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Coalition of Concerned Taxpayers, Construction Association Representatives and Small, Local, Women and Minority Business Owners in Oakland Blast Oakland Housing Authority's Shoddy "Study" Recommending a Union-Only Discriminatory Project Labor Agreement for Future Taxpayer Funded Construction Work

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By sealed bid on September 21, 2010, the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) selected Davillier-Sloan, Inc. (DSI) to develop a "study" of the potential benefits and consequences of signing a union-only Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for future taxpayer funded OHA work. Then, on January 24, 2011, Jake Sloan, President of DSI presented the "study" to the OHA Commissioners behind closed doors with a recommendation to move forward with negotiations with local labor bosses for a special interest handout scheme that requires all workers on OHA projects to join the union. This scheme would drive up the price of construction for taxpayers by nearly 25%.

"We are disturbed the Oakland Housing Authority is working on behalf of big labor special interests on a discriminatory scheme that not only would drive up the price of construction for Oakland taxpayers, but would also exclude nearly 80% of bay area workers from the jobs they deserve on projects that their tax dollars fund", said Nicole Goehring, Government Affairs Director of the Golden Gate Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors.

The Coalition sites numerous problems with the study, including the conflict of interest for the OHA to hire DSI to perform the analysis in the first place. DSI is in the business of negotiating PLAs and then overseeing them for a profit. DSI employs former union construction trade personal who directly or indirectly benefit from any PLA that is implemented.

The Coalition is opposed to Project Labor Agreements and supports fair and open competition, free enterprise, and freedom of choice for workers concerning union membership and training programs. Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) end open, fair and competitive bidding on public work projects, while discouraging the vast majority of local contractors and small business owners from bidding on the work. Among other things the PLA would force non-union contractors and their workers to pay union dues, pay into union benefit programs, go through a union-hiring hall to get work, and would allow for only union apprentices. Such agreements make it hard for merit shop contractors to bid such work.

"Taxpayers deserve the best quality at the best price," said Louis Summerhill, an Oakland based contractor. "The proposed Project Labor Agreement will deny taxpayers that right."

A copy of the [study](#) and the coalition's [analysis](#) is available here.

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