

**REMARKS FOR STEVE SANDHERR AND LES SNYDER
CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT RELEASE
VIRTUAL BRIEFING
Tuesday, August 3, 2021**

- **Hello and thank you for joining us today. With me is Les Snyder, the President of Shikun & Binui America, Vice Chair of the Board of i+iconUSA and the chair of the Associated General Contractors of America's Climate Change Task Force.**
- **There is no doubt that the climate issue is of global importance and that any ultimate solution will need to be addressed on a global scale.**
- **That being said, the construction industry is key to any measures needed to make our economy more efficient, less carbon intensive and more resilient.**
- **While construction firms are responsible for only a small amount of the carbon emissions released each year, the industry has a clear obligation to find ways to operate more efficiently moving forward and to**

use its expertise to assist public and private owners to meet their climate objectives.

- **More important, however, is the fact that the construction industry is the delivery vehicle for building a greener, more climate friendly future.**
- **That is why the Associated General Contractors of America is launching a new climate change initiative that is designed to ensure that our industry has the support and resources needed to construct a less carbon intensive economy. And that we take the steps needed to make our industry even more efficient.**
- **This new initiative was crafted by a special task force the association convened to look at the implications of climate change on the construction industry.**
- **Les Snyder, who also serves as AGC of America's Board Vice President, chaired this task force. And I**

would like to hand things over to him to talk a bit about the new initiative the task force helped craft. Les...

LES SNYDER

- Thank you, Steve. AGC's Climate Change task force, which included eighteen members from different construction and construction-related firms, has been meeting since the early Spring of this year.**
- Our guiding principles have been clear: that the construction industry is committed to continuous improvement; that contractors have an opportunity to reduce their environmental impacts; and that AGC of America has a clear role to play in helping the industry build a greener future.**
- Out of our meetings we crafted a series of recommendations that are at the core of the association's new climate change initiative.**

- **These recommendations include steps construction firms can take to reduce their carbon emissions.**
- **Among those steps are engaging with equipment manufacturers to improve the fuel efficiency without sacrificing the performance of key construction machines.**
- **We will help member firms reduce their fuel consumption by discouraging needless equipment idling.**
- **We will share information about industry innovations like solar powered job-site trailers and energy efficient job site lighting.**
- **Likewise, we will share resources with our members about jobsite water conservation and management.**
- **AGC also plans to create a group within the association to identify and recommend carbon reduction programs and strategies for the industry.**

- **Our goal is to make sure the construction industry is doing its part to operate efficiently and be even better stewards of the environment.**
- **We also want to make sure public officials and the public are aware of the environmental practices this industry already employs. Few people understand, for example, how much our industry uses recycled materials in paving and pouring with concrete.**
- **Or that contractors meticulously sift through every torn down building to make sure all possible components are recycled and reused.**
- **Even more important, we need to appreciate that the U.S. construction industry is responsible for between only one and two percent of total U.S. manmade greenhouse gas emissions.**
- **How we build is far less of the problem than what we build. And while the construction industry has traditionally had very little say about what our**

clients – private and public – want constructed, it is time for that to change.

- We have identified a series of steps that AGC will take to make sure our industry serves as the delivery vehicle for a more efficient, less carbon-intensive future. As Steve likes to say, you can't wish for a greener future, you have to build it.**
- Involving the construction industry in the conversation about what is built is the most effective way to improve the process and the product.**
- That is how we have been able to design and build structures that are more resilient to natural disasters like flooding and fires.**
- That is how we have been able to incorporate recycled and sustainable materials like timber and coal fly ash into the built environment.**

- **That is how we have been able to design and build zero energy buildings and pavement surfaces that generate energy.**
- **And that is how we will lessen the carbon footprint of the built environment.**
- **I am going to turn things back over to Steve to detail exactly how the association is going to make sure that what we build becomes as efficient as how we build it. Steve...**

STEVE SANDHERR

- **Thank you Les. Finding ways to make the construction industry more efficient will have, at best, a marginal impact on overall domestic greenhouse gas emissions. Whereas finding a way to ensure that what our members build is more efficient will have a significant impact on climate change.**

- **That is why our new initiative includes a series of measures designed to influence what gets built. These include:**
- **Advocating for a national strategy to invest in physical infrastructure that will make our communities more resilient.**
- **Increasing investments and funding opportunities for public and private infrastructure so we can build more efficient highways, transit systems, water plants and public facilities, for example.**
- **Pushing for new federal investments to modernize federal buildings and make them more energy efficient.**
- **Supporting government initiatives that encourage and support sustainability in our built environment. This includes expanding the Section 179D deduction for energy efficiency.**

- **We also need to expedite permitting for projects that will improve efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This includes for retrofitting existing buildings and upgrading public infrastructure.**
- **And we are calling for new tax incentives to encourage investments in more efficient, even potentially battery operated, construction and maintenance equipment.**
- **But just as the federal government can and must play a lead role in supporting and investing in an environmentally friendly built environment, we also need to make sure that federal measures don't undermine the industry's ability to build that greener future.**
- **That is why we also want to make sure that any new federal climate policies do not mandate construction labor and workforce policies that will exclude large segments of the construction workforce and industry**

from participating in efforts to make our economy more efficient.

- Addressing climate change by imposing policies that exclude most people from being a part of the solution is not the answer.**
- Our nation's built environment sustains our quality of life and our economic productivity. We cannot, and should not, stop building. However, there are reasonable steps everyone can take, including the construction industry, to be climate leaders.**
- Our new climate change initiative is designed to do just that – make the construction industry more efficient while pushing for reasonable measures that will encourage the construction of a more efficient built environment.**
- We know climate change is a challenge that must be addressed. And we appreciate that the industry best positioned to do that is the construction industry.**

- **That is why we will be working hard over the coming months and years to make sure the construction industry and our association play a lead role building a better, more efficient and less carbon-intensive future.**
- **Now Les and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have...**

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