

Sheet Metal Journal

June 2026 « smacna-oregon.org



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STRENGTHENING OUR INDUSTRY THROUGH CONNECTION AND LEARNING

As we approach the halfway point of 2026, I want to take a moment to reflect on the spirit of collaboration that drives the success of SMACNA Oregon & Southwest Washington. When our members come together to share knowledge, build relationships, and support one another, our entire industry is elevated.

Over the past several months, our chapter has focused heavily on creating environments where you can make new connections, dive into relevant industry topics, and walk away with practical benefits for your businesses. From technical training to casual outdoor networking, our recent calendar highlights the incredible value of active participation.

Reflecting on Recent Successes

We recently gathered for a technical joint session with our partners at ASHRAE Oregon for The Process of Commissioning Conversation. This event brought together a group of design professionals, architects, building owners, and commissioning experts to tackle recurring project roadblocks. SMACNA member firms presented real-world scenarios demonstrating how early partnerships and proactive communication significantly reduce headaches during building commissioning. By addressing common drafting and installation issues before they reach the field, our members showed the broader design community exactly how mechanical and sheet metal contractors deliver tangible value early in the lifecycle of a project.

We also recently hosted an intensive, hands-on workshop, Unlock the Power of AI: Master the Art of Prompting, at the Sheet Metal Institute. Guided by industry expert Hugh Seaton, attendees explored how artificial intelligence is actively shifting how contracting businesses operate. From learning prompting structures for high-quality results to building custom workflows for everyday management tasks, our members walked away with practical strategies to turn AI into an effective workplace tool.

Typical events like our Open Board Meeting held in June provide an excellent opportunity to find out exactly what is happening behind the scenes in our industry, chat with your peers, and enjoy refreshments and appetizers.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the summer and fall, we are keeping the momentum going with a mix of local networking and educational programs designed to support every level of your organization.

I am looking forward to the SMACNA Invitational Golf Tournament at Langdon Farms Golf Club. Sponsored by DeWalt, this sold-out event will bring together over 140 golfers for a day



By Chris Schneider, Executive Director
SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington

of camaraderie and friendly competition on the green. We're hoping for good weather so peers, competitors, and affiliates can catch up, share stories, and strengthen the professional bonds that keep our industry resilient. Events like this remind us that some of our most productive business conversations happen outside the office.

There are more exciting social events coming. I encourage you to join our Networking Committee on July 24 for a Clackamas River White Water Rafting Adventure. Last year's event sold out, and attendees had a great time out on the water.

If you missed this year's golf tournament or just want to get back on the course, the chapter will be offering two free foursomes to chapter members in support of the annual B.U.L.L. Session Golf Tournament on Monday, September 28, at Langdon Farms Golf Club. It is a fantastic way to enjoy a premier course while supporting an incredibly worthy cause.

Project Managers Institute will be an excellent opportunity for local project managers looking to build upon existing field and office skills, focusing on project planning, financial management, change orders, and leading integrated teams. SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington will cover the registration fees for a limited number of local project managers (ideal for those with two to five years of experience).

The Power of Being Involved

Every single one of these events is planned with a specific purpose: to give you and your team the tools, connections, and insights needed to thrive. Whether you are sending a rising project manager to Denver, bringing your leadership team to the river, or joining me for a glass of wine at Amaterra, your involvement is what makes our association vibrant.

Thank you for your continued dedication to excellence, safety, and collaboration. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming gatherings. ■

The SMACNA Oregon & SW WA Networking Committee Invite you on a Clackamas River Rafting Adventure

On Friday, July 24 at beginning at 2:00 pm SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington Members are invited to raft the Clackamas River guided by eNRG Kayaking. This event is absolutely free and space is limited (no-shows will be charged). Duration is about two hours, and no experience is necessary. Target audience is current leaders and up and coming members of your company for an adventurous day on the upper Clackamas river. A fun Friday afternoon and still be home in time for dinner. Register now by contacting JoLonna. ■

2026 Oregon Bonding & Capital Construction Overview

During the 2026 Short Session, the Legislature approved a package of bonding and capital construction measures primarily through SB 1585, SB 5701, SB 5702, and SB 5703.

These bills authorize and modify the issuance of state general obligation bonds, lottery revenue bonds, and other financing mechanisms used to support capital construction and infrastructure investments across Oregon.

The purpose of distributing this report is to make you aware of State investment in local capital projects some of which may present opportunities for our industry. Based on past years' results we know that this report can be an invaluable tool for contractors to get a leg up as they assess upcoming bidding opportunities and workforce needs around the state.

Learn more and view the following document, and reach out if you have any questions: mcusercontent.com/51341853c4ec552ed5a3be428/files/8bd8110e-16a8-9ce4-b2c3-8fbd9d21c91/Bonding_Report_Final_2026.pdf ■

AI Training Attended by 25 Contractors

AI is no longer a “future” technology—it is here, and it is changing how the construction contracting industry operates. Are you ready to lead the charge? Twenty-five SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington contractors attended this intensive, hands-on workshop designed to turn AI into a valuable coworker.



Attendees left this free training having learned the specific structures needed to get high-quality, accurate results from AI every time; how to use AI for everyday tasks, from project budgeting to creating professional infographics; and how to build their own “custom GPT” tailored to individual business needs. Instructor Hugh Seaton facilitated the training, breaking down the capabilities and real-world limits of current AI tools.

Learn more about Hugh Seaton, advisor to construction leadership on AI, risk, and decision governance, and develop your path from AI plans to production at linkedin.com/in/hughseaton ■

Project Managers Institute: September 27-30 in Denver, Colorado

SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington members may qualify for free registration

Experienced SMACNA Contractors know that the best project managers take ownership of their projects. This concentrated, in-person program provides essential training for sheet metal and HVAC project managers*, building upon existing project management skills and strengthening proficiency in project planning, management/leadership, and time management. Registration for this specific session is noted to open on July 7, 2026. For a limited time and for a limited number of people, SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington will cover the registration fees for members who wish to send a project manager to this exciting training.

*Recommended for project managers with two to five years project management experience.

Topics covered:

- Management Leadership
- Project Planning
- Customer-Focused Construction
- Time Management
- Change Order Management
- Financial Management
- Standards/Best Practices
- Plan projects to maximize profits and customer satisfaction
- Develop and maintain profitable customer relationships
- Build and lead powerful, integrated project teams
- Understand and master financial control of projects

Learn more at smacna.org/education-events/calendar-of-events/event/2026/09/27/educational-program/project-managers-institute

Reach out to the SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington office for registration. ■

Two Foursomes Available for the B.U.L.L. Session Golf Tournament September 28, 2026

Who loves free golf? You do! Two foursomes are up for grabs at the 2026 B.U.L.L. Session Golf Tournament, held September 28 at Langdon Farms Golf Club in Aurora, Oregon. Made up of Business, Union, and Labor Leaders, the first B.U.L.L. Session Golf Tournament was held at the Resort at the Mountain, ultimately raising \$5,000, which was donated to Shriners Hospital for Children in Portland. The next year, \$20,000 was raised and, embraced by the local Pacific Northwest business, union, and labor communities, the B.U.L.L. Session continues to thrive as it enters its 36th year.

Reach out to Chris Schneider for more information and to claim your spot. ■

Wage Increases and Changes to WDA Coming July 1, 2026

New wage increases are coming into effect on July 1, 2026. Attached you will find SMART Local 16 Wage Sheets effective July 1, 2026 and the updated Working Dues Assessment amounts.

Key Changes & Timeline

SMART Local 16 has issued an updated policy and clarification letter regarding the Working Dues Assessment (WDA) and when it is to be deducted and remitted. Employers must deduct and remit the WDA on employer-paid compensatory hours (including sick leave and vacation) when an employee is compensated based on the negotiated contractual rate.

The union will enforce this requirement beginning July 1, 2026. If an employer’s past inconsistency on this deduction is identified during an audit, the union will waive the requirement for periods prior to July 1, 2026.

Guidance on WDA Deductions

Please use the following criteria to ensure compliance with the expanded payroll requirements:

Deduct and remit WDA when compensatory hours are paid directly through the employer’s payroll system and the employee is paid based on a negotiated contractual rate. For example:

- If your company offers paid hourly vacation or sick leave benefits, or paid time off that are provided by the employer in excess of the CBA.
- If your company pays a Local 16 member who is paid over their scale.

Do not deduct WDA when the benefit is not based on hours paid by your payroll system. For example:

- The benefit is paid by a third party (e.g., Paid Leave Oregon, Unemployment Compensation, or Workers’ Compensation).

The payment is not based on an hourly calculation. For example:

- A yearly lump-sum bonus based on a cash amount when it is not based on the hourly rate. (A yearly bonus based on x number of days, weeks, or hours would be deducted.)
- Dealing with per diems and allowances, though travel pay is subject to WDA when based on 2/3 of 1/5x hourly base rate.

Please ensure your payroll systems are updated to align with these requirements by the July 1, 2026 effective date. Contact the association office if you have any questions or require further assistance. ■

Supervisor Guides Available: Wildfire Smoke Rules for Oregon and Washington

Supervisor guides for Oregon and Washington employers whose workers are exposed to wildfire smoke are now available. The guides summarize the Oregon OSHA (OAR 437-002-1081) and Washington Department of Labor & Industries (WAC 296-820) permanent wildfire smoke rules. These requirements apply to most outdoor work when PM2.5 concentrations reach specific levels.

AQI Action Thresholds

Oregon and Washington standards are both triggered by PM2.5 concentrations. The table below outlines the specific triggers for mandatory supervisor actions in Oregon, based on current EPA AQI values.

| Current AQI | PM2.5 (µg/m³) | Required Action |
|-------------|---------------|---|
| 101 – 276 | 35.5 – 150.4 | Baseline: Monitor air quality, implement two-way communication, provide training, and use engineering/admin controls. Voluntary Use: Provide N95s for voluntary use. |
| 277 – 488 | 200.9 – 500.3 | Mandatory Use (Level 1): Implement a Wildfire Smoke Respiratory Protection Program (Appendix A). N95 use is mandatory. |
| 489+ | 500.4+ | Mandatory Use (Level 2): Full Respiratory Protection Program required (29 CFR 1910.134). Requires medical evaluations and fit testing. |

The table below outlines the specific triggers for mandatory supervisor actions in Washington.

| Current AQI | PM2.5 (µg/m³) | Required Action |
|-------------|---------------|--|
| 72+ | 20.5+ | Baseline: Monitor AQI, provide annual training, and establish two-way communication. |
| 101+ | 35.5+ | Voluntary Use: Employers must make N95 respirators available to all outdoor workers at no cost. |
| 351+ | 500.4+ | Direct Distribution: Supervisors must physically hand N95s to every worker (cannot just be “available”). |
| 849+ | 500.4+ | Mandatory Use: Full respiratory program required, including fit-testing and medical evaluations. |

The employer guides include mandatory employer training topics, critical supervisor responsibilities, and supervisor checklists.

Review the Oregon OSHA fact sheet at:

osha.oregon.gov/OSHA/Pubs/factsheets/fs92.pdf

Review the full Washington legal standard at:

lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-rules/chapter-pdfs/WAC296-820.pdf ■

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Email cschneider@smacna-oregon.org to request your free subscription



Sheet Metal Institute Receives Much-needed Upgrade

SMACNA Oregon & Southwest Washington contractors to complete essential scopes of work on the 10,000-square-foot expansion

By Jessica Kirby

The Sheet Metal Institute is undergoing a \$4 million expansion that will provide much needed resources to apprentices and the industry in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

“The expansion has been needed for years now,” says Ben Wood, training coordinator at Sheet Metal Institute. “It will mainly provide more working space for the hands-on and shop activities of a trade school.”

The current 40,000-square-foot training center was built in the 1990s with a college-like set-up comprising lots of classrooms and just 6,000 feet of shop space.

The expansion will add 10,000 square feet of additional shop space on the south side of the building where a fenced-in paved lot has been used for storage and scrap bins.

The new, two-story area with high ceilings will include an essential hands-on installation practice area where apprentices can learn to install ductwork and work safely at heights in a controlled environment, out of the weather.

“The new shop space will house a steel mock-up structure to mimic an industrial/commercial building to give students a real-world installation platform for their sheet metal fabrication and

installation skills,” Wood says. Just like a commercial jobsite, this area will include steel structures, concrete and metal deck floors, shafts, and canopies. The new space will also include a compressor room and a gas bunker to store bottled welding gases.

Previously, the training center taught shop work and building skills, such as sheet metal fabrication and testing and balancing, but relied on contractors to show apprentices how to complete installations.

“This expansion helps us to grow with industry needs and better house our kinesthetic learning environment,” Wood



adds, noting that the extra space will also mean the current curriculum can expand to encompass better cranes, rigging, and signaling, larger and more comprehensive technologies, and more welding booths.

Most of the add-on structure will be concrete, but members working for three Local 16 signatory contractors will also be performing some of the work on their training center expansion. General Sheet Metal will do the HVAC work on the project, Swan Island Sheet Metal Works will be doing structural steel, and Arctic will be doing architectural metal.

James Slater, employer trustee of the JATC and executive at McKinstry, says it is exciting to have SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington contractors work on the project. “The final product will be influenced by the craftsmanship of our local firms,” he says. “Having General Sheet Metal, Swan Island, and Arctic driving the HVAC, structural, and architectural work on our training facility is a testament to the capability of contractors in this region. Ultimately, many of us are competitors in business, but I think all of us recognize the high level that SMACNA Oregon & SW Washington contractors are operating on.”

The expansion will test out a model project labor agreement (PLA) that local unions hope could become a template for private

“This expansion helps us to grow with industry needs and better house our kinesthetic learning environment.”



construction projects. The Sheet Metal Institute’s leadership team required all work to be complete by union companies and workforce, and so mandated general contractor Perlo Construction to sign a PLA with Columbia Pacific Building Trades Council.

Two million in funding for the jointly operated training center will come from reserves, while union-led IBEW and United Workers Federal Credit Union will finance a mortgage loan for the rest.

Last year, Local 16 members approved a 10-cent-an-hour building assessment contribution to pay back the loan. Once the loan is paid off, that money will go back on their paychecks.

Site work, demolition, and clearing began on May 11, 2026, and the expansion is expected to be complete by the end of the year. ■





THE RIGHT TRACK

SMI instructor Paul Culp grew up in the drag racing scene—a lifestyle that led him to sheet metal work and helping apprentices secure a brighter future

By Jessica Kirby

Paul Culp's father built drag cars for a living, and Paul worked for him for as long as he can remember. "He taught me how to wire weld at ten years old," Culp says. "By the time I was 16, I was Tig welding parts for cars going 250 MPH."

He merged into fabricating the interior sheet metal and dragster bodies on race cars, and people at the local dragstrip in Woodburn, Oregon, started calling him the Tin Man. Fast-forward to when Culp was in his early 20s, and his dragster life took a turn.

"Me being a typical young buck, my father and I were not getting along very well at work," Culp says. "One day, I showed up late to work, and we proceeded to have a 'discussion.' At the end of it, we both knew it was time for me to move on."

That afternoon, once the dust had settled, Culp's father brought him an application to a sheet metal shop and encouraged him

to apply. "He said to me, 'Here, go do this. You will be good at it.' So, I did."

His father was right. Culp worked at non-union shops for three or four years and soon realized that to better himself for his small family, it was time to kick it up a notch. He joined Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 16 in Oregon-Southwest Washington in 1994. After journeying, Culp spent 22 years on the tools before shifting gears again.

In 2020, he applied for a role as an instructor at Local 16's JATC and was successful. He's been there ever since as an instructor and certified welding inspector. "I truly enjoy my job as an instructor, knowing I'm teaching lifelong lessons to my students," he says. "Knowing that they will use the skills and knowledge they learn to feed their families and pass those skills and that knowledge on to others is very satisfying."

His favorite part of being an instructor is when a student comes in 'green' and, as he explains it, he can see 'the lights come on'. "Knowing I have helped them get there is everything to me," he says. "My proudest moment as an instructor happened this year at the regional Sheet Metal Workers' Competition when Dustin Comer took home the 1st place finish."

His career in sheet metal thrived, but he never let go of his passion for the track. "Growing up around race cars and hotrods put racing in my blood," he says. "I've always been a very competitive person."

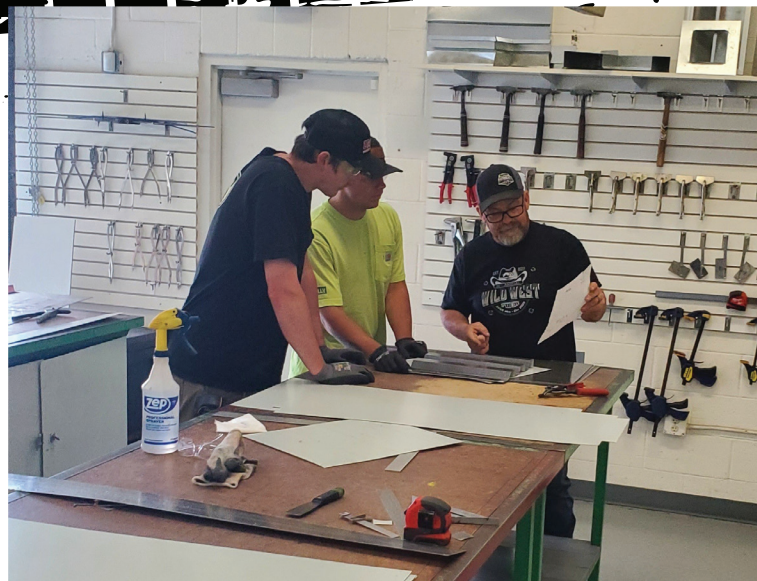
When he was 23, he attended a local Saturday night Circle Track race with his brother-in-law Rick Tyndall. They were at the track talking about the entry level class when Culp commented, "I can build one of these cars." The following Monday, Rick called him over to hang out. When Culp arrived, Rick said, "I've got something to show you."

"We went out to his garage," Culp says. "He lifted the door and there sat a 1970 Ford Pinto—the perfect car to fit the track's requirements for the Claimer class. So, it began."

By Thursday, they had the car stripped and a roll cage, racing seat, and belts installed along with a custom five-gallon fuel cell Culp built from scrap metal he found at work. "We went out and won the first race we entered, and it's been 'fish on' ever since," he says.

Since then, he has built around 50 cars for himself and others. He has won multiple track championships and state championships as both a driver and car owner/crew chief for two different drivers.

In 2024, Culp's driving career came to an end. He was in a crash that caused a brain bleed and led to three strokes. "Luckily, I



had no underlying health conditions and I have made a full recovery," he says. "But my doctors advised I take a back seat."

Today, he is a crew chief/car owner for a young gun named Kevin Williamson. In 2025, Culp's team won track championships at both Cottage Grove Speedway and Douglas County Raceway, and they won the IMCA Oregon State Championship and the IMCA Western Region Championship while finishing sixth in the nation in season points.

"The coolest thing about my career and racing is that they somewhat go hand in hand," he says, drawing on the similarities between sheet metal fabrication and race car fabrication. "The competitiveness in racing goes right along with doing everything with a purpose in sheet metal. If you set your car up in the garage correctly, your chances at the track are far better to win. In sheet metal, the same is true: the better you plan and execute in all areas, the more successful you will be." ■



Chamber Clears Up Tariff Refunds and More at SMACNA Conference

The average effective United States tariff has risen fivefold in the past year



© iStock / Galeanu Mihai

By Austin Keating

Sheet metal contractors hoping for relief from the recent Supreme Court-mandated tariff refunds are likely to be disappointed: Unless you are the importer of record, you will not see a direct payout or price break.

“The money belongs to the importer of record,” John Murphy, senior vice president of international policy at the United States Chamber of Commerce, told industry leaders at the 2026 SMACNA Washington, DC Leadership Conference. “There’s a lot of noise in Washington about whether Costco or somebody like that should give the money back to their customers. But the law is clear—it goes right back to the company that paid it.”

The \$166 billion in refunds is spread across roughly 53 million import entries and 300,000 importers, underscoring how diffuse any financial benefit will be across the supply chain. “That’s a whole lot of data, but spread across 300,000 importers,” Murphy said, “it’s not a clean windfall.”

For most contractors, that means any hope of downstream price relief is out of reach, as refunds are not passed down through the supply chain.

Murphy described the process as a major milestone for manufacturers and importers battered by years of trade volatility and rising costs. “About half of everything we import in this country is used by American manufacturing companies,” he said. “If you’re setting their prices up, then their ability to

compete in global markets is reduced. These are good jobs, and we need more of them.”

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court struck down tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), which Murphy called “a pretty good deal” for American companies. “It’s \$166 billion that companies paid—American companies. The importer of record has to be an American company or your customs broker,” Murphy said.

Since the ruling, United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has built a system for processing refunds through the Automated Commercial Environment, or ACE portal. “We’ve seen construction by Customs and Border Protection of a system for refunds. It’s called CAKE ... It’s a tab on the ACE portal, the automated commercial environment that Customs and Border Protection runs,” Murphy said. “You complete a spreadsheet in a certain format for all your entries and upload it. We’re starting to see refunds arrive.”

According to Murphy, two-thirds of the affected imports are “pretty straightforward and simple” to process, while the remaining third involve additional complexities, such as overlapping anti-dumping or countervailing duties.

Refund processing began April 20, with initial payments expected around May 10 and a 60- to 90-day window for

review. “They’ve been saying that some of the very first of them start to come out about May 10,” Murphy told the audience. He estimated that roughly half of claims could be resolved by July 1.

Many companies absorbed tariff costs or financed them through loans, and with new or revised tariffs, as well as inflationary pressures from high energy prices, the likelihood that refunds will translate into lower prices for contractors is limited.

Still, the issue of who ultimately benefits from the refunds remains contentious. “Some people are saying, ‘How is Costco going to give back its refund to the customers?’” Murphy said. “It’s complicated, because a lot of small businesses, they hate the tariff. Some of them took out loans. Many industries are facing new tariffs that they have to continue to pay.”

Murphy said the average effective United States tariff has risen from about 2% to roughly 10% in the past year—a fivefold increase. Section 232 tariffs remain in place, including 50% duties on steel and aluminum—key inputs for sheet metal fabrication—and 25% on autos and auto parts.

Murphy noted there were 33 changes to tariff classifications last year, compared to a typical single annual update. “That volatility has been a problem for the business community,” he said.

Murphy pointed to roughly 100,000 manufacturing job losses over the past year, including about 40,000 in the auto sector, as higher input costs weighed on hiring and profitability.

Tariffs have become a flashpoint in Washington, with both political parties expressing concern over their impact on prices and economic growth. “Tariffs are not popular, and, in fact, affordability generally is absolutely the biggest negative that the administration is facing right now,” Murphy said.

While Congress is increasingly interested in reclaiming its constitutional authority over trade, Murphy warned that for now, the administration is preparing “a third wave” of tariffs under different statutes. “These tariffs don’t seem to be going away,” he said.

For importers waiting on refunds, the process is underway, but patience is required. “It’s a big job,” Murphy said. “But CBP, they’ve shown goodwill, and they’re working really hard.”

And for American manufacturers and small businesses, Murphy said, the outcome of these policies will ripple through the economy. “It all shows how these things are connected, and tariffs and the war are having an impact,” he said. “We want to get to that 3% economic growth. The United States economy—it’s hard to keep it down.”

This article was reprinted with permission from [ACHRNews.com](https://www.achrnews.com). Austin Keating is the special section editor of SNIPS NEWS at The ACHR NEWS. He covers sheet metal, mechanical contractors, duct cleaning, testing and balancing, steel, building information modeling (BIM) and architecture, engineering and construction (AEC). ■



NEW AFFILIATE MEMBER:

SOKOL LARKIN

Sokol Larkin, a boutique law firm focusing on the construction and design industries, is SMACNA Oregon and SW Washington’s newest affiliate member. The firm represents contractors with litigation (both affirmative claims and defense), risk management, project-related contracts, and other transactional matters.

“Our goal is to provide the highest level of legal service in an aggressive, though pragmatic and cost-effective, manner to help clients achieve the best possible results for their particular needs,” says Grant Margeson, member and attorney at Sokol Larkin.

Sokol Larkin has developed one of the leading construction practices in the Pacific Northwest. Its team offers deep-rooted experience in all aspects of construction and design processes, the relationships that form in connection with those processes, and the disputes that arise from them. Joining SMACNA OR & SWW furthers that experience.

“We joined SMACNA OR & SWW to be more connected to some of our clients and others in the field we represent and to learn more about how we can support the market participants,” says Lee Wagner, member and attorney at Sokol Larkin.

Sokol Larkin believes in developing long-standing and close relationships of trust and shared success, and whether at the negotiation table or in the courtroom, its team sets the standard for construction and design law.

Sokol Larkin attorneys are licensed to practice in the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and California. They can assist with all aspects of construction and design law, including contracts, project planning, bonds and sureties, liability, and aspects of litigation, including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, trial, and appeal.

➔ Learn more at [sokol-larkin.com](https://www.sokol-larkin.com)

LEGISLATIVE ACTION FROM SMACNA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

SMACNA Government Affairs was extremely active from January through June 2026. Just a few of its major legislative actions include Davis-Bacon defense in the Senate and expansion of prevailing wage requirements through the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); continued advancement of the *Small Business Payment for Performance Act* in both chambers, including a full slate of federal regulatory comments and monitoring; coalition coordination on prevailing wage and multiemployer pension issues; and significant executive branch action on energy infrastructure, federal contracting, and trade policy.

Davis-Bacon Defense and Expansion

The primary legislative threat this period is S. 4477, the *Davis-Bacon Repeal Act*, pending before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. SMACNA opposes this bill because prevailing wage repeal would create a race to the bottom on federal construction projects, undercut local wage standards, and put responsible signatory contractors at a structural disadvantage against those competing on exploited labor.

SMACNA on Offense: The Hill staff has been advocating for a draft NDAA amendment expected from Rep. Don Norcross (D-NJ) to the Defense Community Infrastructure Program statute. Because DCIP distributes federal money as grants to state and local governments rather than through direct federal construction contracts, Davis-Bacon does not attach, leaving workers in 18 states with no federal prevailing wage protection on DCIP-funded projects. The amendment would close that gap by adding standard prevailing wage language as a condition of every DCIP grant award.

Small Business Payment for Performance Act (H.R. 4615)

SMACNA is advancing H.R. 4615, the *Small Business Payment for Performance Act*, introduced by Representative Pete Stauber (R-MN), which would require the federal government to equitably adjust contracts when directed changes increase a contractor's costs. The bill has passed the House as a NDAA amendment multiple times and has been stripped in Senate conference each time.

This cycle, Government Affairs is pursuing both a Senate introduction to establish standing in the upper chamber and inclusion in the House-passed FY2027 NDAA. To build the member relationships needed for both outcomes, Government Affairs has conducted direct outreach to approximately 50 congressional offices, focusing on members serving on committees with jurisdiction over the NDAA and federal contracting and those representing districts with significant federal construction activity.

Military Construction and VA Appropriations Act, FY2027 (H.R. 8469)

SMACNA engaged on H.R. 8469 as it moved to the House floor, submitting vote recommendations on two amendments. SMACNA recommended a YES vote on the Rep. Walkinshaw (D-VA) amendment, which would direct GAO review of indoor air quality, ventilation, and HVAC performance standards in



By / Stan Kolbe, Executive Director of Legislative and Political Affairs, SMACNA

military construction and VA-funded buildings, creating a direct policy hook for the kind of work SMACNA contractors perform in federal facilities.

SMACNA recommended a NO vote on the Rep. Ogles (R-GA) amendment, which would prohibit architectural, engineering, and construction design services for administrative facilities falling outside specified DOD property categories, unnecessarily restricting federal construction design and build activity. SMACNA also expressed support for the bill's overall \$157 billion discretionary funding level and urged Congress to fully fund VA construction at the President's requested level of approximately \$3.9 billion, which sustains critical veterans' healthcare infrastructure projects built by SMACNA contractors under Davis-Bacon prevailing wage standards.

Other Legislative Priorities

SMACNA supports H.R. 7460, the *Airborne Act of 2026*, introduced by Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA), which creates a tax credit for indoor air quality assessments and HVAC upgrades at commercial and public properties with apprenticeship utilization requirements that directly benefit SMACNA-SMART contractors, and H.R. 5123, the *Indoor Air Quality and Healthy Schools Act*, a bipartisan bill introduced by Reps. Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), which drives ventilation and filtration work in schools and childcare facilities.

SMACNA supports H.R. 5862, the *American Energy Independence and Affordability Act*, introduced by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA) and 128 cosponsors. This bill will be a featured energy efficiency tax incentive bill late this year or early next year if the House flips to Democrats in November, as is widely expected. The Capitol Hill office is also tracking H.R. 4105, the *Veterans Energy Transition Act*, which provides employer-side reimbursements for hiring veterans in the energy sector and maps to the SMACNA-SMART joint apprenticeship pipeline.

In April 2026, GOP Representatives Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Lawler (R-NY), Max Miller (R-OH), and Carey (R-OH) introduced SMACNA-endorsed H.R. 8477, the *American Energy Dominance Act*, also backed by North America's Building Trades Unions, to restore energy tax credits accelerated for phase-out under the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*, including the 179D commercial buildings deduction without expiration, the 45L home credit through 2032, and the 45Y and 48E clean electricity credits that drive energy infrastructure construction. ■