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February 12, 2025

Hon. Arthur Corvese  
Chairperson  
House Committee on Labor  
HouseLabor@rilegislature.gov  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: **H 5366; An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations — Payment of Wages**

Dear Chair Corvese,

BuildRI is a domestic non-profit trade association comprised of four (4) contractor associations (the Labor Relations Division of the RI Chapter of the Associated General Contractors, the New England Mechanical Contractors' Ass'n, the RI Mason Contractors' Ass'n, and the RI and Southeast MA Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors' Ass'n), and seventeen (17) Local Trade Unions comprised of approximately 10,000 local tradesmen and women.

In years past, the Rhode Island General Assembly has passed legislation aimed at protecting workers from illicit practices. This legislation would allow for individuals employed by construction companies who have experienced wage theft, to recover the wages owed to them when their direct employer cannot (i.e. insolvent). This legislation would permit the employee to hold the prime contractor responsible for the payment of unpaid wages, particularly since the contractors ultimately benefited from this unpaid work.

The prime contractor on a job site is responsible to ensure the work is done safely, and to make sure all workers are appropriately hired and managed by their subcontractors. Because the prime contractor hires subcontractors to perform the work, they should be held responsible for the payment of wages, if the subcontractor chooses to leave without paying what their workers are rightfully owed. This legislation holds unscrupulous prime contractors and subcontractors accountable and establishes an avenue for employees to pursue civil action if necessary.

Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Anthony Cherry  
Assistant Executive Director

