



Design-Build Institute of America
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dbia.org

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader, United States Senate
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Republican Leader, United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Democratic Leader, United States Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy and Leader Schumer:

As Congress continues its response to the Covid-19 virus, the Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA) is writing to urge the passage of a broad infrastructure response as a way to put Americans back to work and begin the important work of rebuilding and reinvesting in our nation's roads, bridges, dams and other infrastructure. As you know, our infrastructure needs are into the trillions of dollars just over the next few years.

DBIA is the nation's authority on Design-Build Done Right®. DBIA's membership is comprised of professionals from across the project delivery arena, including architects, engineers, contractors and, of note, public sector officials who use design-build to better assure successful projects. Together we collaborate and innovate to deliver some of America's most successful projects, especially during times of crisis.

Design-build is a method of project delivery in which one entity – the design-build team – works under a single contract with the project Owner to provide design and construction services. Early collaboration, and design-build's inherent ability to innovate and adapt, has shown time and again that design-build delivers both time and cost-efficient projects [in times of crisis](#), including during economic emergencies. The use of design-build exploded during the nation's recovery from the economic downturn of 2007-2009, when getting infrastructure in place quickly and safely was at a premium. [Research](#) has shown that design-build out-performs other delivery systems in schedule, construction and delivery speed as well as cost.

A few examples include:

- **Tyndall Air Force Base:** When Hurricane Michael struck Tyndall Air Force Base last October, the damage left every single one of Tyndall's nearly 1,200 facilities needing some level of repair. An expected \$3 billion over the next five years will be invested to not only rebuild Tyndall, but to make it an "installation of the future," including the addition of multi-use, smart facilities able to withstand severe weather, an expanded flight line to support F-35 operations by 2023 and walkable campus areas that provide consolidated facilities for the base community. What was originally a catastrophic blow to the service may actually provide a unique opportunity.



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- **Camp Lejeune:** Yet another natural disaster left devastation in its wake when Hurricane Florence hit North Carolina's Camp Lejeune in September 2018. More than 900 buildings were damaged and an estimated \$1.7 billion will be needed to rebuild. The Naval Facilities Engineering Command faces an enormous challenge that design-build will help to address. From new construction and renovation of buildings to rebuilding systems and infrastructure, the multi-year rebuild at Camp Lejeune is immense.
- **I-35W Bridge in Minneapolis:** Following the tragic collapse of the I-35W Bridge, a key transportation artery, the state's goal was to get this bridge rebuilt as quickly as possible. Initial goals called for having the bridge fully operational within 14 months. Using exemplary design-build methods, the team beat that goal by three months while, of course, meeting the state's safety, quality and innovation goals.
- **Post 9/11 Pentagon Rebuild:** The design-build project team was formed the very day of the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon and an ultra-fast-track schedule was created. Design-build enabled design and construction to operate together under a single contract, saving time and reducing potential conflicts. Motivation was high and the project was delivered 28 days ahead of schedule and \$194 million under budget.

We are confident that design-build will be part of the nation's Covid-19 economic recovery, and Congress can help in that. For example, we have been working with the respective House and Senate Committees writing a FAST-Act Reauthorization on two provisions that we have encouraged be included in the reauthorization but could be modified for a broader infrastructure package. They are both consistent with Design-Build Best Practices, the basis of our work.

First, recipients of funding should be encouraged to make an objective assessment of project delivery methods they are authorized to utilize to determine those best suited to achieve best value, considering cost, schedule, quality and maintenance.

Second, the authority for and use of innovative project delivery methods has increased dramatically over the last decade. This has been particularly true at the state and local levels. However, innovative project delivery authority alone is not a panacea. Delivering projects more efficiently and more cost-effectively requires the proper education and training to guide an understanding of innovative project delivery contracting and teaming approaches. This problem could be addressed if more educational materials were made available for local governments. Therefore, we recommend increased funding for educational materials on innovative project delivery methods.

DBIA does not seek to mandate the use of design-build by State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) or anyone, nor do we want to create burdensome reporting requirements. These provisions do neither. We merely want to encourage public sector officials tasked with delivering infrastructure projects to make an informed decision about the project delivery method best suited to achieve the goals of each project. We are confident that with the right information and authority, such officials will continue to turn to design-build allowing them to maximize tax-payer dollars and create stellar infrastructure.



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DBIA stands ready to work with you on crafting, refining and implementing these ideas as appropriate. Should you have questions please do not hesitate to reach out me or Louis Jenny at DBIA (202-454-7507 – ljenny@DBIA.org).

Sincerely,

Lisa Washington
DBIA Executive Director/CEO