

Hello my name is Darren Enns and I am the Secretary/Treasurer of the Southern Nevada Building and Construction Trades Council. I would like to start by thanking Ranking Member Miller for the invitation, and Chairman Kline and the members of the committee for allowing me to testify today. I come before the committee on behalf of 20,000 highly trained craft workers in the Southern Nevada area who belong to one of 17 local unions that make up the Southern Nevada BCTC. These locals, in partnership with their signatory contractors, run apprenticeship and training programs that provide the skills necessary for a good career in the construction industry. As the apprenticeship system has functioned for centuries, the apprentice works and earns a wage with good benefits while attending class all the while moving to journeyman status. Furthermore, the national scope of all of our unions, allows us to bring in travellers with standardized training and certifications; providing reliable and highly-trained workers for our contractors regardless of the need. Unfortunately, that demand for workers in our area isn't there anymore. Even though Southern Nevada and the country as a whole has gaping needs for new energy, and infrastructure.

Because of the lack of construction jobs in Nevada I have been on the lookout for a way to try to help make things better for the people I represent. For this reason I found myself attending workforce investment board workshops at the local level and listening to all of the ideas that people put forth in order to create jobs. As the organization that represents the premier training programs in the area, I wanted to share our model for high-skilled training that seamlessly matches people with employment. I also hoped to gather new ideas to ensure we remained the best trainers, and to find and all opportunities to

meet new industry demands and thus create more jobs for my members. I applaud the local board for listening to my ideas and recognizing what the Building Trades bring to the training world. I hope that our model helped them find ways to build more connections between training and employment.

I believe we should be trying to create jobs, not students.

Unfortunately, there is nothing my workforce investment board, or any other, can do to spur meaningful job creation. Businesses are cautious and hoarding cash, afraid to create a job in these uncertain times. I don't blame them, when they can't be sure if the government is going to slash needed programs that generate real economic activity and cut off their unemployment benefits, or if real help will come from Washington, DC to put our economy back on track - like rebuilding our infrastructure, investing in new energy projects, or helping people like my members with mortgage relief.

During this recession, our members have continued to build their skills even with the lack of work. The Journeymen craft workers have gone back to the classrooms for journeyman upgrade classes so that they can better serve the contractors when they finally do go back to work. In the state of Nevada we supported OSHA 10 hour and 30 hour training for all construction workers and all of our many craftspeople have returned to the classroom for that safety training that is now a state law. In my experience as a member of the Plasterers and Cement Masons Union local 797 I know that we as union members are Very well trained, and yet our industry is still plagued with high unemployment So when discussions start to go the direction of more

training, it seems to me that we're not going to get anyone to work this way. Despite the best efforts of the local WIB, I personally never saw anyone go to work as a result of their efforts. We need to be creating jobs, so my local WIB can begin the hard work that the Southern Nevada Building Trades have been doing for decades - providing meaningful training, leading to good careers, directly connected to employment and industry needs.

It's a good feeling when you are able to send someone to a job that they may not have gotten without your efforts. I'd encourage Congress to pursue that feeling. Wouldn't you feel great if you returned to your district to see your constituents repairing a structurally deficient bridge or building a new, clean and safe school?

I would like to close with a personal account of a conversation that I had with my grandfather who was my instructor in the Plastering trade many years ago. We had a job on the west end of Las Vegas that sat on a golf course. We stopped for a break at lunch time high up on the building that had a commanding view of the Las Vegas Valley. After eating and enjoying the view I commented to my grandfather about how much the city had grown in the last several years of my short recollection. He agreed and then I said "It has to come to a stop some time" He laughed and said "we've been saying that for 30 years..." Well, it's been another 30 years since that day and I'm saddened to report that we have found the day when it has stopped. Construction craftspeople are now suffering the worst unemployment in Nevada history. We need your help to create jobs. The Building Trades have

been taking care of the training, in our industry anyway, for decades and will continue to do so.

Thank You.

Darren Enns