

Dear Senator _____,

I am writing today to ask for your support or to co-sponsor the “Merkley Amendment” that is in circulation thru the Senate. Senator Merkley has sponsored an amendment which would be applied to the construction industry and would allow the employer exemption to apply to 5 employees or \$250,000 or less, instead of the Senate’s current number of 50.

We need a more sensible small employer exemption for a key industry that is made up of almost all small employers. The current Senate proposal exempts all companies that employ less than 50. In construction, 90% of firms employ fewer than 20 workers, 80% employ less than 10 and 50% less than 5.

This means the small employer exemption will give a Free Pass to almost the entire construction industry, one of the largest industries in our economy.

Such an impact undermines health care reform and is highly unfair to the Building Trades, affiliated contractors and our employees who have been doing the right thing by providing health care for years. Do we really want health care reform that punishes companies and unions who do the right thing? Do we really need health care reform that goes out of its way to reward contractors who don’t? This must be fixed.

We need the support for a construction industry amendment that exempts only the true small employers in this industry- those that have less than six employees and a payroll of less than \$250,000.00.

Regards,