



March 20, 2020
The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711

RE: Texas Construction Industry and COVID-19

Dear Governor Abbott:

Thank you for your efforts during this current public health crisis. We recognize and sincerely appreciate your leadership and the work of your staff and those who are spending every hour to keep Texans safe during this time. You have always appreciated the important role the construction industry plays in supporting the state's economy. We hope you will recognize our commitment to continue operating in a safe and productive manner, following best practices and adhering to OSHA guidelines.

The Texas Aggregates and Concrete Association (TACA) represents the aggregates, concrete, cement and affiliated industries that underpin one of the largest economies in the world. Members are committed to the health, safety and welfare of our workforce and the public. Altogether this industry represents more than 100,000 women and men who work hard to make Texas a better place every day.

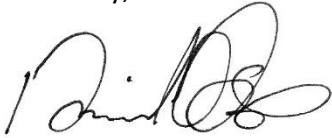
We write to you today to ask you to treat construction as an essential service for the state and refrain from any action to curtail ongoing construction projects. As higher risk industries are being impacted by the spread of COVID-19, it is more important to the long-term health of Texas' economy to keep the construction industry intact.

Based on input from the CDC, OSHA has developed a hierarchy of industry risk for COVID-19. The lowest risk industries are those with workers that have "minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers." Construction jobsites are not densely populated work areas. Construction sites are a unique workplace with their own levels of "social distancing" built in. Many workers are segregated completely or separated by large distances. Access to jobsites is strictly controlled to the public. Additionally, safety briefings are already part of the construction industry culture, and with the additional guidelines developed by OSHA to address COVID-19, briefings include the extra precautions recommended by the CDC and OSHA.

The impact of shutting down construction work in Texas will severely impact ongoing development of critical infrastructure and housing projects. Worker layoffs will make it extremely difficult for construction companies to meet the demand to maintain existing healthcare facilities and build new ones, retrofit existing buildings for emergency use and provide new transportation corridors for people and materials. Moreover, such a hit to the construction industry workforce in Texas will undermine current and future recovery efforts due to natural disasters. A virus pandemic does not halt hurricanes, tornadoes or floods.

TACA members are all working to implement strict measures for the safety of their workers and the public during this pandemic. With the low risk nature of construction related to the virus and the existing heavy emphasis on safety in our industry to implement protections for workers and the public, we urge you to recognize construction as essential services that should not be impeded during this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Perkins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Perkins
President and CEO
Texas Aggregates and Concrete Association