

**Testimony Before the
Pennsylvania House State Government Committee
January 24, 2018
Project Labor Agreements**

**TESTIMONY BY: Frank A. Sirianni
President
PA State Building and Construction Trades Council**

Thank you Chairman Metcalf and Chairman Bradford and the members of the Committee for allowing me to testify before you today on House Bill 1849.

My name is Frank Sirianni, and I am the President of the Pennsylvania State Building and Construction Trades Council which represents 98 local construction unions and 16 regional Councils.

Collectively, we represent over 130,000 construction workers throughout the Commonwealth in cooperation with over 2,900 signatory construction contractors in all phases of the construction industry. As a matter fact, all the power generated for this meeting wouldn't be possible without our members.

It is also my pleasure to inform you that we represent one-third of all the construction workers in the Commonwealth. It is also important that you know that we negotiate our contracts in the private sector in the free market. The reason it is important for you to know this, is that the wages and benefits our members, your constituents, earn each day are beneficial to your local economies in your area.

I am here today to state for the record that we **strongly oppose House Bill 1849**. With all due respect to the maker of the bill, I truly believe that there has been much misinformation circulated to many members on both sides of the aisle on the issues pertaining to Project Labor Agreements.

Some would say the Project Labor Agreements limit competition. This simply is not true.

Project Labor Agreements on public projects are open to all contractors that meet the qualifications required by the contracting body. By restricting public bodies from negotiating their own contracts "PLA's" would mean you oppose Public Private Partnerships.

Some opponents to Project Labor Agreements say PLA's increase the cost of the project. Again, nothing could be further from the truth. All construction contracts on public projects are awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, as part of the PA Procurement laws.

I've also heard some people and some organizations claim that Project Labor Agreements discriminate against nonunion workers. I have actually been on projects that were publicly funded and had a PLA with both union and non-union contractors. I have personally worked with non-union contractors and sub-contractors on publicly funded projects. As you may or may not know, Section 8A, 3B, 2, of the National Labor Relations Act prohibits employers and unions from discriminating against employees based on a membership or non-membership in labor organization.

Opposing Project Labor Agreements reduces the opportunity for local municipalities, townships, boroughs, school districts, and other public entities in general from using Project Labor Agreements as a Public Private Partnership.

Project Labor Agreements contain costs, guarantee local workers working on local tax payer funded projects, and also eliminates the possibility of undocumented workers working on local taxpayer funded projects.

Project Labor Agreements increase minority and women in business, and increased veteran participation, which inevitably spurs the local economy by keeping taxpayer dollars circulating in local areas and not going to out-of-state contractors.

It is a proven fact that Project Labor Agreements provide for better trained workers, and the job is done right the first time which is more cost-effective.

Project Labor Agreements provide a safer workplace, reduce lost time, and reduce insurance premiums.

Project Labor Agreements provide for criminal background checks and create a drug-free environment through drug testing.

Project Labor Agreements guarantee a qualified local workforce, a reliable supply of talented and skilled local workers for the duration of the project.