



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, August 6

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VIRGINIA CONGRESSMAN BEN CLINE CALLS FOR WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DURING TOUR OF LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Congressman from Virginia's 6th Congressional District Notes the Need for Common Sense Workforce Development Training for Trade Professionals

BROADWAY, VA. – Virginia Congressman Ben Cline (VA-6) called on Congress to take steps to address construction workforce shortages during a visit to a local construction site last Thursday. The Congressman made his comments while touring the renovation and addition to John C. Myers Elementary School along with representatives from Lantz Construction Company, Associated General Contractors of Virginia and the Associated General Contractors of America.

“It is time for Congress and President Trump to enact solutions that fix the higher education bias. While the federal government invests \$120 billion a year in higher education funding, only about \$4 billion is spent for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training programs and Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “Congress needs serious leaders, like Rep. Cline, who understands the country needs workforce development that allows greater flexibility for industries like construction.”

While touring the jobsite, the construction officials and Rep. Cline further discussed the direct impact the workforce shortage has on Virginia. They noted that a 2019 AGC survey which found that that 92 percent of those contractors are having “a hard time filling some or all positions.” Of those firms experiencing staffing challenges, 27 percent say projects have taken longer than anticipated and 47 percent say they have included higher prices in their bids or contracts.

The tour took place on Lantz Construction Company’s nearly \$12 million project for Rockingham County School Board that includes renovating and creating additions for John C. Myers Elementary School. The project began in March of 2019 and is expected to be completed in August of 2020.

Jeff Deavers, Chief Preconstruction Officer of Lantz Construction said, “I am proud to show Representative Cline the important work our company does in our local community and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. More importantly, we are encouraged to see that the construction industry has strong advocates in Washington and Richmond who understand the issues facing our industry.”

“The construction industry is in a job crisis,” added Gordon Dixon, chief executive officer for Associated General Contractors of Virginia. “The many open positions with construction firms provide lucrative careers and fast track advancement. Virginia.byf.org is the place to go to find all the construction careers available.”

“We have to get serious about workforce education in America,” said Representative Ben Cline. “It is time for the federal government to make funding for workforce education a priority. I will work with my colleagues on the Education and Labor Committee to raise awareness and focus our efforts on addressing this problem.”

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