

OHIO'S CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PULLS ITS OWN WEIGHT

Ohio's Prevailing Wages for Heavy, Highway, Bridge and Utility Construction are currently reflective of the wages and benefits collectively bargained by and between the Heavy, Highway, Bridge and Utility Construction Industry and the unions that perform this type of work (Carpenters, Cement Masons, Laborers, Operating Engineers, and Teamsters). Included in the prevailing wages are provisions for payments into pension, health insurance and education, training and apprenticeship funds. Though these funds are strictly regulated by state and federal laws, they are devoid of any public funding. Construction employers and employees fund the accounts. The funds are jointly and professionally managed by contractor and union trustees, and their purpose is to provide private retirement security, health insurance benefits and skills and safety training for the industry. Again, it is important to stress that these funds are strictly monitored and must maintain adequate funding levels in order to meet liabilities. Because of current economic conditions, it is often necessary for fund managers to cut benefit levels and/or adjust employer and employee contribution levels in order to maintain proper funding levels. Again, no public dollars are involved. By virtue of its own investment and proactive management of these funds, Ohio's construction industry promotes the long term security of its workers without public assistance. The impact of eliminating or severely diminishing these funds as a result of repealing Ohio's prevailing wage laws would be devastating, not only to Ohio's construction industry, but also to Ohio's economy. Shrinking and/or failing multi-employer Pension and Insurance Funds would shift the financial burden of Ohio's construction industry employees to the State by way of their increased reliance on state unemployment benefits, and State Medicaid for health care previously covered by industry funds. In addition, Federal Pension laws would hold Ohio's contracting companies responsible for any unfunded liabilities of withered retirement funds, putting many out of business overnight. In order to demonstrate the scope of Ohio's construction industry benefit plans, the following table shows the contribution levels into the pension, health insurance, and education, training and apprenticeship funds of the Construction Industry during 2010. The list reflects the total number of work hours reported to each of the union's funds in 2010 multiplied by the Highway-Heavy Contract Contribution rates for each.

UNION	HOURS	PENSION	HEALTH INS	ED.TRAIN APPREN
Laborers	14,118,264	\$37,413,399	\$73,414,972	\$4,941,391
Oper. Engineers	13,309,424	\$66,547,120	\$88,640,763	\$7,852,560
Carpenters	15,500,000	\$78,585,000	\$91,295,000	\$7,285,000
Cement Mason	2,100,000	\$11,865,000	\$11,739,000	\$840,000
Teamsters	1,162,379	\$6,951,095	\$5,862,248	\$126,666
Totals	46,190,067	\$201,361,614	\$270,952,163	\$21,045,618