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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Chuck Parker, President | John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer | Justin Williams, Director

# WVSBT Leaders Meet US Senators in Washington

Last month, West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades leaders met with the state's representatives in the United States Senate on Capitol Hill in Washington DC.

The visit was part of the annual North American Building Trades Union (NABTU) Conference held in the nation's capital city.

The meetings with United States Senators Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito were focused around emerging infrastructure projects brought about by federal legislation passed throughout the last few years.

"There are a number of issues that directly affect the Trades on the federal level, so it's important for us to meet with our representatives on the federal level," said Justin Williams, Director of ACT WV.

"The Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will bring more than \$6 billion in federal funds, and billions more in tax credits for developers, over the next decade," said Williams.

During the meetings, while topics of discussion were primarily related to energy infrastructure advance-

ment, the delegation also discussed how the trades can work with government leaders and agencies to help

take advantage of the multi-billion-dollar opportunity created by the  
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West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades leaders meet with United States Senator Joe Manchin at his office in Washington, D.C. about federal infrastructure money coming into West Virginia for public construction projects.

# Multiple Hydrogen Energy Hub Projects Announced Throughout West Virginia

Last month, developers announced three major hydrogen energy projects in different locations across the state of West Virginia. The announcements include an ammonia production facility planned for Mingo County and two electrolysis-based hydrogen production facilities in Wood County and Kanawha

County.

The three projects come about in the wake of \$8 billion in federal money being made available, as a part of the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, for the development of "Hydrogen Hubs" across the country.

All the announcements support,

and are a part of, the Appalachian Regional Clean Hydrogen Hub (ARCH 2), a group of industry, state, and local government partners committed to developing a Hydrogen Hub network in the northern Appalachian region.

In early April, Adams Fork Energy LLC, CNX Resources Corpora-

tion, and other partners announced the Adams Fork Energy clean ammonia project. The planned project will be built on the site of a reclaimed coal mine near Gilbert Creek in Mingo County, WV.

According to a communications representative from the companies,  
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# Annual Tax Fraud Days of Action Held by Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters

On April 12-18, the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC) held their annual Tax Fraud Days of Action to educate the public and protest construction employer tax fraud, wage theft, and abuse of workers in the United States and Canada.

According to a press release circulated by the Carpenters International, “state and federal tax losses reach at least \$8.4 billion a year due to schemes by perpetrators of fraud and...many employers deliberately misclassify workers as independent contractors or pay them off the books

to avoid paying employment taxes.”

Throughout the week, Carpenters locals across the country held rallies, lobby days at their legislatures, and other public events to inform officials and the public of the growing issues related to tax fraud and wage theft.

“The problem of wage theft and tax fraud is getting worse in our industry, and many workers who are affected by it don’t even know it’s happening,” said Luke Begovich, Senior Council Representative for the EASRCC.

“We want to make sure workers are aware of their rights on the job-

site and put a spotlight on the bad actors who take advantage of workers for their own personal gain.”

However, there are solutions to the issue. According to their website, recommendations include: better enforcement of IRS tax laws already on the books; strengthening and expanding existing laws to ensure contractors who cheat are held accountable for their actions; comprehensive

immigration reform to bring construction workers out of the shadows; and requiring state and federal agencies, as well as banks and private sector entities, work together to address tax fraud and wage theft.

To learn more about this year’s events, and data surrounding tax fraud and wage theft in the United States and Canada, log on to [stoptaxfraud.net](http://stoptaxfraud.net) for additional information. ■

## WVSBT Leaders

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IRA and the BIL.

In addition to the meetings on Capitol Hill, West Virginia State Building Trades leaders attended the 2023 NABTU Conference to engage and network with Building Trades officials from across the country.

The conference featured a number of speakers from both industry and government, with a keynote address from President Joe Biden on the same day he announced his 2024 reelection campaign.

The conference also included various workshops to provide more

information on legislative and industrial events.

The topics from the workshops included: federal legislation, multi-employer pensions and healthcare, apprenticeship readiness programs, Helmets to Hardhats, industry research and data, tools to grow the labor movement, US DOL Wage and Hour division priorities, and many others.

For updates on building trades issues on the federal level, log on to [www.NABTU.org](http://www.NABTU.org) to get more information. ■

## Hydrogen Hub

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the facility is expected to be online in late 2026 or early 2027, with construction of the project slated to begin in 2024.

The companies estimate a total of 2,000 construction jobs at the peak of the project.

Later, in mid-April, the Chemours Company and TC Energy announced the execution of an MOU for the potential development of two electrolysis-based hydrogen production facilities near Chemours’ Washington Works site, in Wood County, and their Belle manufacturing facility in Kanawha County, WV.

According to a press release, the agreement outlines Chemours’ and TC Energy’s interest in developing, constructing, and operating the two

facilities and any associated infrastructure.

Under the terms of the MOU, a non-binding offtake agreement for hydrogen produced would take effect, to support the needs of the Chemours facilities. In addition, any excess hydrogen produced would be stored and available for purchase by third parties.

“There is a great deal of excitement around these potential projects, which could lead to lots of good construction jobs for Building Trades members,” said Justin Williams, Director of the WV Affiliated Construction Trades. “ACT will continue working together with the ARCH 2 group in an effort to ensure the jobs become reality.” ■

## PSC Orders Pleasants Power to Remain Open



Bruce Forshee, Business Manager for Boilermakers 667, testifies during a public hearing regarding a proposal by Monongahela Power and Potomac Edison to keep Pleasants Power plant open for a 12-month period, while the two FirstEnergy subsidiaries consider purchasing the plant from Texas-based ETEM.

On April 24, the PSC issued an order authorizing Mon Power and Potomac Edison to continue negotiations with ETEM, with the possibility of a purchase from ETEM to continue generating electricity again, effectively keeping the plant open for another year.

While the plant was originally scheduled to shut down this month, the proposal would keep the 154 plant employees working until May 2024. During this time, Mon Power and Potomac Edison will lease the plant from ETEM to keep it functional.

“Just as the U.S. needs time to make energy transitions, Pleasants County and the surrounding areas also need time to transition from these job and tax base losses,” said Forshee. “I am in support of the proposed plan.”

## Recruitment Initiative

# Trades Begin Production of Campaign to Develop Construction Industry Workforce

Earlier this year, West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades leaders unveiled a plan to rebrand the organization and employ new strategies to increase numbers in craft apprenticeship programs.

As a part of the plan, the trades are increasing outreach efforts in a number of ways, including public relations and education initiatives, focused digital marketing advertisements, and direct community engagement events.

John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer for the West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council,

**“With billions of dollars coming into our state for public construction projects, we have to make sure we are prepared to staff the jobs with skilled workers,”**

**John Epperly**

*Secretary-Treasurer*

*West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council*

says this new campaign is a direct result of new opportunities brought

about by pieces of federal legislation such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Policy experts say these bills will bring more than \$6 billion dollars in direct funding, and billions more in tax incentives, to West Virginia for infrastructure development over the next decade.

“With billions of dollars coming into our state for public construction projects, we

have to make sure we are prepared to staff the jobs with skilled workers,” said Epperly. “We have the most

highly trained craftworkers in the industry, and it’s time for us to grow our numbers to ensure we take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

Epperly says WVSBT leaders have identified three target demographics the trades must focus on to recruit new applicants for craft apprenticeship programs.

The first of these demographics are individuals who want to enter the workforce for the first time, such as recent high school graduates.

The second group are those who are already a part of the state’s workforce, in another industry, who may

wish to retrain for a new career in construction.

The third group are those who wish to reenter the workforce after a prolonged period of unemployment for various reasons.

“It’s our goal to work with individuals and groups in all of these areas to maximize our workforce development efforts,” said Epperly.

“I want to thank our contractors and members who are working so diligently to help us reach out to the public and build our programs. By working together, we’re building a bright future for the industry and our state.” ■



John Epperly (left), Secretary-Treasurer for the West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades, speaks with electrical foreman Dave Henson (center) on a jobsite in Kanawha County, as a videographer records drone footage of the project for a promotional video.

## Workers Memorial Day Ceremony at Capitol



AFL-CIO President Josh Sword speaks to attendees at the 35th annual Workers Memorial Day Observance Ceremony at the WV Capitol.

Workers Memorial Day is a day set aside nationwide by unions to remember workers who died on the job. During the ceremony, a bell is rung for every worker who lost their life as a result of workplace activities throughout the year.

B.B. Smith, retired member of Boilermakers 667, rang the bell while Paul Breedlove, Business Manager for UA 625, read the names of those who passed. In 2022, 18 West Virginia workers lost their lives on the job.

“Labor has fought hard to create protections for workers on the job-site,” said Sword. “Still, too many workers are injured or killed due to dangerous working conditions.”

“The labor movement across the world will not stop fighting for safer workplaces. Many say—and I agree—this is our most important job as unions.”

# Iron Workers Local #787 is Now Taking Applications for Apprenticeship Program

The Iron Workers Local 787 Joint Apprenticeship Committee will be accepting applications for the Iron Workers Apprenticeship Program during regular business hours, Monday thru Friday (except holidays), from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

The apprenticeship program usually takes three years to complete. Apprentices earn while they learn with on-the-job training and attend unpaid classroom sessions.

Upon completion an apprentice will have learned all aspects of the trade including structural steel placement, welding, reinforcing rods, ornamental and more.

You must fill the application out in person at the Iron Workers 787, 303 Erickson Blvd., Parkersburg, WV.

Bring copies of related documents

described below.

The following are the minimum requirements. Lack of any one of these will automatically disqualify the applicant.

- Must be at least 18 years old (Proof required).
- Must be capable of doing work of the Iron Worker trade.
- Must be a High School Graduate or have equivalent certificate (GED/TASC).
- Must have a valid Driver's License.
- Must score a passing grade on the TABE test given by Workforce.
- Must live in the jurisdictional area of Iron Workers Local 787 for at least one (1) year before applying.

If selected for the Apprenticeship

Program the candidate must submit to and pass the Substance Abuse Test offered by the Parkersburg-Marietta Contractors and Trades Educational and Development Fund. The Iron Workers Local 787 JAC will pay the

gan, Mason, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Monroe, Nicholas, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Putnam, Raleigh, Ritchie, Roane, Summers, Upshur, Webster, Wirt, Wood, and Wyoming Counties, and the southern portion

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## Charleston BT at KCS Exceptional Games



Ray Flanagan (right), Business Manager for Roofers Local 185 assists students with a bean bag toss during the Kanawha County Schools Exceptional Spring Games at Laidley Field in Charleston, West Virginia.

The event brought more than 400 students with special needs that competed in various events throughout the day.

Roofers Local 185 and Plumbers and Pipefitters 625 of Charleston, West Virginia donated the prizes for the bean bag toss, hosted by the Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council.

"The smiles we witnessed were amazing, and I certainly appreciate everyone's support," said Fred Chandler, Business Manager for the Charleston Building Trades.

cost of the test.

The jurisdictional area covered by Local 787 is as follows:

OHIO: Athens, Meigs, Morgan, Noble, and Washington Counties.

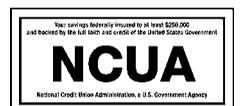
WEST VIRGINIA: Boone, Braxton, Calhoun, Clay, Doddridge, Fayette, Gilmer, Greenbrier, Jackson, Kanawha, Lewis, Lincoln, Lo-

of Randolph County.

No Applicant will be rejected because of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. Iron Workers Local 787 will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunities in apprenticeship.

For more information go to <https://ironworkers787.org/> ■

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