

Alderman Bauman and members of the Common Council's Public Works Committee,

Construction Business Group is a joint labor-management organization representing the mutual interests of Wisconsin-based construction contractors and their union employees. Specifically, we focus on issues related to public works projects – both state and local. Our goal is to strengthen the integrity of the construction industry in part through the support of beneficial public construction standards, policies, and practices. As such, we are pleased to see that the City of Milwaukee, and the Public Works Committee in particular, appears to be taking an *active* interest in the manner in which contracts for public works are fulfilled by private contractors.

Although we strongly opposed the proposal to ban Zenith Tech from City of Milwaukee work for five years, we agree that contractors in general need to be held to a higher standard than they are currently being held to. Our past experience with the Department of Public Works has not always been positive, but we believe that there are Department employees who are as concerned as we are strengthening contract standards and the enforcement of those standards. As such, we look forward to an ongoing discussion of these issues with the Department.

We also sympathize with Council members and their constituents who often must deal with the inconveniences that major public construction projects can cause. It is our contention that ongoing education of the public is an essential component of countering many of the negative perceptions of the construction process in our community.

We strongly urge the Committee, the Council, and DPW to continue working with contractors, labor organizations, and community groups to address some of the broader issues that this particular instance helped open for public debate. Construction Business Group would like to see a working group of all interested parties formed to move the discussion forward. Please let me know how we can assist in the development of such a group.

Sincerely,

Jerry Knapp

Standards and Training Manager, Construction Business Group - Milwaukee

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