

## Act Now for U.S. Jobs!

Now that the President has signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act into law, we have to ensure that we're maximizing the benefits. To do this, we need to make sure that taxpayer dollars are used to every extent possible to create and maintain jobs in the United States. That's why our union is leading the way in getting a Buy American Resolution passed at the state and local level. This will help ensure accountability in the law and make sure we are maximizing the number of jobs that are saved and created in these tough economic times.

### Action Instructions

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- 1) Print off the Buy American Resolution, available at the end of this document.
- 2) Identify local elected officials that should be targeted. Possibilities include city councils, county commissioners or council members, school boards, mayors and others. To view a list of communities and states where the Resolution has been introduced or passed, visit [www.makeourfuturework.org](http://www.makeourfuturework.org) or call the number below. *Please note: while we are asking for your assistance with local lawmakers, there are also Steelworker efforts ongoing at the state level. It is likely that you will be called on to assist as these efforts progress.*
- 3) Call each elected official and set up a face-to-face meeting where you can present the Resolution. We are asking that the Resolution be passed at an upcoming council, school board, etc. meeting.
- 4) On the Resolution Progress Report, available at the end of this document, indicate whether or not each official supported or did not support the resolution. If they did not make a decision, indicate that you will follow up in the next week. We expect them to make a decision one way or the other.
- 5) Return a copy (or original, if possible) of any signed Resolutions or Resolution Progress Reports to:

Email: [uswrr@usw.org](mailto:uswrr@usw.org)  
Mail: USW Rapid Response  
5 Gateway Center – 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
Fax: 412-562-2266

- 6) For questions, contact your District Rapid Response Coordinator or call Rapid Response toll-free at 866-311-1889.

# Questions and Answers on the Buy American Resolution

## ***What are the goals of the Resolution?***

The Resolution asks that elected officials:

- Work to maximize the creation of American jobs and restore economic growth and opportunity by spending economic recovery plan funds on products and services that both create jobs and help keep Americans employed;
- Commit to purchase only products and services that are made or performed in the United States of America whenever and wherever possible with any economic recovery monies provided; and
- Commit to publish any requests to waive these procurement priorities so as to give American workers and producers the opportunity to identify and provide the American products and services that will maximize the success of our nation's economic recovery program.

## ***If the federal government has already enacted a Buy American law in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, why do we need to act at the state and local level?***

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act contains Buy American rules that will help our economy and our workers. But, the states and local governments who will be carrying out the infrastructure projects in the Act still have the ability to circumvent those rules by getting waivers under certain conditions to purchase foreign products with our taxpayer dollars. Obviously during these tough economic times that are resulting in the layoffs of thousands of Steelworker members who are employed in the manufacturing of iron, steel and other goods, we need to ensure that Buy American rules are implemented as fully as possible – with the fewest waivers possible! And, when a waiver is sought, we need to know about it quickly. For this to happen, the process needs to be transparent and public.

## ***Will some state and local governments try to claim that the Buy American rules don't apply to them because of international trade agreements?***

It hasn't come up to date, but given that major off-shoring companies are working overtime to undermine these rules, we might hear this going forward. It's important to note that Buy American rules have been around since 1933 when FDR used them to help pull our country out of the Great Depression, and they've been applied consistently with our obligations under international trade agreements ever since. The Buy American part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act even specifies that it will be carried out consistently with our obligations under international trade agreements, and our Resolution reads that the governing body will "commit to purchase only products and services that are made or performed in the United States of America whenever and wherever possible."

**Our bottom line is that we don't want elected officials to hide behind "trade agreement obligations" as a reason to get around ALL the domestic purchasing they CAN do with taxpayer dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.** This is also why we are asking the state and local governments to commit to publish any requests they make for a waiver of the Buy American rules. We want to know how our taxpayer dollars are being spent!

### ***What are some talking points I can use when talking about the need for the Buy American Resolution?***

- To get our nation back on track, we must get our economy working again and working for the middle class. In order to do that, we need to insist that our tax dollars are spent at home, on American-made products.
- The United States is, by far, the world's largest importer. We brought in \$819 billion in goods in 2007. This is why Buy American is so important. It is about using taxpayer dollars, when allowed by our obligations under international trade agreements, to purchase U.S.-produced goods.
- Four million U.S. manufacturing jobs have been lost since 2000, amounting to losses of nearly one-fourth of all U.S. manufacturing jobs. Factory orders now stand at record lows while the U.S. racked up a \$700 billion trade deficit in 2007.
- Buy American ensures that taxpayer dollars are used to buy goods produced in our country and create jobs at home.
- According to an Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) study by the University of Massachusetts' Political Economy Research Institute, significant investment in infrastructure could create more than 250,000 manufacturing jobs if U.S.-made goods are used.

### ***How do Americans Feel About Buy American?***

Two recent surveys show that Americans overwhelmingly approve. A Harris Interactive poll found 84 percent favor "Buy American" requirements (66 percent strongly, 18 percent somewhat). The support was consistent regardless of gender, age, income level, education or region. A Pew survey also confirmed strong support with 70 percent of Democrats, 66 percent of Republicans and 63 percent of Independents saying the federal economic recovery plan should require that spending should be limited to U.S.-made goods and services.

### ***Where can I read more about Buy American?***

The Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) has done a great job of outlining why infrastructure spending creates jobs, and how the job-creation is maximized by spending taxpayer dollars on U.S. goods. The AAM has also debunked many of the Buy American myths in another report entitled, *Buy America: Key to America's Economic Recovery*. View both reports by visiting their website at [www.americanmanufacturing.org](http://www.americanmanufacturing.org).

**For additional resources and assistance, contact Rapid Response toll-free at 866-311-1889 or visit the following websites:**

**[www.uswrr.org](http://www.uswrr.org)  
[www.makeourfuturework.org](http://www.makeourfuturework.org)**



**2009 Resolution on the Spending of  
Federal Economic Renewal Grants to  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )**



**WHEREAS**, the economic downturn is having a critical impact on everyday Americans who are struggling to maintain or find jobs in an increasingly difficult environment, and

**WHEREAS**, those same Americans are the taxpayers that provide the revenue needed to operate essential government services, and

**WHEREAS**, Congress has approved and President Obama has signed into law a taxpayer-sponsored economic recovery package that will provide billions of dollars to help economically devastated cities and states immediately provide jobs to millions of out-of-work Americans through considerable infrastructure rebuilding, green energy projects and other projects that will require manufactured components, and

**WHEREAS**, our taxpayer dollars should be spent to maximize the creation of American jobs and restoring the economic vitality of our communities, and

**WHEREAS**, any domestically produced products that are purchased with economic recovery plan monies will immediately help struggling American families and will help stabilize our greater economy, and

**WHEREAS**, any economic recovery plan spending should – to every extent possible – include a commitment from ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) to buy materials, goods and services for projects from companies that are produced within the United States, thus employing the very workers that pay the taxes for the economic recovery plan spending in the first place.

**THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, we the undersigned will work to maximize the creation of American jobs and restoring economic growth and opportunity by spending economic recovery plan funds on products and services that both create jobs and help keep Americans employed.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, we commit to purchasing only products and services that are made or performed in the United States of America whenever and wherever possible with any economic recovery monies provided to ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) by the American taxpayers, AND

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, as legislators of ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), we commit to publish any requests to waive these procurement priorities so as to give American workers and producers the opportunity to identify and provide the American products and services that will maximize the success of our nation’s economic recovery program.



2009 Resolution on the Spending of Federal Economic Renewal Grants to ( )



Signature

Printed Name

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