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## **Fair and Open Competition Initiative Qualifies for the City of San Diego 2012 Ballot**

**(San Diego)** – Voters in the City of San Diego will have the opportunity to consider and vote upon a Fair and Open Competition initiative in 2012.

The San Diego City Clerk reports the signature drive has been successful in collecting the required minimum 62,057 valid signatures from registered voters to place the initiative on the next citywide ballot.

“The fact this measure qualified so easily is an indication that voters are eager to have their say as to whether city contracts should be open to all bidders,” said Jim Ryan, Executive Vice-President of the Associated General Contractors of America, San Diego Chapter.

The Fair and Open Competition measure is the first City of San Diego initiative to qualify for the ballot via citizen signatures since 1998.

If approved by the voters, the measure will prohibit the City from forcing contractors to participate in Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) for City construction projects. The measure allows contractors to voluntarily participate in PLAs.

PLAs are pre-construction contracts requiring contractors bidding for the work to agree up front to contribute union dues and adhere to other union restrictions. Merit shop contractors are effectively prohibited from competing. With fewer bidders in the process to drive down prices, PLAs have been shown to increase taxpayer funded public construction costs.

Voters in the cities of Chula Vista and Oceanside and in the County of San Diego approved similar measures in 2010.

“The fair and open competition initiative simply guarantees the right of all contractors including the 87% of contractors who are non-union to compete for city contracts on a level playing field with their union counterparts,” said Scott Crosby, President of the Associated Builders and Contractors of San Diego. “Everyone stands at the same starting line with no advantage. Fair and open competition insures the best quality and best price for the taxpayers.”

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