



**INTERNATIONAL  
BROTHERHOOD  
OF ELECTRICAL  
WORKERS®**

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LONNIE R. STEPHENSON  
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April 6, 2020

**VIA EMAIL**

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam  
Office of the Governor  
Patrick Henry Building  
1111 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Northam:

On behalf of the over 10,000 active members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) who live in the Commonwealth of Virginia, I urge you to sign into law HB 833, SB 182 and HB 123, three pro-worker, pro-middle class bills recently passed by the General Assembly that would help ensure Virginia has the highly-skilled, experienced and locally-based construction workers needed to build the world-class infrastructure that Virginians deserve.

These three bills, regarding prevailing wages, project labor agreements (PLAs) and wage theft, are fundamental protections that construction workers have been waiting for decades to be adopted in Virginia and are found in states around the country, including Maryland and the District of Columbia. The unfortunate reality is that without these protections, too many skilled electricians and other construction workers cannot afford to live in many of the communities they help build, particularly in Northern Virginia, which has one of the highest costs of living in the United States.

The IBEW is concerned that certain business interest, particularly unscrupulous, anti-union contractors, are using the COVID-19 pandemic as a specious excuse to lobby against prevailing wage protections and project labor agreements. In reality, these protections are even more necessary during the current pandemic, which requires thousands of IBEW Virginia members to serve as frontline workers who are currently operating and maintaining electrical and gas service and installing critical electrical work on infrastructure projects throughout the Commonwealth. These hardworking men and women deserve basic protections that will ensure they receive a fair wage, have access to the necessary worksite health and safety equipment, and can go to court if an employer denies owed compensation.

I hope you will stand with the working men and women who are serving Virginia during this difficult time and sign HB 833, SB 182 and HB 123 into law as soon as readily possible.

Sincerely yours,

  
Lonnie R. Stephenson  
International President

LRS:nl

