

TESTIMONY TO SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



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Chair Flores and Members of the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs,

Nevada Policy opposes AB 213, proposing to expand prevailing wage requirements to any worker performing custom fabrication of nonstandard goods or materials used in public works. This would impact a range of specialized manufacturing businesses that may never set foot on a construction site, yet would now be swept into a compliance regime designed for on-site public works labor. At a time when inflationary pressures and supply chain challenges already strain public project budgets, increasing costs by mandating union-level wages for off-site fabrication work could make it even harder to deliver infrastructure projects on time and within budget.

The prevailing wage rates in Nevada are already one of the best in the nation. However, they are determined by survey conducted by the Nevada Labor Commissioner with a deeply flawed methodology.¹

As a result, prevailing wages in Nevada are, on average, 45% higher than market wages. In just 2009 and 2010 alone, taxpayers paid an extra \$1 billion in wage premiums due to these inflated rates.² AB 303 will only make this problem worse by applying prevailing wage laws to broadband and fiber-optic projects—industries that are not traditionally classified as public works. For comparison, in 2011, an alarm installer working under prevailing wage in Clark County was receiving \$55.95 per hour, while Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation reported the average wage of \$24.59 for the same profession.³ This expansion will similarly drive up costs for other professions instead placing the burden on the taxpayer.

If Nevada truly wants to ensure fair pay and quality job opportunities and fair market rates, the solution is not more regulation and artificial wage inflation. The state should instead promote open and competitive bidding, where wages are set by the free market rather than dictated by outdated formulas.

¹ Geoffrey Lawrence, “Who Really Prevails Under Prevailing Wage?” Nevada Policy Research Institute, 2011, <https://nevadapolicy.org/study/who-really-prevails-under-prevailing-wage/>.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

For these reasons, I urge this committee to oppose AB 213. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Prevailing Wage Versus Market Wage (Reported by Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation), by Job Classification, Clark County, 2011

Job Classification (Journeymen)	Prevailing Wage	DETR Average Wage	DETR Wage + 40% (accounting for benefits)
Alarm Installer	\$55.95	\$24.59	\$34.43
Bricklayer	\$44.71	\$20.07	\$28.10
Carpenter	\$48.95	\$26.57	\$37.20
Cement Mason	\$46.28	\$22.63	\$31.68
Electrician - Communication	\$39.83	\$25.33	\$35.46
Electrician- Wireman	\$56.31	\$30.01	\$42.01
Floor Coverer	\$47.32	\$23.63	\$33.08
Glazier	\$57.51	\$28.10	\$39.34
Iron Worker	\$56.74	\$26.25	\$36.75
Laborer	\$42.94	\$19.15	\$26.81
Mechanical Insulator	\$56.23	\$21.42	\$29.99
Millwright	\$49.95	\$31.07	\$43.50
Operating Engineer	\$55.67	\$29.23	\$40.92
Painter	\$46.64	\$24.37	\$34.12
Plumber/Pipefitter	\$56.52	\$28.25	\$39.69
Refrigeration	\$35.17	\$21.28	\$29.79
Roofer	\$31.91	\$18.62	\$26.07
Sheet Metal Worker	\$59.52	\$34.86	\$48.80
Surveyor	\$57.59	\$29.70	\$41.58
Taper	\$46.64	\$21.03	\$29.44
Tile Setter	\$34.63	\$23.56	\$32.98
Truck Driver	\$46.13	\$22.45	\$31.43

Prevailing Wage Versus Market Wage (Reported by Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation), by Job Classification, Washoe County, 2011

Job Classification (Journeymen)	Prevailing Wage	DETR Average Wage	DETR Wage + 40% (accounting for benefits)
Alarm Installer	\$27.95	\$21.48	\$30.07
Carpenter	\$38.80	\$23.60	\$33.04
Cement Mason	\$34.40	\$25.45	\$35.63
Electrician - Communication	\$29.36	\$18.01	\$25.21
Electrician- Wireman	\$50.78	\$25.21	\$35.29
Iron Worker	\$56.74	\$34.02	\$47.63
Laborer	\$30.82	\$17.89	\$25.05
Operating Engineer	\$43.08	\$25.53	\$35.74
Painter	\$32.74	\$18.74	\$26.24
Plumber/Pipefitter	\$45.20	\$33.47	\$46.86
Refrigeration	\$41.58	\$27.28	\$38.19
Roofer	\$41.58	\$27.28	\$38.19
Sheet Metal Worker	\$48.35	\$17.90	\$25.06
Surveyor	\$27.88	\$39.80	\$55.72
Taper	\$36.28	\$19.38	\$27.13
Tile Setter	\$32.87	\$20.86	\$29.20