



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

## Everyone's hurting

March 26, 2009

THE ENTIRE construction industry is hurting in Massachusetts, not only union shops. Your article may have given the wrong impression because it mostly quoted union officials ("[Construction jobs in Mass. at 10-year low](#)," March 16, Page A1). In fact, 80 percent of the construction workforce in Massachusetts was open shop, or nonunion, according to 2008 federal data.

Unfortunately, our elected leaders often ignore open-shop workers and focus on the much smaller, politically connected unions. For example, President Obama recently issued an executive order allowing project labor agreements on federally funded projects over \$25 million, a policy that locks out open-shop contractors and their employees and allows the use of only union labor. And Governor Patrick, in a recent radio interview, endorsed the use of PLAs, as did a report from his task force on labor. While the construction industry is in a recession, the stances of our elected officials doling out billions in federal stimulus funds to special interests are alarming and hurtful. It also shortchanges taxpayers because reduced competition increases project costs.

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