



COALITION URGES DETROIT JOBS ON BRIDGE CROSSING

Detroit - Contractors, construction trade union representatives, local and state officials assembled today at the Michigan Black Chamber of Commerce to urge Governor Snyder to incorporate “best value supply chain policy” in the Michigan’s construction contribution to the new international bridge crossing.

“The direct and residual economic impact of constructing a second span between the U.S. and Canada represents a tremendous commerce and cash infusion opportunity for our local economy that the Governor must challenge Michigan’s representatives on the new international bridge authority to meet”, said Chamber President & CEO Ken Harris.

“The most visible focus is always on the contractor selection process, said Harris. “But there are also tremendous opportunities to use locally produced equipment, supplies and materials; and even tie in restaurants and retailers if Michigan’s representation on the authority presses for best value benefits.”

The Federal Highway Administration authorized Michigan’s use of “best value” processes in the 2011 successful reconstruction of M-39.

“Through the Detroit Workforce Diversity Task-Force, headed by MDOT’s Tony Kratofil, and the coalition of organizations assembled here today, Michigan has an outreach infrastructure already in place to help maximize local job creation”, said Laborer’s International Union Business Manager Mike Aaron. “From Don O’Conner in Operating Engineers to Doug Needham at the Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association, we have leadership in the sector that knows how to deliver a quality built product, on time and within budget. Together, we can maximize a Detroit workforce.”

“Everyone benefits from successful job creation in Detroit”, said Michigan Legislative Black Caucus Chair, Rep. Fred Durhal. “We need the same determination the Governor has shown in getting a construction agreement, dedicated to maximizing community benefits and job creation for local business and residents.”

The coalition has requested creation of a Local Commerce & Community Development Resource Committee to track and report local job creation, business participation and community benefit progress.

“Organizations like the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council have extensive experience in collaborating on participatory efforts like this”, says MMSDC Board Member and Rickman Enterprise CEO, Rod Rickman. We urge the Governor to support their engagement with the authority and hope provincial leaders utilize the Canadian and Aboriginal Minority Supplier Council in the same manner.

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