



## Support the GROW Act and Authorize Innovative Composite Plans to Modernize the Multiemployer Pension Plan System

### Background:

- The GROW Act would modernize the multiemployer pension system by creating a new type of plan called a composite plan. This new plan design combines the key features of defined benefit and defined contribution plans. Like a traditional pension, composite plans provide workers with lifetime income and are designed to be more financially stable over the long-term.
- Since 1946, NECA contractors have contributed to the National Electrical Benefit Fund (NEBF), a viable pension plan which benefits participants, retirees and surviving spouses. This plan serves over 502,000 participating individuals and has over 8,000 contributing employers, making it the fourth largest Taft-Hartley Pension Plan in the United States. In addition to NEBF, NECA contractors contribute to 123 local pension plans covering over 800,000 participants and beneficiaries in the construction industry, with total assets of roughly \$30 billion.

### Key Points:

- *Composite Plans Are Voluntary.* Participation in composite plans is voluntary and would be subject to the collective bargaining process. This design is an alternative to the 401(k)/defined contribution plans that are increasingly proposed for adoption when an employer can no longer assume the financial responsibilities of a defined benefit plan. No current defined benefit plan would be required to adopt these provisions.
- *Composite Plans Will Provide Secure Lifetime Retirement Income for Participants.* Unlike a 401(k), composite plans provide a lifetime benefit to workers through an annuity. By overfunding these plans at a target funded rate (assets over liabilities) of 120 percent, this structure can grant peace of mind to workers who have seen the devastating effects of the 2008 financial crisis. In fact, the proposed composite plan design has been stress tested against a crisis of this magnitude and was shown to remain sufficiently funded.
- *There is No Withdrawal Liability for Composite Plans.* By requiring the overfunding of plans, and other securities, the GROW Act gives employers greater certainty that they will not be driven out of business due to increasing costs or unexpected penalties as a result of their participation in the multiemployer system and the so called 'last man standing rule'. Withdrawal liability in the defined benefit plan is unchanged.
- *Composite Plans are the future of the Multiemployer Pension System.* Composite plans can only be utilized by plans who are in the "green zone." Because of this, they are not being offered as a solution for current failing plans. However, due to changing demographics, volatile markets, and a consolidated employer network, they should be viewed as a tool necessary for preparing the multiemployer system for its next generation of retirees entering into the 85 percent of healthy plans.

## NECA Asks:

- Co-Sponsor the *Giving Retirement Options to Workers (GROW) Act* (H.R.4997)

### Sponsors:

Six total sponsors (3 Democrats, 3 Republicans)

- Rep. Norcross, Donald (D-NJ-1)\*
- Rep. Pallone, Frank, Jr. (D-NJ-6)
- Rep. Donovan, Daniel M., Jr. (R-NY-11)
- Rep. Costello, Ryan A. (R-PA-6)
- Rep. Cuellar, Henry (D-TX-28)
- Rep. Roe, Phil (R-TN-1)\*

\* *Denotes Original Sponsor of the Legislation*

- Encourage members of the Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans to include composite plan legislation in the final recommendations of the Select Committee and as a necessary component of any fix to the multiemployer system.

### **Members, Joint Select Committee on Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans**

<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Sen. Orrin Hatch, Utah, Co-Chair</li><li>▪ Sen. Lamar Alexander, Tennessee</li><li>▪ Sen. Mike Crapo, Idaho</li><li>▪ Sen. Rob Portman, Ohio</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Sen. Sherrod Brown, Ohio, Co-Chair</li><li>▪ Sen. Joe Manchin, West Virginia</li><li>▪ Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, North Dakota</li><li>▪ Sen. Tina Smith, Minnesota</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Rep. Virginia Foxx, North Carolina</li><li>▪ Rep. Phil Roe, Tennessee</li><li>▪ Rep. Vern Buchanan, Florida</li><li>▪ Rep. David Schweikert, Arizona</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Rep. Richard Neal, Massachusetts</li><li>▪ Rep. Bobby Scott, Virginia</li><li>▪ Rep. Donald Norcross, New Jersey</li><li>▪ Rep. Debbie Dingell, Michigan</li></ul>