



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

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A history of the Associated Subcontractors of Mass.

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Joe Corwin (1908-2002) and his wife and law partner, Sally Corwin (1917-2004) dedicated their life to protecting the rights of subcontractors.

In 1950, a small group of subcontractors was alarmed by efforts to weaken a state law calling for competitive bidding of sub-trade work. Determined to preserve the law and protect subcontractor rights, they formed the Associated Subcontractors of Massachusetts (ASM).

With the help of legendary construction attorney Joe Corwin (whose law firm still serves as counsel

to ASM today), the founding members formed a legislative committee and set to work. Over the next several years, they not only saved the law but also persuaded Beacon Hill lawmakers to expand it to further strengthen the protections for subcontractors.

As a direct result of their efforts, we have the law as it is today, with separate “filed sub bidding” by 18 sub-trades, direct payment rights for subcontractors, and a short, fair form of subcontract in use on all public building work.

Also, thanks to the founders’ work, we have the only statewide association in ASM, dedicated exclusively to the business issues affecting subcontractors.

Today, ASM is the voice of subcontractors on Beacon Hill – both union and open shop, in all of the specialty trades.

Efforts have been repeatedly made to weaken or repeal the state’s public bidding laws, and repeatedly, ASM has defeated those efforts through strong grassroots opposition. In 2004, ASM helped pass major construction reform legislation that improved all aspects of public construction while preserving the best of the existing system – including competitive bidding for subcontractors.

Throughout the years, ASM has also been active on other legislative and legal issues affecting private and public sector work. Among our most significant accomplishments have been the successful passage of major “Prompt Pay” legislation in 2010 and the “5% Retainage” legislation in 2014. Just as significant was our role in the sweeping reform of the Massachusetts Mechanics Lien Law, achieved in 1996 in cooperation with other industry groups.

While remaining true to our mission to protect the rights of subcontractors, ASM today focuses on providing essential resources and connections to help our members build their businesses. We also cooperate with general contractors and architects to promote fair business practices that benefit the entire industry.

On Thursday, October 23rd, ASM will hold its 75th Anniversary Gala at the Omni Parker House in Boston. At the gala, we will honor our past and show our excitement for our future, as many people who have meant so much to our Association will be in attendance. We hope you will join us to celebrate what ASM has meant to the construction industry and, specifically, the rights of subcontractors. To learn more about the gala, including information on registering or sponsoring the event, please visit our website at <https://www.associatedsubs.com/event/ASM75Years>.

Jim Welch is the CEO/executive director of the Associated Subcontractors of Mass., Boston.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540