

Texas

May 2020

MERIT SHOP Journal

*Defending the
Rights of
Merit Shop
Contractors*

The Political Effects of
the Coronavirus on Texas
and National Politics

PAID SICK LEAVE -
Update for Members in
the Age of COVID-19

Representative
JEFF LEACH

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LETTER from the Chairman



HOLLIMAN

While this year is moving quickly, it has also started as an anomaly to any year we have experienced in decades and through many generations. The ABC Texas Board of Directors is being diligent in implementing our strategic plan to identify our legislative priorities, work with other industry associations to continue to be "One Voice" at the State Capital, and to pursue raising PAC funds to support conservative state leadership. Even with an anticipated busy legislative session ahead of us, we are also being flexible to meet the challenges in front of us with the recent adversity of COVID-19 facing our State and Country.

For now, we are individually concentrating on caring for our employees and their families to keep them safe and paid during this challenging business cycle. I am proud to hear of the collaboration between ABC Chapters, members, and construction industry associations, caused by this health crisis.

We will stay focused on our priority goals to keep Texas business-friendly by electing state leadership positions that will retain the conservative values for Texas businesses and citizens. Texas is an example to the rest of the country using common sense regulations, not intrusive or over-burdensome ones that hinder the growth of our local and county economies.

A special thank you to all our members in advance who support your local Chapter PAC, which will help support the State PAC. This support helps promote free enterprise and the merit shop mission.

As we head into the balance of this year and the 87th Legislative Session, I encourage continual prayer for your families, co-workers, businesses, leadership at the State and Federal levels, and especially the first responders and medical professionals working to conquer the COVID-19 virus. We have an incredibly blessed State and Country. While some are trying to destroy it by trying to exploit and take advantage of a health crisis for political purposes; we are a strong and resilient State that will be stronger than before as we have a positive attitude and fortitude to build back the Texas economy.

God Bless America, God Bless Texas, and God Bless each of You. Thank you for allowing me to represent this organization and be a voice on behalf of Merit Shop and Free Enterprise principles in Texas. 🇺🇸

GPaul Holliman

2019-2021 ABC of Texas Chairman
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McADAMS

Dear ABC Members,

We live in strange times. Allan Greenspan, former Chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve, once referred to the globalized post-Cold War era as the “age of turbulence”. I think that phrase captures the theme of the moment in which we find ourselves.

My great-grandfather lived through such a time when he withdrew his enrollment from Texas A&M University in 1918, because of the Spanish Flu Pandemic that swept through the world that year. Similar in effect to what we see now, life ground to halt and lives

were disrupted as peoples and governments combated a crisis unseen in several generations.

One hundred years later the great-grandchildren of those Americans are replaying a moment so often repeated in human history. But for us, our lives will forever be a little different. What it will look like when we emerge is unknown, but what we do know is that our industry is incredibly important to the post-coronavirus world.

And why is that? Because we build things and make them work.

We will debate all through this coming summer on how public resources should be used to re-stimulate the animal spirits of our markets and kickstart our economic engine. ABC of Texas will be engaging decision-makers on your behalf as those discussions take place. But for now, our members need to focus on survival, making payroll, and keeping their employees and families safe.

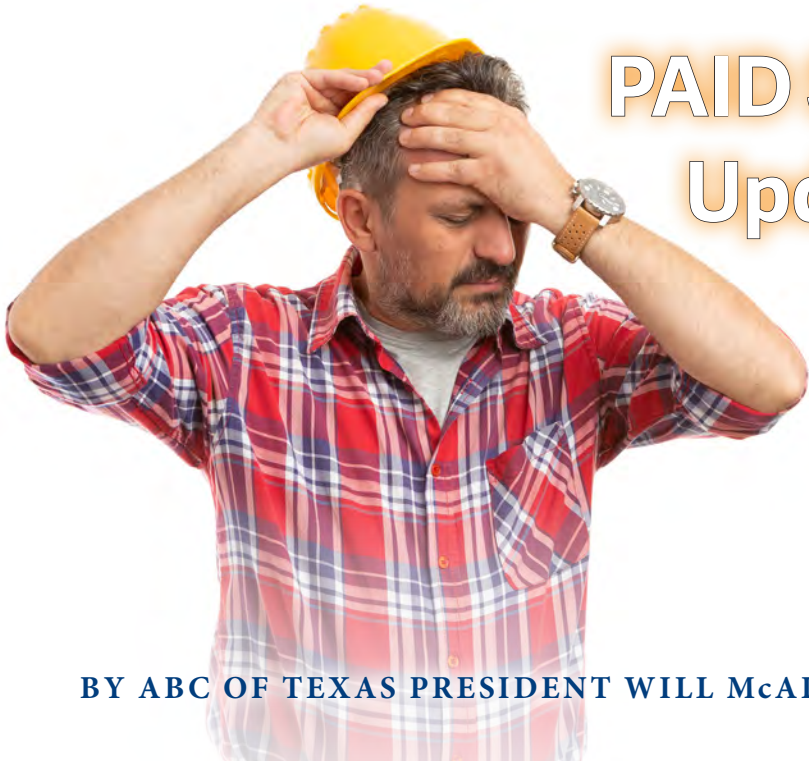
Our great-grandparents did this. My great-grandfather went back to college and earned both his undergraduate and masters’ degrees, an uncommon accomplishment in the 1920’s. He created a thriving cattle ranch that became a source of pride for the family. I think this will be our story as well. We will get through this, and we will go on to create something – a business, or a legacy in our industry that will be a source of pride for generations to come. 🇺🇸

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Will McAdams". The signature is fluid and cursive.

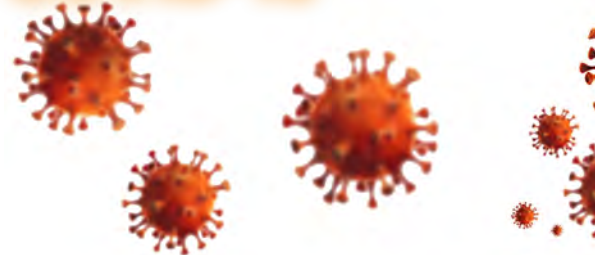
Will McAdams

ABC of Texas

President



PAID SICK LEAVE - Update for Members in the Age of COVID-19



BY ABC OF TEXAS PRESIDENT WILL McADAMS

In hindsight, it seems like we were living in another world in 2018 when the Workers Defense Project (WDP) and their allies within the Austin City Council initiated a paid sick leave ordinance. From the first draft of the ordinance to final passage, the City of Austin took 30 days to deliberate and ram through a massive entitlement paid for by businesses. At the same time, the WDP organized petition-driven referendums on paid sick leave, which served dual purposes of getting an ordinance on local ballots, while also registering likely democratic voters for the mid-term elections of that year.

Almost immediately, lawsuits were filed in state district courts within Austin and San Antonio. A federal case was also filed in Plano a year later. While plaintiffs in all three cases comprised businesses including ABC members and chapters, the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) based out of Austin Texas took a central role in coordinating legal challenges in both state and federal court. Robert Henneke, General Counsel, and Director for Center for the American Future, housed within TPPF, led a legal strategy that could work through the court system in the event a policy initiative during the 2019 Session of the Legislature should fail.

Plaintiffs set out to prove that the paid sick leave ordinances contemplated by Austin, San Antonio, and Dallas violated state and federal law on four key points. Court filings pointed out that the local laws exempted unionized employers from the mandate, building in carveouts for those businesses with collective bargaining agreements already in place. Henneke argued that the unequal nature of the regulations had the effect of placing non-union businesses at a competitive disadvantage. As a result, he concluded that the mandates violated the Freedom of Association and Equal Protection clauses of the U.S. Constitution.

Similarly, he argued that the cities themselves had violated the "Due Course of Law" provision of the Texas Constitution,

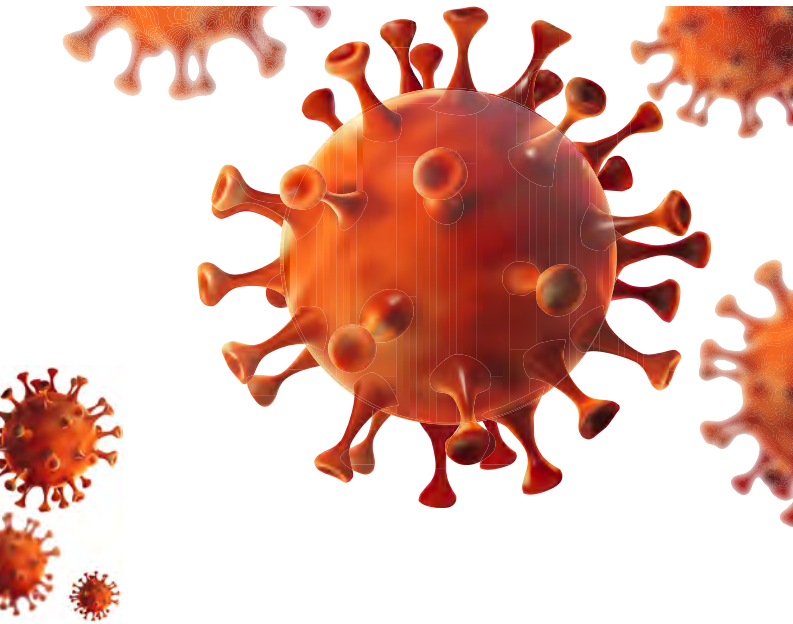
which showed the cities hadn't done adequate analysis in the rushed process of forming their ordinances. Specifically, the City of Austin had failed to identify how many employees within their jurisdiction even lacked paid sick leave before moving forward with their regulation.

The third point of law pursued by plaintiffs focused on the auditing provisions adopted by all three cities. Each had allowed their city staff to enter a business and require disclosure of documentation to prove that the business owner was affording employees paid sick leave to the mandated degree. The argument was made that this breached the Unreasonable Search and Seizure Prohibition under the 4th Amendment.

Finally, and as it turned out most importantly, Henneke argued that the effect of mandating a paid sick leave entitlement violated the Texas Minimum Wage Act. Since the State of Texas had already precluded local governments from exceeding the federal minimum wage under Chapter 62 of the Texas Labor Code, the financial impact to employers could be clearly quantified to prove the ordinances had exceeded state law.

In 2018, the Texas 3rd Court of Appeals agreed that the Austin Ordinance violated the Texas Minimum Wage Act, and issued an injunction pending review by the Texas Supreme Court. In 2019, the Texas 4th Court of Appeals reviewing the San Antonio ordinance left a district court injunction in place while awaiting the Texas Supreme Court to act on the Austin case. And most recently, the U.S. Eastern District Court in Plano issued an injunction against the City of Dallas on March 30th prohibiting the City from enforcing their own ordinance.

The COVID-19 pandemic has most recently brought paid sick leave as a policy to the forefront of our national discussion. The singular and historic nature of the disaster has left both



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employers and employees focused on the health and safety of the American worker. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act passed by Congress required all businesses under 500 employees to provide 2 weeks sick and 10 weeks paid family leave for those employees effected by COVID-19 through the end of 2020, while employers will qualify for a tax credit to offset costs they will experience.

Mr. Henneke believes that the federal legislation does not establish a precedent that could disrupt his legal strategy. The narrow focus, and limited duration of the paid sick leave requirement make it a crisis specific policy. However, after the crisis has passed, Americans will surely face a time of introspection about what lessons to take from the pandemic. The arguments will be shaped by both the human toll, but also economic aftermath.

Turmoil within the political class will be profound as the economy tries to find its footing. ABC is fortunate that our core principle has always been that employers should have a concern for the welfare of their employees, and that there must be fair compensation for work performed. That, and the facts of life, say a business can only pay out what it takes in. Our arguments should be profound in their simplicity. 🇺🇸

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The Political Effects of the Coronavirus on Texas and National Politics

BY VANCE WALTER

On the eve of Super Tuesday—March 3, 2020—a date that seems in the distant past for so many, the political winds in America remained unchanged by the violent and deadly coronavirus that would soon wreak havoc on the nation's healthcare system, economy and psyche. That next day, voters in Texas and 13 other states and territories overwhelmingly expressed their preference as to which septuagenarian should lead the Democrat ticket against President Trump. Yet, within a matter of weeks, everything had changed for America and candidates running for public office on the November general election ballot and antecedent primary and run-off elections.

Since then, traditional campaign tactics, which include traveling the country, expressing substantive policy differences at debates and town hall meetings, hosting fundraisers, whipping up excitement among a base of supporters in mass rallies, etc., have all been suspended, likely into summer months.

Prior to the collapse of the U.S. job market, which was caused by the forced closure of millions of businesses across America, the president's message and overarching argument for reelection was simple: "It's the economy, stupid." Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, the health, scope and trajectory of the U.S. economy was strong, which, while possible, would have made difficult for Americans to change

the proverbial horses in the middle of a record-setting run. Now, however, the dynamics of the race and the presidency itself have changed. President Trump now has the entire agenda for the remainder of the campaign cycle laid out in front of him.

For the president, this is a war time scenario. Simply put, if the president is able to: contain the spread of the virus and reverse the infection rate using sound, principled tactics; effectively allocate the \$2 trillion in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, as well as historic-level funding packages expected later this year, to save thousands of companies and millions of jobs lost because of the forced shut down; and show leadership over and stewardship of a measured economic recovery after the virus' assault has been halted, the race could likely be over for the Democratic nominee. In fact, given the wartime scale of the havoc caused by COVID-19, the president may be able to reserve comment on dozens of other issues until after reelection that would otherwise be arguments used by his rivals.


However, should the president lose reelection, voters will have opted to hand the keys of a struggling economy to former Vice President Joe Biden, who has radically different plans for America. From a race that seemed destined to be headlined by the no-small matter of the impeachment



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of the president of the United States, it has adapted into a real-time, life-or-death test of competency and leadership for those seeking the White House in November.

Meanwhile, the elections themselves aren't immune to the virus' reach and the presidential election isn't the only race affected by the epidemic. In Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott's (R) decision to move the run-off election date from May 26 to July 14 has drastically changed the Lone Star State's short-term political scene. Sixteen federal contests - one Senate and 15 House races - will have a longer secondary campaign cycle.

In the Senate race, retired Army pilot and former congressional candidate, M.J. Hegar, placed first in the Democratic primary with 22.4% of the vote, will face state Senator Royce West (D-Dallas) who slipped into second place by just over a percentage point in the 12-candidate field. The eventual nominee faces three-term Sen. John Cornyn (R), who was easily re-nominated in his Republican primary. The longer run-off cycle should typically help the second-place finisher, since the individual has more time to change the campaign's flow. In this case, the Democratic nominee, who already starts as a severe underdog to Sen. Cornyn, would lose valuable general election time with the later run-off, thus making the task of overcoming the incumbent even more formidable.

Of the 15 run-off elections for the House, nine are competitive to some degree, while six lie in districts that are safe for one party or the other. The congressional primary and run-off elections in Texas have and will be important indicators for the future success of the national parties, as they have seemingly given rise to another class of rising stars in the Republican party in candidates like Wesley Hunt, August Pfluger, Genevieve Collins and Beth Van Duyne. Although the same can be said about most large states, the adage rings true in 2020 - the path to the House majority (for either party) and control of the larger congressional agenda in Washington runs through Texas.

Through the pandemic, ABC continues to represent the interests of the merit shop construction industry on Capitol Hill, while producing timely and relevant resources for ABC members on several legislative packages from Congress to address the unfolding COVID-19 crisis. Visit www.abc.org for more information. 📍



Vance Walter is the Coordinator of Legislative Affairs for Associated Builders and Contractors' governmental Affairs Division. Prior to joining ABC, Vance worked in the polling industry. He is a graduate of the University of Arizona and resides in Washington, D.C. He can be reached at walter@abc.org.

One on One with Representative Jeff Leach



Representative Leach is a member of the Texas House of Representatives for District 67, which encompasses portions of Plano, Allen, Richardson, and Dallas in Collin County. With a conservative track record and a notable list of legislative accomplishments, Jeff has been on the front lines of the fights that are important to the Texans of today and the future of Texans of tomorrow. He's fought to safeguard liberties, protect the rule of law, strengthen free markets, and fought for innocent lives.

Representative Leach, you have practiced law in both the areas of construction and real estate. When you were starting your professional career, what interested you about these fields, and now as a policy maker, what within these areas of law have you most wanted to change?

I am proud to be Senior Counsel in the Construction Section at Gray Reed & McGraw, P.C., a full-service law firm founded in 1985, currently employing over 140 attorneys across Texas. Whether it's helping contractors negotiate contract documents or navigate complex claims and project disputes, I have worked hard over the years to become a trusted advisory and counselor for our construction clients. Whether it's in my role as a construction attorney or as a state legislator, where I've had the opportunity to lead on key policy reforms for the Texas construction industry – one thing has become abundantly clear to me: Some of the best people in Texas are the very people literally building Texas – owners, contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those who support and undergird our industry. Because of those hard-working Texans – the Lone Star State is, without question, the envy of the Nation. And as we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, I know that those Texans in our industry will continue to lead the way to a brighter, more prosperous future for generations of Texans to come.

Last session you filed House Bill 1999, commonly known as the "Right to Repair" bill for construction and design defects relating to public works or buildings. Can you tell us what led you to file this bill, and why this will be so important for our industry moving forward now that it is law?

I was extremely grateful to have the opportunity to author and pass House Bill 1999 in the 86th Legislative Session. I filed this legislation in response to the alarming trend

of governmental entities suing contractors for alleged construction defects without first notifying the contractors of or offering a chance to remedy such defects. These lawsuits are lengthy and onerous, causing serious risk and cost to both contractors and governmental entities. Likewise, insurance carriers have often increased the cost of insurance for contractors that work for governmental entities due to this surge in litigation. The result? Contractors putting in fewer bids for public works projects, undermining the competitive bidding process and increasing the cost of such projects for the taxpayers. Bad for everyone (except the trial lawyers convincing the governmental entities to file suit, I suppose). House Bill 1999, however, flips the script. Simply put, HB 1999 promotes fairness and reduces costs in governmental construction projects by giving contractors a chance to inspect and correct alleged defects prior to being sued. Governmental entities can still sue contractors – but the contractors must be given a fair and reasonable opportunity to correct any defects prior to being sued. That's common sense. It's good business. And it's good for Texas. And I'm glad we worked together to finally get this important bill passed.

Right now, Texas is the only state in the nation that operates outside of the "Spearin" decision for design defects in construction. This leaves general contractors on the hook for defects within plans or specifications provided by an owner or their agent. You made progress to address this situation by passing House Bill 2899. Please tell us about that bill and what it means for Texas contractors?

Right now, Texas is the only state in the nation that operates outside of the "Spearin" decision for design defects in construction, leaving general contractors on the hook for defects within plans or specifications provided by

Continued on page 12



Representative Leach represents the people of HD 67 which encompasses portions of Plano, Allen, Richardson, and Dallas in Collin County.



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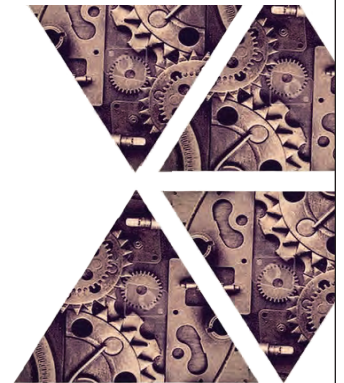
an owner or their agent. While I believe in the freedom-to-contract, governmental entities should not be holding contractors liable for any design they did not prepare. This is why I was proud to work with industry leaders and key legislators this session to author and pass House Bill 2899, which puts Texas more in line with the “Spearin” decision. Under the bill, which only applies to certain public transportation projects, a contractor cannot be held liable for the accuracy, adequacy, sufficiency, suitability, or feasibility of any project specifications the contractor didn’t prepare. While the bill is a win – there is still more work left to do on this front to ensure a more level and fair playing field for contractors.

Last session was significant for construction, but there was still unfinished business left on the table. You co-authored House Bill 589, which represented

the reform effort for the Texas “lien law” that has been building for over a decade. In your view, what are the complications that caused this bill not to pass, and what can we do as an industry to try and simplify the law for our contractors?

Texas lien laws are some of the most onerous, complicated and confusing in all the Nation. I have worked diligently, along with other industry leaders and legislative colleagues, to attempt to advance sensible reforms that simplify, streamline and strengthen the lien process. And although we haven’t made the progress that many have hoped we would by this point, the “legislative ball” is further down the field than it’s been in quite some time, and many potential reforms remain on the table for consideration and passage in the next legislative session. ➔

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In February ABC Houston hosted its annual Texas Hold 'Em Tournament and raised \$22,500 for the ABC Scholarship Foundation.



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RESOURCES FOR ABC GREATER HOUSTON MEMBERS
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GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

This past February, ABC Houston hosted its annual Texas Hold 'Em Tournament and raised \$22,500 for the ABC Scholarship Foundation, which is awarded to college students who are pursuing a career in the construction field. The March Spring Golf Tournament, which usually raises funds for the Scholarship Foundation, was canceled due to health concerns from COVID-19.

In March, the chapter canceled its events for the following 6 weeks and started hosting virtual meetings to comply with the "Stay Home, Work Safe" order from Governor Abbott following the outbreaks of the coronavirus. The chapter also launched a page on its website at www.abchouston.org/covid-19

to post relevant resources to members that affect the industry. Additionally, the chapter started holding peer group conference calls for Human Resources, Industrial General Contractors, and Commercial/Specialty Contractors. The calls allowed for members to share best practices with each other as to how they are working with the constant changes and updates from Greater Houston, the state of Texas, and the Federal Government.

The chapter is continuing to hold committee meetings via virtual meetings and conference calls and working to be a resource for the industry and its members. ➡

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

The ABC Central Chapter added 14 new members in the first quarter of 2020 and is looking forward to another year of net membership growth. Flynn Construction hosted the January Coffee & Contractors breakfast, and in March, the chapter featured Lott Brothers Construction as General Contractor host. The Coffee & Contractors events continue to bring multitudes of members into the office to network with other subcontractor and supplier members and learn from local GC members about their company culture, bid list, and upcoming projects.

Melanie Pfeiffenberger from ABC National and Will McAdams from ABC of Texas were guest speakers at the February 26th

Construction Executives' Breakfast Group, laying out National and State election issues and expectations.

In February, ABC CTX hosted the semi-annual Economic Forecast, featuring Keith Phillips from the Federal Reserve Bank. The UT Club was full of attendees, all wanting to learn more about what the regional economy holds in store for the upcoming 1 – 2 years.

In early March, the chapter's Emerging Leaders Group held a professional development seminar, "Clarity, Confidence and Creativity: The Neuroscience of Difficult Conversations", presented by Dr. Bill Crawford of Crawford Performance

ABC CHAPTER INITIATIVES AROUND THE STATE

Solutions, hosted at the Airco Mechanical offices in Round Rock.

In March, as social distancing became the norm, various counties and cities within Texas began issuing their own Shelter-in-Place orders. Austin's orders did not align with the surrounding counties' and cities' as they pertained to construction, essentially banning all commercial and residential construction unless it was for essential infrastructure to protect health and safety during the pandemic. The Austin General Contractor community, as well as the Austin construction trade associations and chambers, came together to lobby the Austin Mayor and Travis County Judge for clarification. At the same time, ABC of Texas and other state-wide organizations were working to encourage consistency across all counties in Texas. In the end, the Austin/Travis County

area was able to open back up to construction.

Considering mitigation efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 and keep members and staff safe and healthy, ABC Central Texas postponed its April 4th Chili/BBQ Cook Off to October 23rd and has also postponed its May 18th golf tournament to September 21st.

On April 8, the chapter's OSHA Partnership members will hold a virtual Safety Forum, to review the COVID-19 CDC safety guidelines and the City of Austin jobsite safety requirements, and to share best practices for implementation from various GC and Specialty Contractor members. 📍

SOUTH TEXAS CHAPTER



Meeting with State Representative Steve Allison

2020 started out with great promise, building on the successes of 2019 and the chapter's strategic planning efforts.

In the Advocacy arena, the focus remained on the City of San Antonio mandated Paid Sick Leave legal battle, with a strong push to reach PAC and FEA goals, continued meetings with the various agencies regulating the construction and development process, the March primaries, and outreach to elected officials. By the end of the third quarter the chapter nearing met its ABC-PAC and FEA goals. The meeting with State Representative Steve Allison covered the upcoming primary elections and their impacts on the 2021 legislative session. The bi-monthly meetings with the agencies demonstrated the importance of continuing dialogue and collaboration as the agencies are moving to more online processes, where industry input at the front end is so critical.

In the Business Development arena, the first Social Hour mixer in January had a great crowd. The second annual Texas Hold 'Em Tournament in early February sold out and additional tables were brought in that evening to accommodate the last-minute requests, and the annual Chili Cook-off had the largest number of teams ever for a total of 36. The chapter is currently at 83% retention, nearing its goal of 90%.

The Construction Education arena was equally successful, with OSHA 10 and OSHA 30 classes sold out, a tremendous showing

at the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo's Ag Mechanics Program, creation of new crew leader and supervisor classes, and major plans for the annual Texas Construction Career Initiative, the annual construction career fair where almost 2,000 students were expected.

Then COVID-19 decided to show up. The TCCI event set for mid-March had to be canceled but is looking at a new mid-November date. All April events have been postponed, while there is still hope the May and June events can proceed. Planning for future chapter membership events is ongoing. The apprenticeship program is moving to online instruction, which is proving to be a challenge but doable in a very short period. Face-to-face safety classes have been put on hold. Advocacy efforts are now focused on keeping the construction industry moving.

During this time, the construction industry has come together like never before by exchanging best practices, assisting each other, volunteering to assist where needed, and striving to keep their co-workers, company and community healthy and safe. The various construction associations also came together to secure much needed masks and other necessities for the medical front line personnel in Bexar County. What an amazing industry! 📍

SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER

In January, the ABC Southeast Chapter formed a new Emerging Leaders/Young Professionals Committee and is fortunate to have two young leaders volunteering as Co-Chairs, Colby Plaia of Turner Industries Group and Jennifer Pate of Gulf Coast-Texas. This Committee creates opportunities for future industry leaders to build relationships, expand their knowledge of the merit shop philosophy, as well as become more engaged with ABC at the local, state and federal levels. In the late afternoon on January 27th, at “5 Under Golf”, the ABC Southeast Chapter and board hosted the Committee’s first social event. The event’s guest speaker was State Representative Dade Phelan, who was also presented with the “ABC-Texas Eagle Award” by the chapter President and board members. Representative Phelan spoke to the group regarding the economic growth and development Southeast Texas is experiencing and encouraged all of them to stay informed and active with ABC and the community. Everyone

at the Chapter is looking forward to seeing great things from this committee of eager leaders.

Additionally, the Chapter’s Annual “Spring Shutdown Golf Tournament” was held on Friday, March 6th, and was another huge success! The event was held at a new location, the Beaumont Country Club, and everyone who participated loved the course and had a fun day marketing, networking, and enjoying the beautiful weather. A special thank you to all sponsors, cooks, and golfers. As in years past, there was an overwhelming response to this event, 37 teams, 18 hole sponsors, and 4 beverage cart sponsors, all of which sold-out in less than one day. The Southeast Chapter also had 10 cooks, and as always there was an abundance of food and beverages on the course for everyone to enjoy. Thank you to all Southeast Texas’ membership for their continued support of the Chapter and Southeast Texas! 📍

TEXO CHAPTER

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, TEXO had kicked off the new year and new decade with a number of exciting activities. First and foremost was the Board of Director’s annual strategic planning meeting, which was held as an overnight retreat in East Texas. This retreat featured a collaborative effort to synthesize a powerful “Why Statement” and set of core values that adequately demonstrated why TEXO, its volunteers, and its staff are so dedicated and passionate about serving the membership.

A major highlight of the first quarter of 2020 was the TEXO | ASC Region V Student Competition, where 19 student teams from 11 universities gathered to compete February 23rd and 24th in three divisions: Commercial Building, Design-Build, and Heavy Civil. The competition also included the Networking Lounge, which allowed students to interact with TEXO members hiring for internships and full-time positions, as well as the popular Improv Speech Contest for the second year.

The event concluded with the award ceremony during which Louisiana Tech University took home first place in the Heavy Civil division, Oklahoma State University took home first place in the Design-Build division, and Texas Tech University took home first place in the Commercial Building division. This was followed by the presentation of \$32,000 in scholarships to 12 students from 5 different universities.

Other significant happenings at TEXO this quarter included the rollout of the General Contractor/ Specialty Contractor Contract Tool; the AIA/TEXO Committee’s biannual Technology Roundtable focused on “The Future of BIM;” and the 2020 AIA|TEXO Economic Update showcasing presentations from ABC chief economist Anirban Basu and Dallas Regional Chamber representative Mike Rosa. Furthermore, TEXO announced the winners of the 2020 Distinguished Building Awards, in which 41 member companies submitted 79 projects in 26 categories. These winners will be eligible to go on to the



A major highlight of the first quarter of 2020 was the TEXO | ASC Region V Student Competition, where 19 student teams from 11 universities gathered to compete.

ABC Excellence in Construction Awards and will be celebrated at our Holiday & Awards Gala in December.

While the first quarter of 2020 has certainly been marred by the COVID-19 pandemic, TEXO has endeavored to continue serving its members in any and every capacity during this time of crisis and uncertainty. This includes working tirelessly in conjunction with local counties and municipalities to support construction’s status as an “essential industry” in North and East Texas, as well as remaining in constant contact with the membership to keep them abreast of new and changing information regarding the virus, jobsite and workplace safety measures, government mandates, and more.

TEXO is confident that the construction industry will remain resilient and productive throughout this crisis and that the chapter and its membership will emerge stronger on the other side to enjoy the exciting events, classes, and trainings to come throughout the remainder of 2020. 📍

COASTAL BEND CHAPTER

During the COVID-19 pandemic that has surrounded the Coastal Bend Chapter, along with the nation, chapter members are coming together as a community and offering their services. Saltwater Grill delivered lunch to a local radio station, and Bechtel Corporation donated N95 masks to healthcare workers at CHRISTUS Spohn Hospital. These are just a few ways that members are helping out the community.

The Coastal Bend chapter is working diligently to offer members information and guidance on safety during the pandemic. In addition, the chapter worked the bank and finance members to provide guidance for SBA loans. The success of many small businesses in the Coastal Bend area will depend on the SBA loan options while also maintaining a healthy workforce. 📌

TEXAS MID COAST CHAPTER

At the ABC Texas Mid Coast Chapter, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted members along with the entire country. The ABC National office has provided webinars on topics such as: human resources, telecommuting, current workforce challenges, financial impact, CARES legislation and programs, safety, plus much more! Information exchange has been overwhelming and wonderful as the nation comes together to fight this virus and the unprecedented challenges that everyone is facing. From working remotely and virtual meetings to education through virtual classrooms, there are some efficiency benefits that can be benefited from.

The chapter increased communication to assist and provide resources including sample forms, essential employee programs, COVID-19 health protocols, safety plans, etc. The chapter has educated themselves so that they can be a wealth of knowledge to assist members during this time of need.

ABC Mid Coast had a record attendance at the 37th Annual Installation & Awards Banquet on January 30th. The 2020 Board of Directors were sworn in, Will McAdams and Jeff Bauknight presented State Representative Geanie Morrison with a PAC check and handed out 24 National Safety Training Evaluation Process (STEP) awards! On March 6, 34th Annual Golf Tournament brought over 200 players and volunteers together for a gorgeous day of building business relationships!

On April 7th, another NCCER Construction Site Safety Technician class was held virtually for the first time ever. Upon completion of this class, the students will earn certificates for: Construction Site Safety Supervisor, Orientation & Technician, Safety Technology and Field Safety.

The Mid Coast Construction Academy (MCA) education coordinator, Tonya Perez, quickly went from recruiting-

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mode for the upcoming school year to survival mode. She had to learn new platforms for providing pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training and swiftly migrated to virtual training for the textbook portion of the ongoing classes. The exams and performance testing will be addressed soon.

Many prayers and well wishes from the Chapter to you! 🇺🇸



ABC of Texas President Will McAdams presented State Representative Geanie Morrison with a PAC check at the National STEP Awards on January 30th.

GULF COAST CHAPTER



Pictured L to R are candidates for Texas District 25: Troy Brimage, Ro'Vin Garrett, Patrick Henry, Hector Rivero (Moderator and President & CEO of ACIT), Laura Seth, Mitch Thames and Cody Vasut

While 2020 began very unobtrusively at ABC Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, Spring has made a forceful entrance that could not have been foreseen.

Being an election year, we anticipated political challenges ahead. On January 29, 2020, ABC Texas Gulf Coast partnered with ACIT to host a joint membership luncheon and candidate forum to meet those challenges head-on.

Candidates for Brazoria County Sheriff and candidates for the District 25 State seat presented their respective positions and platforms to ABC members, following up with a question and answer session moderated by Hector Rivera, President & CEO of ACIT (Associated Chemical Industries of Texas). This exchange allowed ABC members the opportunity to present issues of particular relevance to them, to get to know the candidates better, and to make informed decisions about voting.

The race for Sheriff had a decisive finish, and the race for District 25 culminated in a runoff between Ro'Vin Garrett (R) and Cody Vasut (R); the winner of which will face Patrick Henry (D). The runoff, originally scheduled for May, will now take place in November due to the unwelcome entrance of yet another force to be reckoned with, COVID-19.

While this unwelcome guest has caused major disruption worldwide, essential industries continue to operate in the Texas Gulf Coast region and ABC Texas Gulf Coast's essential support services remain in place. Our physical boundaries are tighter than ever before, but opportunities present themselves to extend our reach virtually. With the assistance of NCCER and Pearson, craft training has been able to continue for those equipped to learn online. ABC and its training partners are working through various online platforms to deliver classroom lectures and e-texts to students of all ages. While the skills learned must continue to be evaluated in person with a hands-on approach, online solutions have been rolled out to maintain progress.

Using these same techniques and technology platforms, ABC boards and committees will be able to convene virtually and continue to share ideas and solutions at a time when it is so needed. Having a voice at the table with others who are navigating this difficult environment is more crucial and adds more value than ever before. A collaborative, inter-disciplinary team approach is the best way to solve complicated issues and achieve common goals. ABCs value proposition is clearer than ever before. There is strength in numbers. Working together, we can solve any problem. 🇺🇸



ONE MISSION, ONE TEAM, ONE VOICE

DELIVER WORK

ABC defended open competition in bidding to help members win more than **\$3.6 billion** in FY 2017.

\$3.6 BILLION

WORLD-CLASS SAFETY

ABC STEP Diamond participants were **670% safer** than the industry average, **reducing their TRIR rates by 85%**. ABC is a partner in the Construction Coalition for a Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace.



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are posted annually on the ABCMeritShopProud.org website, which highlights national, chapter and member news and events to help tell the ABC story.



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