

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 5, 2022

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Young,

We write to you today in support of proposed updates to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), as detailed in a recent report from the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment. This report represents an important opportunity to strengthen unions, lift up workers, and ensure local communities reap the full benefits of federal funding. We are committed to working with the Biden administration to implement the recommendations included in the report.

The report encourages OMB to explore and identify opportunities to update the Uniform Guidance, which dictates how states and localities can spend federal money. Proposed updates include:

- Allow states and localities to consider job, wage, and worker empowerment impacts when contracting with federal funds;
- Ensure states and localities have the freedom to apply worker-empowering, high-road conditions, including local hire and project labor agreement (PLA) obligations, on their subgrantees; and
- Ensure federal financial assistance programs cannot be used to deny workers the right to organize.

We strongly support these proposed updates and encourage OMB to begin formally updating the Uniform Guidance to include these new provisions. We want to be able to create fulfilling, safe, high-road jobs for our constituents, and make them accessible to communities that have not traditionally had access to jobs on projects funded through federal awards - especially for people of color, women, returning citizens, veterans, and other workers facing barriers to employment.

We applaud the Biden administration's work around the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), a historic investment in our nation's infrastructure that will enhance our competitiveness and create good-paying jobs. As states and cities begin receiving federal funding from this new law, we ask that OMB issue an interim guidance supporting these changes. This would allow states and cities to broadly implement policies, like local and targeted hire, while OMB proceeds with the formal update of the Uniform Guidance.

The interim guidance would also align with Section 25019 of the IIJA, which removes the prohibition on local hire for transportation construction projects. Excitingly, the Department of Transportation has already started to implement this provision by including local hire in their selection criteria for the next round of Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants. We hope the projects funded by RAISE grants illustrate the benefits of local hire and embolden OMB to issue the interim guidance, allowing local hire on other projects funded through the IIJA.

Updating the Uniform Guidance is a crucial step to connecting good-paying, family-sustaining jobs to the communities that need them the most. Local hire programs can help communities address historic inequities by creating on-ramps to construction careers for low-income workers, who are more likely to be people of color. Money earned by those workers strengthens local economies by channeling resources back into their communities.

We look forward to working with the Biden administration to empower state and local recipients of federal funds to take substantial strides in improving job creation, quality, and equity for workers in hundreds of industries across the United States.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



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Member of Congress



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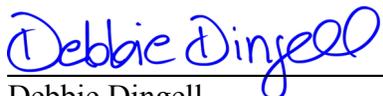
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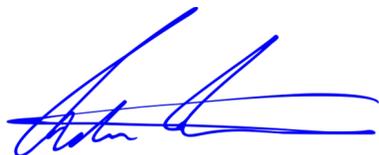
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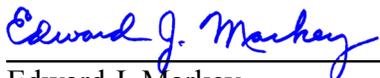
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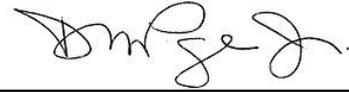
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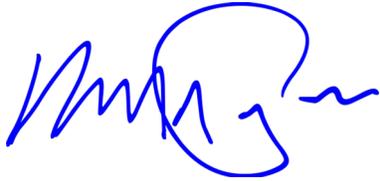
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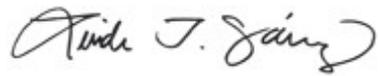
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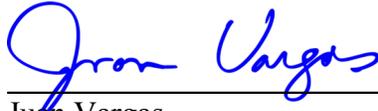
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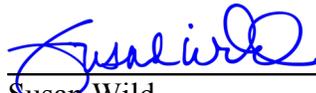
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