, composed of fourteen national and international

unions and over 330 provincial, state and local building and construction trades councils. The LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council is part of the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California, which serves as the state-level representative for NABTU in California. This affiliation means that the CA Building Trades works in coordination with NABTU on national issues, while also focusing on state-specific matters such as prevailing wage enforcement, apprenticeship programs, and safe working conditions. NABTU also works in close partnership with a wide array of industries to seek and secure a

SEE NABTU PAGE 16



Photo of the National Mall in Washington, DC.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE & DATA CENTERS

The growth of cloud computing, streaming, e-commerce, AI, and other digital services is increasing demand for data centers around the world. They power the services Californians rely on every day, and are already an important part of our state's modern economy. Even though data centers are often described as "cloud" infrastructure, they are still physical facilities that require land, systems, and coordinated construction work from highly trained individuals.

These projects all require major electrical systems, mechanical and cooling infrastructure, fire/life-safety systems, concrete, steel, utility connections, and more, as well as ongoing maintenance. For the construction industry, PG&E estimated that this pipeline of work could produce 50,000 construction jobs, 115,000 associated support jobs, 5,000 permanent tech jobs and 28,500 permanent support roles in the state. PG&E also estimates that for every GW of new electric demand from the data centers it serves, their customers may save between 1-2% on their monthly bill in the long term, on top of property tax and sales tax benefits.



BY ERNESTO MEDRANO

Executive Secretary
LA/OC Building and Construction
Trades Council

Some of the biggest technology companies in the world already call California home, and they are now explicitly investing in skilled trades training, because data center and AI infrastructure growth depends on skilled construction workers. Google in particular has invested \$50 million, with their most recent initiative aiming to train more than 300,000 skilled trade workers around

the country. This kind of supplementary education and training can make a real difference, and it helps us ensure that the workforce of today is ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

With all of these benefits in mind, the question is not whether California will need digital infrastructure; it is whether we build it responsibly. Our state has obvious advantages in this regard, but our same capacity for growth also raises important questions on if we are doing enough to protect the people and places that we care about most. California has a chance to be at the forefront of the next generation of digital infrastructure, but the state has to do it the right way: with a focus on good projects, reliable power planning, strong labor standards, and protections in place

"We cannot move forward into the digital future while also leaving the health and wellbeing of our communities in the past."

California also has some of the strictest regulations and protections in the country on where and how these data centers can be built. California data centers undergo a rigorous review and approval process under California's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including thorough environmental impact analysis and energy code compliance. In our state, data centers also cannot connect to the power grid as inefficient assets or be permitted as unregulated water consumers. Mandates for modern cooling options are already in place, including the use of recycled water and closed-loop systems, which both significantly reduce water use. This level of intentional oversight is already being implemented, and it plays a key role in keeping the builds in our state as thoughtful and responsible as possible.

for the places we live.

I believe that with the responsible construction of data centers, that we can achieve that future. But it is our collective obligation to ensure that these infrastructure investments are not just benefitting one subset of society, and that we are building our way to a more responsible and sustainable future for everyone. Our members and our communities need to have a voice and a seat at the table, and the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council will continue to advocate for those interests, no matter who is at the other end.

In solidarity,
Ernesto Medrano, Executive Secretary
LA/OC Building & Construction Trades
Council

BUILDING TRADES NEWS

Building Trades News is published by the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Ernesto Medrano

EDITOR

David Winfield II

ART DIRECTOR

Cynthia Tan

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ronald Gonzales-Lawrence, Hector Sandoval, McKeever Photography & the Port of Long Beach, The Perfect Exposure Group, David Winfield II

CONTRIBUTORS

Shahrad Arjomandi, Clare Dietz, Gray Mandabach, Blake Miller

LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTIES BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

1626 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026

P 213.483.4222 • F 213.483.4419

www.LAOCBuildingTrades.org

www.BuildingTradesNews.com



"Building Trades News" is a member of the
International Labor Communications Association, AFL-CIO.

OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Ernesto Medrano, Executive Secretary

Mitch Ponce, President

Luis Arida, Vice President

Andy Gerber, Trustee

David Hanson, Trustee

David Sikorski, Trustee

Tony Olea, Sergeant-at-Arms

COUNCIL AFFILIATES

Heat & Frost Insulators Local 5

Boilermakers Local 92

Bricklayers & Tile Layers Local 4

Electrical Workers Local 11

Electrical Workers Local 40

Electrical Workers Local 45

Electrical Workers Local 441

Elevator Constructors Local 18

Operating Engineers Local 12

Iron Workers Local 416

Iron Workers Local 433

Laborers District Council

Laborers Local 300

Laborers, Gunit Workers

Local 345

Laborers Local 652

Laborers Local 1184

Laborers Local 1309

Laborers, Plaster Tenders

Local 1414

District Council 36 Painters

& Allied Trades

Drywall Finishing Local 1136

Glaziers Local 636

Tradeshow & Sign Crafts

Local 831

Painters Local 1036

Resilient Floor Local 1247

Civil Service Local 1991

UA Pipe Trades District Council 16

Plumbers Local 78

Steam & Pipefitters Local 250

Plumbers Local 345

Plumbers & Fitters Local 398

Plumbers & Steamfitters

Local 582

Road Sprinkler Fitters Local 669

Sprinkler Fitters Local 709

Plumbers & Fitters Local 761

Plasterers-Cement Masons

District Council

Plasterers-Cement Masons

Local 755

Plasterers Local 200

Cement Masons Local 500

Cement Masons Local 600

Roofers & Waterproofers Local 36

Roofers & Waterproofers

Local 220

Sheet Metal Workers Local 105

Teamsters Joint Council 42

Teamsters Local 848

Teamsters Local 952

Teamsters Local 986

Change of address: Union members, please contact your local.

LA/OC ENDORSED CANDIDATES SEE SUCCESSES UP AND DOWN THE STATE



Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass with Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano & representatives from the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council affiliates.

BY GRAY MANDABACH

The June 2026 Primary Election was one of the most hotly contested in recent memory, and it demonstrated the strength and influence of the Building Trades across Southern California. The LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council proudly endorsed 96 candidates seeking office at every level of government, including statewide constitutional offices, U.S. Congress, the State Assembly and Senate, county boards of supervisors, and a wide range of city, local, and judicial offices throughout the region.

This election recap highlights several key races and ballot measures, including Xavier Becerra's first-place finish in the Governor's race; Mayor Karen Bass emerging as the top vote-getter in the Los Angeles mayoral contest and advancing to the runoff; a sweep of all three Building Trades-endorsed candidates in the Glendale City Council election; the passage of Measure CPT in Compton, and Mark Pulido's successful campaign to advance in California's 67th Assembly

District race.

Together, these results demonstrate the continued strength of labor-backed candidates and policies that support good-paying union jobs, infrastructure investment, and working families throughout Southern California.

Governor's Race

The Governor of California oversees a

state of nearly 40 million people and the 4th largest economy in the world, making it one of the most powerful positions in the entire country. Decisions made in Sacramento have a direct impact on infrastructure investment, housing development, energy projects, and job creation. For Building Trades members, the Governor's policies help shape the

future of prevailing wage protections, apprenticeship programs, project labor agreements, and worker safety standards. As California continues to modernize its infrastructure and expand construction opportunities, we need leadership that recognizes the critical role the construction industry plays in driving economic growth and stability.

On May 29, the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council endorsed Xavier Becerra for Governor of California. Becerra went on to finish first in the June 2026 primary, which positions him as the leading candidate heading into the general election. Xavier Becerra recognizes how the construction industry can build a stronger future for all of us, and he has the experience, vision, and commitment to working people needed to keep California moving forward.

We look forward to supporting Xavier's campaign in the general election as he continues to stand with organized labor, strengthen California's infrastructure, and create opportunities for the next generation of skilled trades workers.



President of the State Building & Construction Trades Council of California Chris Hannan, Xavier Becerra, and Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano.



Representatives from the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council affiliates speaking with Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass.

Los Angeles Mayor

As Southern California's largest city, the Mayor of Los Angeles holds one of the most influential positions in the region. The mayor's office plays a critical role in advancing projects that create jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, and strengthen our communities. The City of Los Angeles deserves strong leadership, and it is essential as we continue to build a more prosperous future for working families across the region.

On March 2, the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council proudly endorsed Mayor Karen Bass for

reelection. In the June 2026 primary, Mayor Bass finished first, advancing to the November runoff election against current LA City Councilmember Nithya Raman.

Mayor Bass had this to say about the trades impact on Los Angeles and their support of her reelection: “Together, we are changing the way we do things in this city—moving with urgency to build a new, modern Los Angeles. Whether it’s transforming LAX and the Port, expanding our Convention Center, or fast-tracking the affordable housing our neighbors desperately need, our union brothers and sisters are the backbone of this progress. I look forward to our continued partnership as we create good-paying, union career opportunities and ensure Los Angeles is ready to take the world stage.”

Echoing that sentiment, Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano had this to say about the endorsement: “Los Angeles needs a mayor who is committed to providing more work opportunities for union labor, and the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council believes that she is the right woman for the job.”

With the November runoff approaching, the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council is committed to helping reelect Mayor Bass and continue building on the progress made for working families, infrastructure investment, and union career opportunities throughout the City of Los Angeles.

Measure CPT in Compton

Making sure that the schools our communities utilize are safe and secure is an essential and worthwhile investment. Investments in public education infrastructure not only benefit students, teachers, and families, but also create opportunities for skilled union workers to build and modernize the facilities that will serve future generations.

The LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council proudly supported Measure CPT, a groundbreaking investment in school infrastructure for the City of Compton. The measure authorized \$360 million in bond funding to repair and modernize aging school facilities, improve roofs, plumbing, heating and electrical

systems, enhance campus safety, and upgrade classrooms, technology centers, performing arts facilities, and athletic complexes throughout the district.

The outcome reflects strong community support for investing in public schools and their critical infrastructure needs. We look forward to seeing these improvements delivered for students, families, and educators while creating valuable work opportunities for the skilled trades in the local Compton community.



Satra Zurita.



Alma Taylor-Pleasant.

Compton also delivered strong wins for the Building Trades on the school board, with Satra Zurita and Alma Taylor-Pleasant elected to the Compton Unified School District Board of Education. We also look forward to working with them, the entire School Board, and the City of Compton to support opportunities that benefit students, families, and working people throughout the community.

Glendale City Council

As one of the San Fernando Valley’s leading economic and employment



Dan Brotman.

centers, Glendale continues to invest in the infrastructure, development, and public improvements needed to support a growing community. The City Council plays a critical role in setting priorities that affect economic growth, housing, public works, and long-term planning. For Building Trades members, those decisions help create the projects and opportunities



Elen Asatryan.

that keep skilled tradespeople working while building a stronger future for Glendale residents.

The LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council endorsed Dan Brotman, Elen Asatryan, and Alek Bartrosouf for Glendale City Council in the June 2026 election. All three candidates were ultimately elected, delivering a clean sweep for the Building Trades’ endorsed slate. Dan Brotman and Elen Asatryan



Alek Bartrosouf.

successfully won reelection, continuing the service they began in 2020 and 2022, respectively. Joining them is Alek Bartrosouf, who was elected to succeed longtime Councilmember Ara Najarian following his retirement after more than 20 years of service on the Council.

The results reflect strong voter support for candidates who understand the importance of investing in local infrastructure, supporting economic development, and creating opportunities for working families.

67th Assembly District

One of the premier political races for the June primary was the 67th Assembly District, which covers parts of LA County but predominantly Orange County. Assemblymember Sharron Quirk Silva seat is vacant because of term limits, and the race featured 6 candidates for a district that covers Disneyland and the resort district. One candidate, Ada Briceno, Co-President of Unite HERE Local 11 and former Chair of the Democratic Party of Orange County, was notorious for leading efforts to stop the construction of PLA projects, including the OCVibe and the Westin Resort in Anaheim. She has even admitted to crossing a Building Trades picket line at the Anaheim Hilton. Her election to a position that may have power and influence over Disneyland and the Anaheim Resort District was one that union construction workers and their families could not afford.

In contrast, Building Trades-endorsed candidate Mark Pulido has a history of fighting on behalf of union labor, from his time on staff with union champions like Congressman Allan Lowenthal and State Senator



Mark Pulido.

Bob Hertzberg. Following his reelection to the Cerritos City Council, Mark Pulido led the effort to pass the first-ever Community Workforce Agreement with the City of Cerritos. He was the obvious choice to champion Building Trades priorities in Sacramento.

This may be the most expensive California Assembly Primary ever waged, but after organizing, campaigning, and contributing, the Building Trades were successful in helping Mark Pulido prevail, making his way into the top 2 of the blanket primary. This victory is a first step, but it is also a testament to what the Building Trades and their affiliates can accomplish with collective power and solidarity. Mark will now face Cypress City Councilman Paulo Morales in the General Election in November.



Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano.

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICTS EMBRACE LABOR

BY BLAKE MILLER

Every Community Workforce Agreement is a product of lengthy negotiations between a council of government and the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council. The resulting document reflects both the standard protections unions expect and the specific priorities each district brings to the process. Even though negotiations are a standard part of this process, some items remain a constant foundational piece of every agreement. For example, most CWAs

will include provisions for strike and lockout prevention, local hire goals, apprenticeship employment ratios, and coherent drug testing policies. Provisions like these are essential to ensure that a highly skilled and capable workforce is delivering the quality of work that all parties expect.

Once the floor is established, specifics are added: Items such as contract duration, auto-renewal processes, core employee tenure requirements, and union signage requirements are often defined during negotiation. Variations within these agreements

can exist for several reasons, ranging from logistical project-needs to the council of governments' familiarity and history working with the Building Trades. These differences allow for the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council to best serve each party that it negotiates with in the best and most consistent ways possible.

This June, two school districts in Los Angeles County approved Community Workforce Agreements with the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council. Both agreements have numerous similarities, but also both had

key variations to better serve each of the school district's unique needs. Both agreements have the same 40% "Local Resident" target and cap apprentices at 30% of a craft workforce, on top of the same commitment to union outreach and pre-apprenticeship programs, designed to inspire the next generation to pursue a career in the trades. Below is a deep dive into the specifics on the respective CWAs with Pomona Unified School District and Bellflower Unified School District.

POMONA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Pomona Unified School District Board of Education Members with Union Representatives.

On June 10, the Pomona Unified School District Board voted unanimously to approve a 4-year Community Workforce Agreement with the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council. Starting on October 1st and running through June 30th, 2030, the CWA covers prime multi-trade construction contracts exceeding \$1,000,000 and specialty contracts exceeding \$150,000 in addition to subcontracts flowing from them. From repairs, upgrades and renovation to modernization, expansion and rehabilitation projects, the agreement fosters workforce development programs and creates doorways for Pomona Unified School District students who are interested in the trades.

This agreement is the first of its kind in the school districts' history, and because of that, there is a fixed term-end date that is only extendable by mutual consent. This gives Pomona Unified School District an opportunity



Pomona Unified School District Board of Education Members. Courtesy of Pomona Unified School District.



Pomona Unified School District Board of Education Members in discussion. Courtesy of Pomona Unified School District.

to renegotiate or conclude the agreement at the end of the four years.

The CWA also includes a completion mechanism which ensures that work funded in the agreement stays covered through completion, and additionally, an explicit grandfather clause excludes projects contracted or underway before the term of agreement. Together, these provisions demonstrate one of the CWA's priorities: to fit smoothly into the district's existing program without creating unnecessary friction or delays for projects benefiting the community.

On the workforce development side, the CWA goes into detail regarding curriculum commitment, apprenticeship seats, and job fair frequency. The specificity reflects a deliberate negotiation and commitment to ensuring these opportunities reach District students and residents directly.

BELLFLOWER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Bellflower Unified School District Board of Education Members with Union Representatives.

On June 18, the Bellflower Unified School District Board of Education voted unanimously in favor of a 5-year Community Workforce Agreement with the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council for District Project Work. The agreement took effect on July 1st and automatically renews year-to-year after an initial 5-year term unless either party gives written notice of termination. The CWA covers multi-trade contracts exceeding \$750,000 and specialty contracts exceeding \$150,000 in addition to subcontracts flowing from them. The agreement also covers construction, repair, upgrades, renovations, modernization, expansion, rehabilitation and improvement work that exceeds the thresholds set. The



Bellflower Unified School District Board Member Renita Armstrong with Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano after the vote.



Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano addressing the Bellflower Board of Education.

scope also encompasses renewable energy initiatives and projects which the District holds a defined proprietary interest. The open-ended contract term is beneficial, in this case, because projects by the district often run for many years. An evergreen agreement prevents interruption or delays for renegotiation. If Bellflower wishes to terminate the agreement, a written notice 90-60 days before the renewal date is required to allow for a non-disruptive exit. However, projects that were started during the agreement would be covered until completion, regardless of the CWA's status. This is designed to keep project continuity and the community at the heart of construction.

Additionally, Bellflower Unified School District left the workforce development recommendations in the hands of the LA/OC Building

& Construction Trades Council. With broad and general language surrounding outreach programs, Bellflower leans on these programs to accomplish the foundational goals of the agreement (like the 40% local hire target and 30% apprenticeship ratio).



Former Executive Secretary Ron Miller, Los Angeles County Representative Eddie Alvarez, and Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano catching up before session.

The agreement also designates a Community Workforce Coordinator to monitor progress, local hire goals and

act as a point of accountability between the District and LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council. With the broad standards of the contract, this Coordinator's role is designed to fill those gaps while creating quarterly reports on apprentice utilization, the training and employment of District residents, a schedule of Project work and the estimated number of craft workers needed. This continuous oversight ensures that every commitment is tracked and reported on, giving the District and the community a measurement of when the agreement's goals are being met.

Both of these CWA's are great victories for the Building Trades, and good examples that show no CWAs are exactly alike. Every agreement requires negotiations, consideration,

and meaningful community input, but the final result is always an agreement designed to better serve the community.



Sheet Metal Workers Local 105 Business Representative Donny Sappington, Bellflower USD Board Member Amie Stewart, Sheet Metal Workers Local 105 Organizer Eric Farrar, Sheet Metal Workers Local 105 Political Director Fernando Ochoa, and Bellflower USD Board Vice President Brad Crihfield.



Los Angeles County Representative Eddie Alvarez addressing the Bellflower Board of Education.

LONG BEACH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

future of clean infrastructure, and the future of good union careers all come together.

The Building Trades have always understood that public infrastructure is about more than just the finished product. It is about the people who build it, the apprentices who get trained on it, the families supported by it and the communities that depend on it long after the ribbon cutting is over. The Port of Long Beach currently operates under a Port-Wide Project Labor Agreement (PLA), which establishes workforce participation goals for covered construction projects. The PLA covers 20 projects valued at nearly \$1 billion, and dictates local hiring goals, including for veterans and transitional workers, apprenticeship goals, and more.

As of December 2025, approximately 27 construction trades are signatory to the PLA and are represented across all Port projects, with a total of 720 workers who have completed nearly 90,000 hours across all active projects. 76% of this total are local workers, 11% of the total being veterans and transitional workers, with apprentices completing thousands of hours of on-the-job training.

These numbers help tell the larger story of the partnership between the Port and the Building Trades. This agreement is putting local workers on the job and creating opportunities to learn and deliver at one of the most valuable construction environments in Southern California.

One of the clearest beneficiaries of this PLA is the Pier B On Dock Rail Support Facility, the Port's major rail expansion effort. The project is designed to strengthen on-dock rail capacity, improve cargo movement, and reduce the need to move containers by



Reinforcing ironworkers working at the Port of Long Beach. Courtesy of the Port of Long Beach.



Aerial views of cargo operations at the Port of Long Beach. Courtesy of the Port of Long Beach.





truck through surrounding roadways. For Long Beach, that means investing in infrastructure that can help relieve congestion, improve efficiency, and support cleaner goods movement.

For Building Trades members, Pier B is also the kind of project that shows why skilled union labor matters. Port work is complicated. Crews are working around active freight operations, heavy equipment, rail lines, truck traffic, and marine terminals that must continue to function. That requires the experience, coordination, and a safety culture that Building Trades members bring to the job every day.

As freight movement continues to grow and change, rail will be one of the most important tools the Port has to stay competitive. Moving more containers by rail does not just improve operations inside the harbor. It also supports the larger transportation network that connects the Port to warehouses, distribution



A worker walks through the Tri-Gen facility at the Port of Long Beach, part of the Port's broader clean energy infrastructure efforts. Courtesy of the Port of Long Beach.

centers, stores, factories, and homes across the region and the country.

The scale of Pier B shows why this project is so important. The \$1.8 billion project began construction in 2024 and is scheduled to be completed in 2032. Once complete, it will reconfigure, expand and enhance the existing Pier B rail yard, directly connecting it to on-dock rail facilities and the Alameda Corridor railway. The project will more than double the size of the existing Pier B rail yard from 82 acres to 171 and more than triple the volume of on-dock rail cargo the Port can handle annually, from 1.5 million TEUs to 4.7 million TEUs. The facility will also include a Locomotive Facility for fueling and servicing up to 30 locomotives at the same time, along with a full-service staging area to assemble the break down trains up to 10,000 feet long.

That is why the relationship between the Port and the Building Trades matters. Projects like these need to be built right, and they need to create real opportunities for workers in the process, which will turn large infrastructure investments into lasting economic benefits at every level.

Pier B is not the only major project moving forward at the Port. International Transportation Service, the operator of the Pier G container terminal, is undertaking a \$365 million project to fill in the south slip of the terminal, which will create 19 additional acres of land and a single continuous wharf. The Port is also advancing its Channel Deepening project, which will provide deeper and wider channels and reduce the need for large vessels to lighter, or transfer liquid bulk cargo or containers to

SEE LONG BEACH PAGE 10



Crews use zero-emission equipment as part of infrastructure work at the Port of Long Beach. Courtesy of the Port of Long Beach.

LONG BEACH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

smaller vessels before entering the harbor.

Rail yards, wharves, channels, terminal improvements and related infrastructure all play a role in keeping the Port competitive and prepared for the next generation of goods movement. They also create the kind of long-term work that supports apprentices, journey level workers and working families across the region.

The Port is also looking toward a cleaner future. Its long-standing environmental work, including the Green Port Policy and the San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan, has helped make Long Beach a national leader in cleaner port operations. The Port is also already exploring the development of the first conventional, zero-emissions container terminal. This potential facility, Metro Express Terminal at Pier S, would handle up to 1.8 million TEUs annually with human-operated equipment powered by renewable energy to serve express vessel services. In addition, the Port has \$165 million in terminal electrification and other projects related to the transition to zero-emissions cargo-handling operations. Pier Wind is another forward-looking opportunity: The proposed offshore wind facility at the Port of Long Beach would support the assembly and staging of massive offshore wind components, giving the

region a potential role in California's clean energy future.

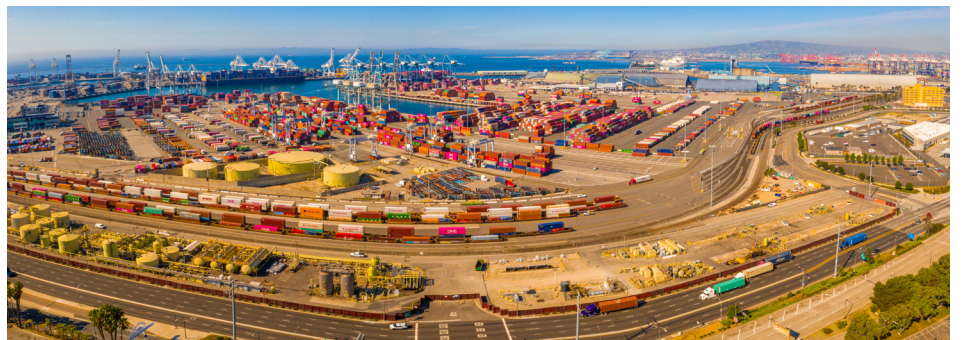
These are part of a bold vision to prepare the Port for the future, but they also represent a construction challenge. As the Port invests in cleaner cargo handling operations, skilled tradespeople will be essential to turning those plans into completed projects.



Port of Long Beach CEO Dr. Noel Hacegaba.

This is where leadership comes in. Port of Long Beach CEO Dr. Noel Hacegaba's depth of expertise and experience make him a tremendous advocate for working people, and our July 23 roundtable discussion will be a great opportunity to continue building that relationship. Dr. Hacegaba has described the importance of our partnership clearly:

"The supply chain relies on critical infrastructure, and infrastructure in turn relies on the skilled tradespeople who build it. The Port of Long Beach and the Southern California logistics industry are fortunate to



Aerial views of cargo operations at the Port of Long Beach.

be able to work with the members of the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council. There is no substitute for the solid dependability that unionized tradespeople bring to every project they work on. As we continue to build the Port of the Future, we look forward to continuing our partnership with skilled union labor."

The Port of Long Beach brings in and moves goods across the world. The Building Trades help build the infrastructure that makes that movement possible. As the Port prepares for the next generation of goods movement, clean energy and port infrastructure, this partnership will continue to matter and continue to thrive.



Skilled trades workers build the marine infrastructure that supports Port of Long Beach operations. Courtesy of the Port of Long Beach.

HOW UNION LABOR FITS IN TO MEASURE ULA



United to House LA Team: East LA Community Corporation CEO Monica Mejia, Community Power Collective Director of Organizational Strategy Carla De Paz, United to House LA Executive Director Joe Donlin, IBEW Local 11 Political Director Antonio Sanchez, United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) President Gloria Martinez, and AFL-CIO Senior Managing Director Ted Chandler inside Los Angeles City Hall.

BY BLAKE MILLER

To combat the worst affordable housing crisis in the country, Los Angeles voters approved Measure ULA back in 2022, which created a dedicated funding source for affordable housing, homelessness prevention, and tenant protections. The measure created the ULA Tax, which applies to the sale of the city's highest-value properties, that then reinvests those dollars into housing solutions that benefit working people.

The tax has two tiers depending on the value of the property conveyed. When the value is over \$5,400,000 there is a 4% tax until the property value is over \$10,900,000, where a 5.5% tax is applied. Today, over three years since its application in April 2023, the ULA tax has raised over \$1 billion dollars for affordable housing.

Affordable housing doesn't get built without skilled union labor. With every affordable housing development, opportunities are created for electricians, laborers, operating engineers, ironworkers, plumbers, sheet metal workers, cement masons, and every trade that builds our region. Additionally, Measure ULA requires that the work funded by the ULA Tax

is covered by the City of Los Angeles Public Works Project Labor Agreement, which ensures that skilled union labor is involved on every project. That's a major reason why the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council joined United to House LA in 2022. The United to House LA coalition is



Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano addressing Los Angeles City Council.

composed of over 240 organizations, including developers of affordable housing, labor unions, tenant rights groups, homeless service providers, community land trusts, and public interest law firms to ensure the proper implementation of Measure ULA. The LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council also sits on United to House LA's Steering Committee, where they provide strategic guidance and keep union members at the heart of

the decision making.

Over the past year, the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council has stood shoulder to shoulder with the coalition and fought hard to improve Measure ULA through numerous technical amendments. On Friday, May 8th, Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano participated in delivering a panel presentation to LA City Council's Ad Hoc Committee, sharing compelling new research and dismantling false claims and inaccurate information about the Measure. The technical amendments discussed were approved by City Council on Wednesday, July 1st, and can now be implemented immediately to accelerate affordable housing production while protecting prevailing wage standards for qualifying projects.

For members of the Building Trades, that means:

- More affordable housing projects moving into construction.
- More prevailing wage union jobs.
- More apprenticeship and career opportunities.
- More working families who can afford to live in Los Angeles.

"For decades, housing development has been dominated by market rate housing, most of it doesn't even employ our members, and most of it is unaffordable to the working class," states Executive Secretary Medrano, "We are proud LA City Council voted in favor of the amendments so that affordable housing will be built by skilled and trained union workers year after year."

Measure ULA is working and only getting stronger; it is a great win for the LA/OC Building and Construction Trades Council and an even greater win for the City of Los Angeles.

The money raised from the ULA Tax has already accomplished the following:



5,613+
UNITS FUNDED

466
UNITS OF HOUSING
PRESERVED

1,900
UNITS OF
NEW CONSTRUCTION

3,487
UNITS STABILIZED
W/OPERATING ASSISTANCE

17.5%
REDUCTION IN
STREET HOMELESSNESS

16%
REDUCTION IN
EVICTION FILINGS

\$54M
DIRECT
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**THOUSANDS
OF JOBS**
CREATED OR ACCELERATED

*Source: United to House LA



United to House LA Team presents technical amendment presentation to Los Angeles City Council.

“WE ARE THE INVESTMENT”: OC LABOR FED’S GLORIA ALVARADO ON A PARTNERSHIP BUILT TO LAST



Members of Pipe Trades UA Local 582 working at Disneyland.

BY CLARE DIETZ

The LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council has a strong commitment to and stands in solidarity with numerous labor unions across Orange County and within the labor movement. For Orange County Labor Federation Executive Director Gloria Alvarado, the relationship between the OC Labor Fed and the LA/OC Building and Construction Trades Council is not just strong, it’s “stronger than ever.”

At the center of that relationship is Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano, whom Alvarado described as a trusted partner, mentor and respected leader across the region.

“Ernesto has respect wherever he goes,” she said.

Alvarado, who represents 97 unions across Orange County, said the Building Trades play a critical role in the broader labor movement, but their impact is not always fully understood.

“Trades are misunderstood, but they are part of everything we do,” Alvarado said. “They are the light that is guiding us.”

She said one of the most important goals of the partnership is helping policymakers, business leaders and community stakeholders better understand the role of the Trades



Members of Pipe Trades UA Local 582 working at Disneyland.

in shaping Orange County’s future. Through their shared work, the OC Labor Fed and the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council have helped bring labor voices into public decision-making spaces, including boards and commissions where major investment and workforce decisions are made.



Orange County Labor Federation Executive Director Gloria Alvarado.

For Alvarado, that representation matters, and it’s because construction does not happen in isolation. When a project is built, it creates a ripple effect throughout the community. It can generate demand for maintenance, hospitality, restaurants, retail, childcare, and other services needed to support workers, on top

of the businesses and the finished development.

These ripple effects extend to the everyday needs of working families, and Alvarado said childcare is one of the most urgent. Union members who start shifts as early as 5 a.m. often have nowhere to turn before sunrise, and she pointed to partnerships like UDW's childcare providers and Jobs First presentations as early steps toward building care options that actually match construction schedules.

Building a system that recognizes the realities of shift work, she said, has to be part of how labor and policymakers think about supporting working families.

Disney is one example Alvarado identified as a strong employer and partner to the Building Trades. She



Orange County Labor Federation logo.

pointed to Anaheim, where a “Proudly Built by Union” billboard stands as a visible marker in support of the city’s union workforce, as an example of how major regional employers can support union jobs while helping generate broader economic activity throughout Orange County.

That economic activity is especially meaningful when projects create good paying union jobs. Alvarado said workers who earn strong wages are better able to live near where they work, support local businesses and stay rooted in the communities they help build.



Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano speaking in support of the OCVibe project to Anaheim City Council.

When workers cannot earn enough to live near their jobs, she said, they are pushed out of the very communities that depend on them. That is why Alvarado sees Community Workforce Agreements, Project Labor Agreements and other labor standards as more than construction tools: they are part of a broader strategy to make sure local investment creates real opportunities for local workers.

Alvarado pointed to Santa Ana as one of the strongest examples of that strategy in action, where local

hiring and apprenticeship pipelines have been built directly into project labor agreements. Partnerships with Santa Ana College and area high schools connect students to union apprenticeships before they graduate, giving young people the knowledge and a clear path into the trades rather than leaving them to build that path for themselves.

Through partnerships with high schools, community colleges and community organizations, young people can learn about careers in the

trades while building a direct path into union membership. Programs like these, as well as organizations like the LA/OC Building Trades’ Apprenticeship Readiness Fund, are instrumental in building up the next generation and preparing them for middle-class union careers.

And to Alvarado, belonging is not only something we all want to feel, but it’s something that needs to be reiterated.

“In every statement that I make, I remind people, especially elected officials... We’re the taxpayers, we’re the voters, we are the parents in the schools, we are your neighbors. So don’t separate us. We are the same people.”

Looking ahead, Alvarado said she is encouraged by the next generation entering the labor movement. Apprenticeship programs are full, young workers are showing up, and more people are seeing the Trades as a pathway to stability, dignity and community pride.

For Alvarado, the partnership between the OC Labor Fed and the Building Trades reflects a larger truth: when labor works together, it does more than win jobs. It builds stronger communities.



Rendering of the OCVibe.



Members of Electrical Workers IBEW Local 441 showing support for the OCVibe project.

MIGUEL CONTRERAS AWARDS HONOR EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ERNESTO MEDRANO



Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano & President of the Miguel Contreras Foundation Board of Directors Michael Contreras.

BY DAVID WINFIELD

LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano was recognized for his contributions and leadership in the labor movement at this year's Miguel Contreras Foundation (MCF) Cinco de Mayo Awards. Held on May 5th at the LA Zoo & Botanical Gardens, the night was a wonderful opportunity to connect with labor leaders, organizers, artists, and community members from

across LA, and a chance to recognize the collective power of this movement.

This year's event carried a powerful theme: BLOOM, A Celebration of Legacy, Labor, and Los Angeles. BLOOM was designed as a celebration of renewal, joy, and collective power, recognizing how far the movement has come and recommitting to the future it is already building.

The Cinco de Mayo Awards is an annual signature fundraiser honoring the legacy of Miguel Contreras, the



Performer sings on stage during the award ceremony.

strength of the Los Angeles labor movement, and the resilience of the city of Los Angeles. The Miguel Contreras Award in particular honors the people in the LA Labor Movement that do more than just stand in solidarity, but that help enact and pass policy that changes working people's lives. Under the Executive Secretary's leadership, the LA/OC Building Trades have expanded access to union careers through PLAs & CWAs across Southern California, delivering good-



Attendees converse at the event reception.



paying, family-sustaining jobs to our communities. This year's ceremony also recognized Angelica Salas, Executive Director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), and posthumously honored the late Kent Wong, a visionary leader in the LA labor movement, with the Mike Garcia Award.

The Miguel Contreras Foundation, a program partner of the LA Federation of Labor, is an organization committed to building coalitions and aligning resources within the LA region to create equitable opportunities for all workers. By working with local agencies, labor unions, and community partners, MCF ensures that investments in workforce development address broader social challenges, such as homelessness, mutual aid, and child care. They are actively bringing Miguel's vision to life with their work, as the foundation supports:

Scholarships for Career Training

Covering tuition, program fees, certifications, and equipment for participants pursuing careers in industries like healthcare, entertainment, and logistics.

Case Management & Career Guidance

Dedicated staff work one-on-one with participants to navigate training programs, resumes, and interviews, helping them to overcome barriers, and successfully transition into careers.

Supportive Services

Assistance with transportation, stipends, emergency needs, and other critical supports that help participants stay enrolled and succeed.

Workforce Pathways to Union Careers

Programs that connect participants directly with apprenticeship opportunities, employers, and unions that offer family-sustaining wages and long-term career growth.

“Without Miguel’s help, we would not have been able to build political power in this city like we were able



Executive Director of CHIRLA Angelica Salas & Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano.



Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano speaking at the podium.

to, and we would not have the number of project labor agreements that we have today. He forced the powers that be to pay attention,” said Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano.

The LA/OC Building Trades have put that same philosophy into action through our Apprenticeship Readiness Fund. ARF launched in 2017 with a clear mission: to open pathways to union apprenticeships across the skilled trades and to strengthen our communities by connecting residents to high-demand union apprenticeships. These programs are offered at multiple

sites throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties, making it easier for participants to access training close to home. By connecting more people to opportunity and ensuring contractors have a steady pipeline of local, job-ready talent, we are actively putting our neighbors, friends, and colleagues in a position to grow and build a stable future.

“We have an opportunity to help the next generation of working men and women become part of the infrastructure generation. I’m excited to be there building the future with

them, and Miguel’s legacy plays a big part in making this possible,” Medrano said in his closing remarks.

Ernesto Medrano’s recognition at the 2026 Cinco de Mayo Awards is a testament to what the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council stands for: showing up for working people and never waiting to be invited to the table. As Los Angeles continues to build, from the LA Convention Center to the 2028 Olympics and beyond, our union workforce will be there, hard hats on, carrying Miguel’s legacy forward.



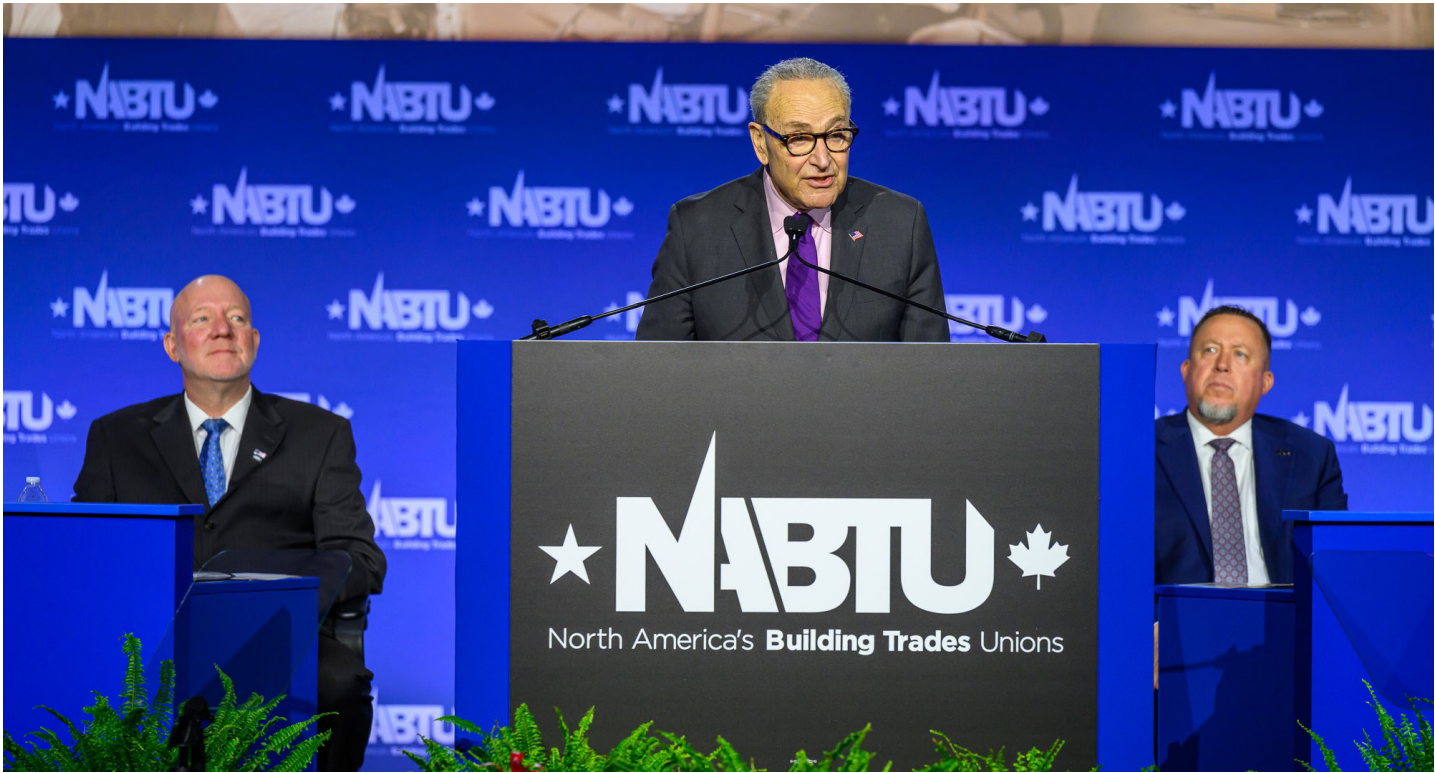
LA City Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez & Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano.



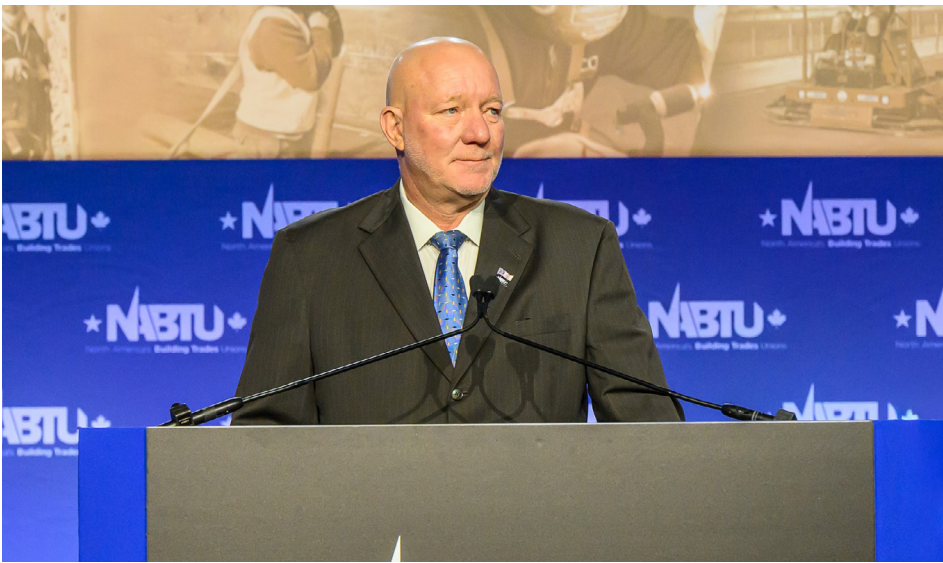
Orange County Representative Andrew Gonzales, Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano, Chief of Staff & Council Representative Chad Boggio, Public Sector Organizer Jason Peterson, & Los Angeles Representative Eddie Alvarez.

wide array of public policy challenges that lead to greater economic development across the nation.

The April event convened with thousands of union leaders and elected officials in attendance. During the conference, NABTU made multiple major announcements regarding projects around the country, as well as announcing a new nationwide building trades upskilling partnership with Microsoft. The partnership will launch no-cost AI literacy courses and industry-recognized credentials to help make AI skills accessible to millions of skilled craft professionals across the nation. The program is specifically designed for the skilled trades, delivered through trusted apprenticeship systems and focused



U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer speaking to the crowd.



NABTU President Sean McGarvey.

on real world applications that will help build relevant skills to succeed in the new economy and uncertain economic moment.

“In a time when too many forget the meaning of their own signature, the Building Trades are here to remind America of something timeless: a deal is a deal,” opened NABTU President Sean McGarvey. “Our members deliver the certainty, skill, and reliability this country depends on to build its future. We always have and

we always will.”

The conference featured a wide array of national, state, and local policymakers alongside labor and industry stakeholders, including but not limited to:

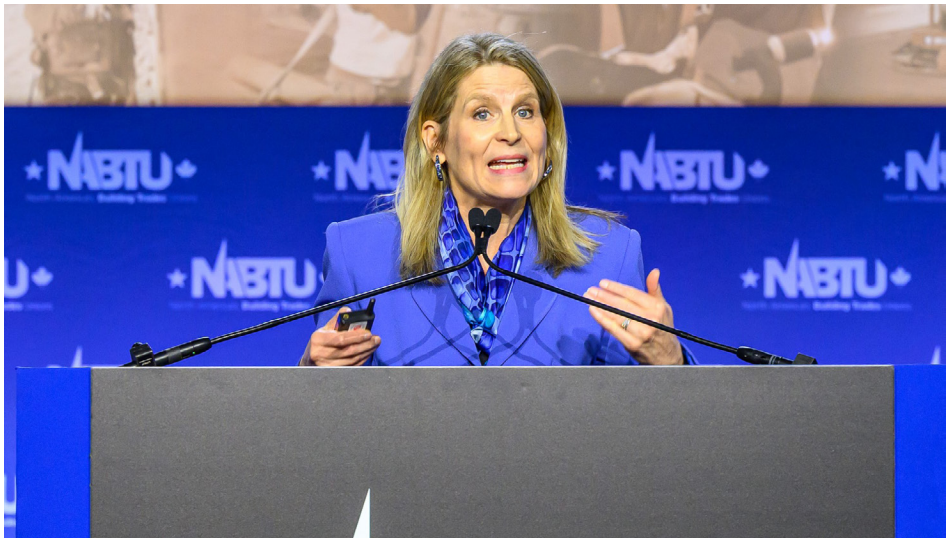
- Liz Shuler, President, AFL-CIO
- Governor Mikie Sherrill (NJ)
- U.S. Sen. Minority Leader Chuck E. Schumer (NY)
- U.S. Sen. Elissa Slotkin (MI)
- U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz (HI)
- U.S. Rep. Greg Casar (TX-35),

and more.

The week’s programming was built for impact: plenary sessions, policy breakouts, a day of community service, and coordinated advocacy meetings, all of which were driving toward the same goal. Historic investments in infrastructure should translate into safe, family-sustaining careers, a message that was continuously driven home by labor leadership in attendance. Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano and other LA/OC Building & Construction Trades representatives took this opportunity to engage directly with

lawmakers on Capitol Hill, advocating for policies like these that protect workers, strengthen labor standards, and expand access to registered apprenticeships.

“Our affiliated unions are the backbone of the fourth-largest economy in the world, and we cannot afford to wait to be included in these national conversations”, said Executive Secretary Ernesto Medrano. “Coming to D.C. to speak with our elected officials and hear from other labor leaders is a golden opportunity for us to give our biggest



AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler.



Michigan Senator Elissa Slotkin speaking to the crowd.

issues the platform and consideration they deserve.”

NABTU’s U.S. Legislative Conference remains one of the nation’s leading forums, dedicated to building a stronger, more resilient economy powered by Building Trades members. This year’s event reiterated that this requires early and sustained commitments between labor and government, and the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council is committed to making that goal a reality.

For more information on the core issues discussed at the 2026 Legislative Conference, please visit nabtu.org/issues-at-hand.