CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE CALLS FOR STUDY OF THE BENEFITS OF OPEN COMPETITION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Washington (June 19, 2020) - The U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure approved H.R. 2, the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation (INVEST) in America Act, which includes an amendment directing the Department of Transportation to examine the procurement practices used to select construction materials. The study will specifically look at how competitive bidding can help reduce costs and promote the greater use of sustainable, innovative or resilient materials for infrastructure projects.

The organizations below belong to the Coalition for Affordable & Resilient Infrastructure and issued the following statements in support of the amendment authored by Congressman Harley Rouda (D-CA):

The American Chemistry Council

“Finding smarter solutions to finally repair, rebuild and modernize our country’s infrastructure is key to driving economic growth and securing a better future for everyone. Congressman Rouda has done a tremendous job working with his colleagues to find ways to help communities stretch the limited resources that are available to fund infrastructure projects. We support Congressman Rouda’s amendment for a study of how taxpayer dollars are spent, and we hope it will eventually lead to the elimination of outdated restrictions that prevent communities from considering a full range of cost-effective and resilient materials.”

- Chris Jahn, President & CEO

The American Composites Manufacturers Association

“For too long, outdated material preference regulations and procurement practices have inhibited asset owners from deploying the best material for the job. To adequately address America’s infrastructure needs, it is time to fully open the consideration of all materials and technologies to enable innovative, resilient, sustainable, and cost-effective investments. We commend Congressman Rouda for leading the way by calling for a study to identify those practices that inhibit maximizing the performance of our built environment.”

- Kevin Barnett, President & CEO
**International Association of Plastics Distribution**

“The International Association of Plastics Distribution (IAPD) is heartened by the Committee’s inclusion of language calling to study the economic impacts of including all materials in infrastructure products. IAPD member companies have been at the forefront of our nation’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, producing PPEs, clear plastic barriers and other devices meant to protect Americans. Given the opportunity to participate in federally funded infrastructure projects, we believe our member companies will be able to continue delivering for the American public a quality product at an affordable price which we believe the study will demonstrate.”

- Susan Avery, CAE, CEO

**Leading Builders of America**

“Safe and affordable housing strengthens the well-being of families, communities and the nation. Yet buying an affordable home is increasingly out of financial reach for many households. The cost of housing is determined by several factors involving labor and material prices including those mandated by state and local regulations. We commend Congressman Rouda for calling for a closer examination of regulatory mandates that unnecessarily limit our choice of materials, which hinders our ability to innovate and drives up housing costs for home buyers.”

- Ken Gear, CEO

**Plastics Industry Association**

“Monopolies are unfair and inefficient. More choices lead to lower costs and better results. But because of outdated laws, many federally funded infrastructure projects are closed to competition among construction materials. This makes no sense at a time when public funds are stretched so thin. Including more materials in the bidding process could save taxpayers up to 30% on water projects, as much as $371 billion nationwide. More durable plastic piping would save ratepayers money, too, as service providers pass on the costs of inferior materials over time. Congressman Rouda’s amendment to study the potential benefits of open competition is a major step in the right direction, and we appreciate his leadership.”

- Tony Radoszewski, President & CEO

**Plastics Pipe Institute**

“The Plastics Pipe Institute (PPI) has been a consistent proponent of material competition in construction practices. Data has shown that unit bid prices decrease when competing materials are allowed to bid against one another. We strongly support a federal study into competitive bidding practices and the value it can bring constituents in cost savings and product innovation. Implementing material competition as the default expectation for federally funded
construction will help stretch resources and optimize service life as we seek to improve our nation’s infrastructure.”

- David Fink, President

**PVC Pipe Association**

“Investments in water and sewer piping represent 60 percent of the total investment needed to upgrade our underground infrastructure, so it is here that open procurement practices can be focused to achieve cost-savings. Closed procurement practices stifle competition among pipe materials and the reliance on preferential pipe materials has the effect of raising the price point at a time when scarce public resources are available. Competition is a critical prerequisite to achieve improved cost structures and system performance. Alternative pipe materials have been developed to improve safety, performance and extend system design life. Savings accrue from less replacement and repair of more resilient pipe materials. Piping materials which meet current standards and technical specifications should be included in water and sewer projects.”

- Bruce Hollands, Executive Director

**Vinyl Institute**

“Finding the $2 trillion dollars that the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates will be necessary to rebuild our nation’s aging infrastructure has been a challenge for a long time. Unfortunately for taxpayers, outdated single source procurement practices across the country make those scarce resources even more limited. We applaud Representative Rouda for working with his colleagues to gain their support for federal review of the procurement processes of state departments of transportation and how flexibility and competitiveness impact project costs. Other studies at the state level have consistently demonstrated that when there is a menu of material options - every material - including legacy materials - become more cost competitive and as a result there are more resources to do more projects for the public good.”

- Ned Monroe, President & CEO

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The Coalition for Affordable and Resilient Infrastructure is dedicated to finding common sense policies that will help rebuild the nation’s infrastructure. Learn more at [https://coalitionforari.org/](https://coalitionforari.org/) and follow on Twitter @CoalitionForARI