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ABC Mass. chairman's message: Get into politics or get out of business - by John Anderson

February 16, 2018 - Construction Design & Engineering

John Anderson

A few years ago, ABC used the tag line "Get into politics or get out of business." Our chapter has heeded that advice, and though members may not always love politics, entering the fray has served our member companies well.

Today, union-only project labor agreements are non-existent on public projects. In recent years we've succeeded at beating back state legislation that would hurt our industry, and now we're affirmatively pushing bills that promote fair and open competition. We worked hard for Charlie Baker during both his gubernatorial campaigns, and now the boards that govern various licensed trades are balanced instead of being the exclusive province of unions.

The Baker administration has expanded opportunities for the open shop in other ways as well; we just need to take advantage of them. Members interested in serving on boards and commissions need only let us know. We can't ensure that you'll be appointed, but you will be seriously considered.

In his recent State of the Commonwealth speech, the Governor again called for additional investment in our vocational-technical schools. These schools offer students a path to well-paying construction careers without the debt associated with a four-year degree. Voc-tech school advisory boards represent another excellent option for members who want to become involved.

We must continue doing the work that has provided such a handsome return on investment. Members can host fundraisers for elected officials. If you're not ready for that, how about donating to the ABC Massachusetts Political Action Committee? Donations from the PAC have been invaluable in helping us establish relationships with up-and-coming legislators.

And speaking of Gov. Baker, the merit shop industry, including several ABC members, is hosting a fundraiser for him at the Westin Waltham Hotel on February 27th. I'll be there and hope that you can join me.

ABC's political involvement has allowed us to more vigorously represent the interests of member companies. Our ability to continue making progress in this critical area depends on more members getting involved. I hope this is an investment in your business that you'll consider making.

John Anderson is the 2018 chairman of the Associated Builders and Contractors Inc.-Mass. Chapter, Woburn, Mass. and is the president of Plumb House Inc., Milford, Mass.

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