



AGC
THE CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION

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**SHUTTING DOWN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IS AN UNNECESSARY STEP, WILL
HARM ECONOMY & UNDERMINE RECOVERY EFFORTS, CONSTRUCTION OFFICIALS
SAY**

Construction Firms Are Already Taking Steps to Protect Employees, Most of Whom Already Wear Protective Equipment, While Halting Work Will Undermine Efforts to Add Hospital Capacity

The chief executive officer of the Associated General Contractors of America, Stephen E. Sandherr, issued the following statement in reaction to steps being taken to put in place arbitrary halts to construction activity in certain parts of the country:

“Halting construction activity will do more harm than good for construction workers, community residents and the economy. Construction firms are already acting to ensure the safety and health of their employees in the face of the coronavirus outbreak. These new measures, which include increased hygiene and halting group gatherings of staff, are in addition to the fact construction workers already wear protective equipment, including gloves that will help protect them and their co-workers.

“Given the precautions already in place, halting construction will do little to protect the health and safety of construction workers. But it will go a long way in undermining economic vitality by depriving millions of workers of the wages they will need over the coming days. At the same time, these measures have the potential to bankrupt many construction firms who have contractual obligations to stay on schedule or risk incurring significant financial penalties.

“In addition, halting construction projects will undermine ongoing, and future, recovery efforts in regions hit by natural disasters, and will also undermine any future efforts to expand hospital capacity.

“We understand the need for social distancing to help slow the spread of coronavirus. But needlessly shutting down projects where workers are already protected will not help. Instead it will threaten the livelihood of millions of craft professionals, force many small and family-owned businesses to shut down, and undermine the nation’s ability to respond to natural disasters, including the coronavirus.

“In the unfortunate event construction is halted, we urge construction owners to consider continuing their scheduled payments to contractors as a down payment for work to be completed on the project. These payments will help mitigate some of the potential economic impacts of construction shutdowns.”

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