

Alaska And New York Dead Last On Construction Scorecard

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The Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) launched a website Wednesday aimed at grading states based on how their policies impact the local construction industry.

The Merit Shop Scorecard website ranks states based on policies they enact and how their construction industry is faring overall. According to the scorecard, the best state for construction is Arizona. It is followed by Louisiana, Virginia, North Dakota and North Carolina. The states with the worst rankings are Alaska, New York and New Jersey. Ben Brubeck, director of labor and federal procurement, hopes the scorecard will be a useful tool for the industry and lawmakers.

“It’s really the only comparative analysis I know of for the construction industry,” Brubeck tells The Daily Caller News Foundation. “It can be used by construction workers and lawmakers.”

The scorecard looked at issues like project labor agreements, prevailing wage laws and right-to-work among other critical policies left up to the states. It also bases its ranking on construction job growth, workforce training, and public-private partnerships.

“We are definitely going to use this when we go to politicians and lawmakers in D.C.,” Brubeck continues. “Its not just a scorecard, on each page there is great research.”

ABC is a national trade association representing nearly 21,000 chapter members. It advocates for a free market system. The aim of the website is to help inform construction workers and companies about each states as well as help politicians enact policies that have a positive impact on the industry.

Right-to-work is a significant issue for many different industries beyond just construction. The policy, which has been enacted in 25 states, outlaws mandatory union dues or fees as a condition of employment. Prevailing wage laws and Project Labor Agreements are more focused on construction and closely related industries.

Project labor agreements require all contractors to unionize in order to work on government-funded construction projects. According to a report by the libertarian Cato Institute, project labor agreements alone can add 12 to 18 percent to the cost of public projects. In government contracting, a prevailing wage is the hourly wage, benefits and overtime that must be paid to the majority of workers within a particular area.

