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Congressional Black Caucus Congress of the United States

2244 Rayburn Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-3436

December 13, 1995

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Mr. Mark Golden
 ABC - 20/20
 147 Columbus Avenue
 New York, NY 10023

Dear Mr. Golden:

It has come to our attention that ABC's news magazine, "20/20", will air a segment on the Davis-Bacon Act. As we understand it, the storyline will focus on allegations that the Federal Davis-Bacon Act is a Depression-era law that was used in the 1930s to shuttle jobs to union members, while keeping them out of the hands of low-wage blacks and others; and that it is still being employed exclusively for that purpose.

Prior to the enactment of Davis-Bacon in 1931, there were many shocking examples of abusive labor practices and wholesale exploitation of female and minority workers on construction sites. For the last 60 years, the Davis-Bacon Act has protected the wages of all construction workers, including minorities and women, who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

The reality is that women and people of color are entering the construction industry in greater numbers than in the past. Today, they are threatened with constant and systematic assaults on many of the social advancements made over the last several years.

We believe that Davis-Bacon has been instrumental in bridging the wage gap for historically disadvantaged sectors of our society. In the face of decaying social and economic opportunities, this measure provides women and minorities with an important tool to achieving greater parity with their mainstream counterparts.

As members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we have stood at the forefront of promoting rights for minority workers. The Davis-Bacon Act has made a valuable contribution to instituting protective equity and stability to American workers everywhere. We believe this important labor protection should be continued and strengthened, not eliminated.

Sincerely,

Donald Payne

Wm M. Clayton

Rhyatt

Don Johnson

James B. ...

Barbara ...

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Alan ...

John Lewis

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Carrie P. Meek

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