

ABC: Georgia Is the No. 1 State for Construction

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ment and advocate for fair and open competition on taxpayer-funded construction projects.

“Commonsense conditions, policies and educational systems are vital in creating quality infrastructure built safely, efficiently and effectively for taxpayers,” said **Ben Brubeck**, ABC’s vice president of regulatory, labor and state affairs. “More than 88% of the US construction industry has already made the choice not to join a union, and the construction industry is facing a skilled labor shortage of more than half a million people. Anti-competitive policies only impede the vast majority of merit shop contractors from building and working in their own communities and further exacerbate the industry’s labor shortage. Taxpayers are best served by policy and educational priorities that create a level playing field for all contractors to compete.”

Top Rankings

Georgia’s construction industry continues to prosper, and it earned the top spot due to the state’s continued dedication to workforce development. This year, 99% of career and technical education students in the state earned a credential and/or continued to a career. Along with inclusive policies that welcome all of the construction industry to compete to build projects in their communities, Georgia’s construction employment continues to grow. Georgia claimed third in the 2022 rankings.

Florida followed Georgia in second in 2023. Since the inception of the rankings, Florida has placed in

the top 10 and continues to be a model state for the merit shop, excelling in the preservation of fair and open competition and creating a policy environment for the entire industry to succeed, especially in fostering a pipeline of highly skilled workers.

Among the top five, Arkansas ranked third, Wisconsin ranked fourth and Indiana ranked fifth. Rounding out the top 10 states are Iowa, Kentucky, Alabama, Oklahoma and Mississippi, in order by rank.

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Indiana, Iowa and Wisconsin have returned to the top 10 rankings this year. Indiana and Wisconsin have strong workforce development systems, seeing 99% and 92% respectively of the states’ career and technical education students earning a credential and/or continuing to a career. All three states have innovative and proactive approaches to upskilling, leading to a sustained, positive job growth rate in construction.

Notably, Wyoming climbed 10 spots to 20th. The state’s passage of the Fair and Open Competition Act

in 2023 now protects local workers against government-mandated project labor agreements on state and local projects, as the Biden administration and union advocates press the use of PLAs on federally assisted projects. In Wyoming, PLAs would shut out 96% of the construction industry from bidding and working on public projects.

Bottom Rankings

Michigan continues to fall in the rankings, dropping from 23rd in 2022 to 31st in 2023. The state’s legislature unfortunately repealed right to work this year, which will take effect in 2024, stripping the right from workers to decide whether or not to join a union as a condition of their employment. Also, local lawmakers codified a prevailing wage executive order into law in 2023, taking effect in 2024. Repeal of the ABC-supported Fair and Open Competition Act is also in sights of the legislature in 2024. This is a trend for the state, as Michigan fell nine spots in 2022.

The bottom five states, in ranking order, included Hawaii, Rhode Island, New York, the District of Columbia and Washington, each receiving poor ratings in creating conditions and policies for merit shop contractors to thrive.

The 2023 Building America: The Merit Shop Scorecard rates state laws, programs, policies and statistics in seven categories: project labor agreements, prevailing wage laws, right-to-work laws, public-private partnerships, workforce development, career and technical education and job growth rate. **C**

Sloan Earns Independent WAVE Verification

FRANKLIN PARK, IL — Sloan, the world’s leading manufacturer of commercial plumbing systems, has earned verification to The Water Council’s WAVE program.

Independently awarded by SCS Global Services—an international leader in third-party sustainability verification—WAVE program verification indicates that Sloan has assessed water-related risks across the enterprise, identified the highest water-related impacts using credible water-related data, and implemented best practices in improving water stewardship performance.

In 2022, Sloan was among the first companies to sign on to The Water Council’s WAVE program, an initiative designed to help companies improve, report, and verify their water stewardship progress. **Kirk Allen**, Sloan’s Co-President and CEO, is a longtime member of The Water Council’s Board of Directors.

“Protecting our planet’s most precious resource is a fundamental responsibility of our business, and we



take this obligation very seriously,” said **Paul Sambanis**, Sloan’s Vice President of Sustainability. “Sloan is proud to achieve certification for The Water Council’s WAVE program. It is an exciting opportunity to lead by example.”

Sloan’s WAVE verification certificate from SCS Global Services required the completion of a six-step process, which included:

1. Promoting Sloan’s membership in The Water Council.
2. Performing an enterprise-wide review of current practices.
3. Performing a watershed risk assessment of key sites.
4. Prioritizing sites where water-related risks are highest.
5. Securing senior-level approval of an enterprise-wide statement on water stewardship.
6. Communicating an enterprise-wide action plan, resulting goals, and timeline for implementing water stewardship projects. **C**

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