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William Samuel
AFL-CIO

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Legislative Alert: Brown/Merkley Amendment to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP 21) (S. 1813)

Abstract

[Excerpt] On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I am writing to urge you to support an amendment offered by Senators Brown and Merkley to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act, or "Map 21" (S. 1813). The Brown/Merkley amendment would close loopholes in current law that allow federally assisted projects to avoid Buy America requirements to procure foreign iron, steel, and manufactured goods.

Keywords

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Comments

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815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

ARLENE HOLT BAKER
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

(202) 637-5057

March 8, 2012



Dear Senator:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I am writing to urge you to support an amendment offered by Senators Brown and Merkley to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, or "Map 21" (S. 1813). The Brown/Merkley amendment would close loopholes in current law that allow federally assisted projects to avoid Buy America requirements to procure foreign iron, steel, and manufactured goods.

First, the Brown/Merkley amendment would improve transparency by requiring a public notification period before waivers of existing Buy America provisions could be granted.

Second, the amendment would close the "segmentation" loophole, by which Buy America provisions can be circumvented by segmenting projects into numerous smaller contracts so that cheap foreign inputs can be utilized. The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure recently adopted, on a bipartisan basis, an amendment offered by Rep. Cravaack (R-MN) that would prohibit the segmentation of certain federally assisted transportation infrastructure projects to avoid Buy America requirements.

Finally, it should be noted that the Brown/Merkley amendment is drafted in a way that is consistent with U.S. international obligations.

Buy America is a longstanding commonsense program that supports domestic producers, manufacturers, and workers by granting preference to U.S.-produced goods for infrastructure projects that receive federal aid. It is a program that has always received strong bipartisan support. The AFL-CIO strongly urges you to support the Brown/Merkley amendment.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT