

Laws and Regulations

- Every employer deserves the right to freely operate his or her business under the laws of the Commonwealth.
- Additional liabilities should not be forced upon contractors over issues on which they have little or no control.
- AGC is opposed to rules that would require a contractor to monitor or be responsible for the hiring practices of subcontractors.
- Laws and regulations should be developed in a manner which not only protects the public but also promotes and supports business by maintaining open entry into the industry and affording opportunities to small business.
- Efforts to reform healthcare must take a market-based approach and avoid further government intrusion into the healthcare system.
- AGC supports low business taxes and cost effective regulations in order to promote economic development.
- AGC advocates the repeal of the BPOL and other gross receipts taxes.
- The government should not abdicate its responsibility by mandating that contractors be responsible for enforcing laws and regulations.
- We support the "Dillon Rule" structure of state-local governance where the authority of local public bodies is limited to that specifically granted by the General Assembly.
- We support the doctrine of contributory negligence and oppose any effort to replace this doctrine with comparative negligence.
- AGC is opposed to a two tier property tax system which would impose a higher rate on commercial property than residential property.

Immigration

- The Federal government needs to enact reasonable reforms of the Nation's immigration laws in order to provide clear guidance, procedures and requirements for employers.
- Businesses should be free to hire individuals whom they reasonably believe are legally in the United States.
- In order to prevent confusion, inefficiency and waste, state and local governments should not enact separate laws and regulations relating to immigrant employment.
- Employers should not be held responsible for the fraudulent acts of illegal immigrants, such as providing falsified employment applications and materials, when the employer has followed the appropriate government-approved process and requirements.
- The federal government should permit the entry of immigrants into the country for the reasonable and controlled growth of the nation and the workforce.
- Any system developed to verify that workers are in the country legally must be timely, efficient, accurate and implemented in a reasonable manner.



2010 Legislative Policy Positions

Founded in 1924, the Associated General Contractors of Virginia is the largest and most influential trade association serving the commercial construction industry in the state. It is comprised nearly 800 firms including general contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers and service providers. Our membership includes more general contractors and subcontractors than any other construction trade association in Virginia.

The association serves as the spokesman for the commercial construction industry representing and protecting the interests of one of the major segments of the Commonwealth's economy.

Current economic conditions have had a dramatically negative impact on construction, particularly private projects as construction financing is for all practical purposes unavailable. As a result, total construction in the Commonwealth has declined by approximately 15% as compared to 2008. Unemployment in Virginia's construction industry now exceeds 20%.

For more information on any of these issues, please contact:

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Detailed below are the association's positions on various legislative and policy issues that impact the industry.

Workforce Development

- It is vital that schools provide career/technical education classes for all students.
- AGC supports a coordinated workforce education program to achieve a technically skilled workforce, improve efficiencies and reduce waste and to provide a continuous learning curriculum for technical skills from k-12 to technical education to community colleges to higher learning.
- Public funding and accreditation are needed to support successful training programs.

Infrastructure Investment

(schools, water treatment plants, libraries, transportation and more)

- It is the responsibility of the government at all levels to invest sufficient funds to provide and adequately maintain facilities needed to promote an improved quality of life for all Virginians and to encourage and facilitate commerce and trade.
- There should be a greater reliance on user fees and taxes to fund these investments rather than bonds and the sale of existing facilities to private entities.
- AGC continues to urge public bodies to invest in infrastructure, especially under current market conditions, as such investment is the most cost effective way to stimulate the entire economy while creating lasting, usable structures and facilities.

Jobsite Safety

- It is essential that the entire construction industry work to ensure safe worksites.
- While fines for violation of safety regulations can be effective, greater emphasis needs to be placed on voluntary compliance activities and training, as well as incentives to promote jobsite safety.
- Construction safety regulations should be uniformly applied to all types of construction, including residential.
- VOSH, AGC and employers should avoid adversarial activities and work in partnership to ensure safer worksites.

Industry Responsibilities

- Efforts should be undertaken to improve the image of the construction industry through activities such as continuing education, professional accreditation and public service activities.
- AGC supports continuing education requirements for contractor licensing.
- AGC members are good citizens. They not only work to protect and enhance our environment, but they are also active in a variety of community service activities.

Free and Open Competition

- In order for the public to feel confident that public dollars are spent in the most effective and efficient manner, it is essential that public construction procurement be conducted in an open and competitive manner to select the most cost effective, qualified contractor.
- While AGC prefers the competitive bid system for public construction projects, the association supports other construction delivery methods such as design-build, construction management and public private partnerships provided that construction is openly procured on a competitive basis.
- AGC believes private parties should be free to negotiate the terms of construction projects with a minimum of government regulation.
- AGC is opposed to use of public employees by public bodies to construct facilities.
- AGC supports the use of payment and performance bonds on all public work in excess of \$100,000.

Right to Work

- Every individual should be free to work wherever he or she chooses without being subject to any restrictive labor practices such as required membership in a union.
- AGC opposes forced unionism through proposals such as the so-called Employee Free Choice Act which would deny a worker's right to a federally supervised private ballot election when deciding whether or not to join a union. It would also subject workers to union coercion and threats, interfere with the bargaining process and force arbitration in bargaining situations.
- Employers should be free to exercise hiring and termination decisions without undue restriction.
- AGC supports Virginia's "Right to Work" laws allowing either the employee or the employer to terminate employment without cause.
- AGC is opposed to "Living Wage" laws. Instead, AGC believes that a federally mandated minimum wage is appropriate.

Environment

- AGC supports reasonable measures in both the public and private sectors to improve and protect the environment.
- AGC is strongly opposed to the recently enacted stormwater regulations for the Commonwealth. They were not only adopted with minimal industry input, but they are also based on questionable scientific evidence. We believe they will result in a dramatic increase in construction costs, further depressing construction markets, and result in a minimal improvement in water quality.
- AGC supports use of green construction practices where they are reasonable and economically feasible.
- AGC supports upgrades and improvements to the waste water treatment program and storm water systems in order to improve the quality of the state's rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.