



**May 14, 2013 (Prince Albert, Saskatchewan)** – Yesterday’s passing of Bill 85 shows a new direction for this province’s attitude towards developing our economy. The Merit Contractors Association would like to offer their support and recognition to the government for this accomplishment.

This past December, the Government of Saskatchewan consolidated 12 pieces of dated legislation into one integrated bill, eliminating contradictions and reducing bureaucratic headaches. The new legislation has been crafted to fit the modern reality of the industry and employee concerns.

“Our members believe that this legislation is a step in the right direction,” said Karen Low, Executive Director of the Merit Contractors Association. “We look forward to continuing the consultation process with the government, as there is still progress to be made. Premier Wall and his cabinet have faced a lot of opposition on this bill, and seeing Bill 85 pass proves their conviction to helping promote Saskatchewan businesses.”

In particular, the changes to the work schedule have been a huge benefit to both employee and employer. By allowing for a modified schedule of 10 hours per day over four days, rather than the typical 8X5 approach, the specific needs of the construction industry are better met. The Merit Contractors Association was very involved in the consultation period for this legislation. Our contention is that the 10 hour work day across four days is a start, and that its inclusion will serve as a test to our original point. By reframing the way we think about the work week into an “80-hours over two weeks” mindset, construction goals will be met quicker, allowing workers to spend more time away from the job site, and with their families. This will mean more time with families, and reduced delivery dates on projects.

As the federal government prepares changes to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program and the Labour Market Opinion, the Saskatchewan government is showing a commitment to the economic future of the province.

“Saskatchewan is an exciting place right now,” added Low. “We lead the nation in employment rates. You have to strike while the iron is hot, and it’s encouraging to know our government realizes that the time for action is now.”

For more information, or to schedule an interview with Karen Low, please contact:

Adam Johnson

(403) 690 6556

[Adam.Johnson@fleishman.ca](mailto:Adam.Johnson@fleishman.ca)

### **About Merit Contractors Association**

Merit Contractors Association, founded in 1988, is the only open shop association in Saskatchewan. We provide human resource support for businesses large and small. Our association is administered by an elected Board of Directors, ensuring that the direction and initiatives undertaken by Merit Saskatchewan are member driven. Merit Saskatchewan is part of a Canada-wide network of Merit associations and a founding member of Merit Canada. We are proud to support the open shop construction community, over 80% of the contractors in the province. We believe success should be based on merit.