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Chairman's message: We support open competition

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Our state and our nation are currently experiencing the worst economic climate we've seen in many years. Whether we've watched the 401K's of family members lose significant value or whether we have friends who have lost their jobs, the state of our economy has touched countless lives.

I believe that now, more than ever, our state and our country needs to remain faithful to the values of free enterprise, competition, and entrepreneurship. Unfortunately there are a significant number of politicians in Congress who seem intent on stifling our economy even further by allowing passage of "card check" legislation. This bill would eliminate the time-tested tradition of allowing men and women to choose whether or not to unionize by a secret ballot election. The process is administered by the National Labor Relations Board and has preserved the integrity of the union organizing process. ABC believes that this pending legislation would have a profoundly negative impact on both employees and employers by allowing intimidation and coercion to enter into a now public process.

While ABC is not anti-union, we steadfastly support open competition and fair bidding. Massachusetts has numerous general contracting and specialty construction companies that have done and will continue to do first class work. However, many of these same companies are prohibited from putting their qualified employees to work because of project labor agreements and other unfair bidding practices. Like the card check bill, these exclusionary policies are at odds with our fundamental principles of democracy.

In a fair, competitive, and transparent bidding process, the best qualified companies will get the work, regardless of their labor affiliation. Similarly a legitimate, private election process allows workers to make independent decisions about their union status. The United States of America has always been a country that rewards hard work, supports the willingness of men and women to create good jobs by starting their own companies, and protects employees from being strong armed into making decisions against their will. In today's economy, the stakes are too high to retreat to a system that rewards mediocrity at the expense of excellence.

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