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Merit Saskatchewan Joins Call to Tear Down Barriers to Free Trade

Prince Albert, Saskatchewan - The Merit Contractors Association of Saskatchewan has joined the call made this week by Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall to tear down the barriers to free trade and equal procurement opportunities within Canada.

“In this busy construction market, we see more and more work being done in Saskatchewan by contractors from other provinces,” said Karen Low, Merit Saskatchewan’s Executive Director. “We welcome that competition but at the same time, we want to make sure it cuts both ways; Saskatchewan contractors expect and deserve equal opportunity to compete in other provinces.”

In other provinces, including Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, Saskatchewan contractors are placed at a disadvantage as local and/or unionized companies are given preferential treatment when bidding on provincial or municipal construction projects.

“Excluding a large number of contractors from the bidders pool is not only unfair, it just doesn’t make good financial sense,” said Low. “The power of the competitive bidding system comes from open tendering and not artificially limiting the number of contractors that can even qualify for bidding the work.”

“The record of these two provisions – the requirement for so-called local knowledge and union only bidding – is clear: they hurt investment, kill jobs and cost taxpayers millions,” said Low.

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For more information, please contact:
Karen Low, Executive Director
MERIT Contractors Association, Saskatchewan
306-764-4380
karen@meritsask.com