

New Hampshire Building and Construction Trades  
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## **New Hampshire Workers & Youth Protest ABC's Role in Cancellation of Job Corps Center**

*Hundreds rally to show support for building the Manchester Job Corps Center  
with a Project Labor Agreement*

MANCHESTER – Hundreds of New Hampshire workers and Manchester youth will meet today at 4pm at Bronstein Park, near Manchester's Unemployment office, to protest the cancellation of Manchester's Job Corps Center project. Joined by clergy and community groups, they will give voice to opposition to a bid protest submitted by North Branch Construction, Inc with assistance from the national Associated Builders & Contractors (ABC) to a Project Labor Agreement on the \$30 - \$35 million Job Corps Center proposed for Manchester. Because of the bid protest, the entire project was cancelled.

This Job Corps Center was likely to be the first use anywhere in the country of any Project Labor Agreement on a federal construction project in nearly a decade, since President Obama's Executive Order to overturn a Bush era policy discouraging use of this excellent labor-management tool that enables union and non-union workers alike to enjoy good work conditions and compensation. U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen and U.S. Representatives Carol Shea-Porter and Paul Hodes fought for a Project Labor Agreement for this Manchester project.

At Thursday's rally, a soup line will help emphasize the need for good jobs for New Hampshire workers. Two costumed "Grinches" will show how the community feels about the ABC and North Branch yanking this project out from under them. Youth leaders will speak at the rally about the need for the resources of a Job Corps Center. Workers will talk about the need for the jobs this project would have created.

Almost a decade ago, New Hampshire residents and leaders started making the case for a Job Corps Center in New Hampshire. Wanting to change the status as one of only two states in the country without one, hundreds of dedicated businesspeople, educators and elected officials across party lines worked for almost a decade to bring this important resource to New Hampshire youth. Job Corps is a free education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. Hundreds of parties in New Hampshire worked for over ten years to bring the project to Manchester. In less than two short months, the ABC and North Branch killed the job.

Joe Casey, President of the New Hampshire Building Trades said: "The selfish actions of North Branch and the ABC stand to harm hundreds of people in New Hampshire: Young people will not be able to benefit from participation in Job Corps programs. Area businesses will not benefit in the long term from a greater number or professionally trained workers and in the short term from the economic boost of a \$35 million project. And construction workers that are struggling through one of the worst down periods in our lifetime will continue to struggle to find work."

"Project labor agreements, also known as Community Workforce Agreements, have a long history of protecting both project owners and the workers who build them. In addition to setting clear, uniform, negotiated standards for all workers on a project, they also have been shown to improve safety, minimize delays, and save owners money," continued Casey.

"If they had their way, all government regulation would be eliminated – no safety laws, no requirement to pay wages for all hours worked, no requirement for worker's comp coverage for all workers," said John Jackson, Business Manager of NH Carpenters Local 118. "Their anti-competition argument covers up business practices that decimate our community."

Elected officials expected to attend in support of the project include: State Representatives Jean Jeudy, Ted Rokas, Bob Walsh, Pat Long, and John DeJoie, as well as representatives of U.S. Representatives Carol Shea-Porter and Paul Hodes.

The New Hampshire Building and Construction Trades Council, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, represents over 5,000 workers in the Granite State and fights for jobs offering good wages, benefits, and working conditions.

For more information about Project Labor Agreements including research showing they lower costs, please go to [www.plaswork.org](http://www.plaswork.org).