

News Release



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For Immediate Release

Missouri Middle of the Pack for Construction Business Climate, According to Associated Builders and Contractors Scorecard

Kansas City, MO, Dec. 1 – Missouri can improve its appeal as a state for construction contractors to do business, according to rankings recently released by Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC). “[Building America: The Merit Shop Scorecard](#)” reviews and ranks state-specific information significant to the success of the commercial and industrial construction industry.

According to the scorecard, Missouri policymakers have implemented some merit-shop friendly policies, but strategic improvements need to be made to create an environment where contractors are better positioned to succeed and grow.

The Merit Shop Scorecard grades states on their policies on project labor agreement (PLA) and prevailing-wage mandates and Right-to-Work status as well as their construction job growth rate, commitment to developing a well-trained workforce, career and technical education opportunities and results, and use of public-private partnerships. Also included is state data related to union membership, prompt-pay laws, business-specific tax and spending figures and safety information.

“Missouri policymakers have enacted some key merit-shop friendly policies, but still have room for improvement in creating a business environment where contractors can excel,” said ABC Heart of America Chapter President Michele Roberts-Bauer. “Prohibiting Project Labor Agreements on state projects that receive more than 50% of their funding from the state has helped contractors by restoring open, fair & competitive bidding on certain public-works projects. However, Missouri policymakers can further reduce the cost of public construction to taxpayers and make it easier for contractors to expand their operations and create more jobs by banning government-mandated project labor agreements on all state funded projects. We are hopeful many of the issues important to the merit shop – including Right to Work – will be implemented during the upcoming legislative session.”

High-performing states such as North Carolina, Louisiana and Virginia received top marks for their Right-to-Work policies and opposition to PLA and prevailing wage mandates.

The merit shop philosophy is the belief that people and companies succeed based on free enterprise principles within the free market system, which is characterized by open and fair competition and diverse participants. Those who adhere to the philosophy believe employees and employers have the right to determine wages and working conditions through either individual or collective bargaining, as they choose, within the boundaries of the law. They oppose violence, coercion, intimidation and the denial of the rights of employees and employers. Furthermore, they believe it is incumbent upon all branches of government to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars and that government should award contracts based solely on merit to the lowest responsible bidder, regardless of labor affiliation.

The [Merit Shop Scorecard](#) was developed with input from ABC chapters and industry stakeholders across the country. Criteria and definitions are available on meritshopscorecard.org. The scorecard will be updated with exclusive state construction unemployment rate estimates from economist Bernard Markstein, Ph.D.

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Associated Builders and Contractors Heart of America Chapter is a Kansas and Missouri trade association representing commercial and industrial construction and construction-related firms who are dedicated to providing the Heart of America with high-quality, affordable, safe and on-time construction.