



GLA Semi-Annual Report



Government & Labor Affairs Council works for you!

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Introduction

The Associated Builders and Contractors' objective is to provide members with an organization to address industry-wide issues. Founded on the merit shop philosophy, ABC serves as the construction industry's voice for the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the federal, state and local governments.

ABC's Mission: The advancement of the merit shop construction philosophy, which encourages open competition and a free-enterprise approach that awards contracts based on merit, regardless of labor affiliation.

The Western Washington Chapter Government and Labor Affairs Council (GLA) works to support candidates for state and local offices that believe in ABC's mission. Through strategic partnerships, grassroots advocacy and direct lobbying, GLA takes measurable steps to building a more favorable business climate for merit shop contractors.

For more information on GLA and how you can get involved, please contact [Nathan Fitzgerald](#).

Washington State Election Results

As of today, November 30th, the election results for Washington State have been certified by the Secretary of State. With the certification of the results comes little change in the way of the partisan makeup of the State Legislature. Our state bucked the national trend by maintaining the status quo. To the surprise of no one, Governor Jay Inslee was re-elected. Secretary of State Kim Wyman, an honored guest at our chapter's Summer Social event, ran a strong campaign and was re-elected as Washington's chief voting officer. Even after losing a seat, the Republican-led Majority Coalition Caucus will maintain the majority in the Senate 25-24, including one Democrat caucusing with the Republicans. In the House of Representatives, the Democrats and Republicans both picked up and lost seats, in effect, maintaining the Democratic majority 50-48. The partisan divide makes Washington State one of eight states with split control of the Legislature (31 states have full Republican control, 11 states have full Democratic control).

As it relates to the GLA Council efforts at the state level, we were able to protect almost all of our targeted candidates. Our PAC supported pro-business candidates in critical races in several swing districts that could have altered the balance of power in the Legislature.



Rep. Lynda Wilson (R)

In the Vancouver area, **Rep. Lynda Wilson (R)** won her race for the open Senate seat against experienced candidate, Tim Probst (D). In Tacoma, **Senator Steve O'Ban (R)** defeated a union backed candidate in one of several races to raise over a million dollars in contributions. Almost all of the candidates our chapter supported for House of Representative positions won with comfortable margins. Similar to what was seen on the national level, the traditionally Democratic district along the southwest coast of Washington elected a Republican legislator due to working-class discontent. We supported candidates **Sen. Barbara Bailey (R-Oak Harbor)** and **Phil Fortunato (R-Auburn)** and also won key races in their respective districts.

Some exceptions to our legislative wins: **Teri Hickel (R)** and **Linda Kochmar (R)**, both incumbents in the Federal Way area, were defeated by a strong push by Democratic interests in a swing district. Perhaps the most notable loss was that of Senator **Steve Litzow (R-Mercer Island)** who was defeated by Democratic business woman Lisa Wellman. As Chair of the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee, Senator Litzow came under fire by education advocates and teachers' unions regarding the State's obligation to fully fund basic education. Data shows that legislative districts with high levels of education and personal income strongly favored Democratic candidates. Sen. Litzow's Mercer Island district matches this trend. The race between Litzow and Wellman saw well over a million dollars raised due to its strategic importance in controlling the Senate. **Rep. Chad Magendanz (R-Issaquah)** ran a valiant campaign against incumbent Senator Mark Mullet (D) only to come up short in the final tally. Rep. Magendanz has been a strong supporter of merit-shop contractors and will be missed in the Legislature.

GLA Events and Activities

Day in Olympia: Every year during the legislative session, members from our chapter and Inland Pacific Chapter gather in Olympia to lobby state legislators on construction industry issues. Along with several one-on-one meetings with key legislators, our Day in Olympia event in 2016 included meeting with **Senate Majority Leader, Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville)** in his



historic Legislative Building office. Also in attendance were House Minority Leader, **Rep. Dan Kristiansen (R-Snohomish)** and House Minority Floor Leader, **Rep. JT Wilcox (R-McKenna)**. As business owners, all three legislators were very interested in hearing from our members. With future Day in Olympia events, we will continue to build our relationship with supportive legislators. We encourage you to join us!

Summer Social: The GLA Council's Summer Social hosted by council Chair, **John Noble**, was a hit this year. This event brings members and guests together to hear from elected officials in a casual setting that encourages candid dialogue while enjoying beautiful scenery. The funds raised during the event go to ABC's State PAC. This year, we invited **Secretary of State Kim Wyman (R)** and Representative from the Auburn area, **Drew Stokesbary (R)**. Both elected officials offered spot-on remarks regarding the state of the construction industry, as well as challenges, and opportunities for our members' interests. In support of her re-election campaign, ABC members were able to personally deliver a campaign contribution to Secretary Wyman.



Crab Feed & Silent Auction: What better way to support ABC's PAC efforts than to join members in feasting on crab legs? This year's Crab Feed was a smorgasbord of delicious food and drink while socializing with members who understand the importance of a politically-active, well-funded GLA Council. Funds raised through registration and our silent auction went toward building a strong PAC for upcoming legislative races.

ABC National

ABC National had a very successful election cycle. Pro-business candidates in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives maintained their majority. The prospect of real reform to existing federal contracting requirements and a lopsided, pro-union National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) are within reach. In total, over 90% of candidates backed by ABC PAC were re-elected, which was a historically high water mark.

The Free Enterprise Alliance (FEA), ABC National's PAC devoted to pro merit shop candidates, raised over \$1.8 million in funds. The funds were spent on key initiatives throughout the states. One example is the success in Alabama's Initiative 8 which placed the Right to Work law into the State Constitution and made it the 26th RTW state.

With the election of Donald Trump, many of the recent executive orders aimed at limiting the ability of non-union contractors from competing on federal government contracts may be repealed. In sum, the potential for substantive reform in government contracting will benefit our members. We have hope that the reforms will put pressure on states to adopt the Government Neutrality in Contracting Act, allowing fair competition for merit shop contractors, prevent the threatened expansion of Project Labor Agreements, and reform the radicalized NLRB.

There is more work to be done, but ABC National will continue to plow ahead.

Conclusion

The GLA Council works hard to support merit shop candidates, create opportunities for members to engage with elected officials, and raise ABC's profile as the voice of merit shop construction industry issues in Washington State. Overall, we had a successful year and look forward to a challenging 2017 legislative session. We can use your help! As our Chair, John Noble likes to say, "get into politics or get out of business!"

We have several ways for you to get involved:

- Attend a GLA event
- Download the [ABC Action App](#)
- Join the GLA Council
- Contact [Nathan Fitzgerald](#) today in order to contribute to our PAC or get involved!

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