



BASSFORD REMELE

APPLICABILITY OF THE FREEDOM TO INVEST IN TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE ACT TO THE MINNESOTA CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

John C. Holper
Bassford Remele, P.A

The construction industry in Minnesota, like much of the nation, faces significant workforce challenges - especially in attracting and retaining skilled professionals such as carpenters, electricians, welders, masons, plumbers, and heavy equipment operators. These occupations remain in high demand, but the costs associated with training, credentialing, and licensing requirements present meaningful barriers to entry for many Minnesota residents considering a career in the trades.

The Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act, signed into law in July 2025, directly addresses this gap by expanding how 529 education savings plans can be used. The legislation was advanced on a bipartisan basis, with Rep. Rob Wittman introducing the House version and Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Sen. Roger Marshall sponsoring it in the Senate. The legislation was also backed by the Tomorrow's Workforce Coalition and hundreds of industry organizations, including those in construction and engineering. The Tomorrow's Workforce Act now affords those interested in the construction trades with new, far-reaching benefits.

Once reserved almost exclusively for college expenses, 529 education savings plans can now cover the costs of obtaining, and maintaining, the professional credentials and licenses critical to the construction trades. The shift effectively transforms 529 educational savings plans from a traditional "college savings account" into a flexible career-building tool designed to support multiple pathways into the workforce. For Minnesota families and construction workers, this means that 529 educational savings plans can be applied to a broader array of expenses: apprenticeship and training programs, licensing exams, certification costs, study materials, and fees related to continuing education and credential renewals.

The potential impact on Minnesota's labor force is considerable. Construction employers statewide have continued to report difficulties recruiting qualified workers. With 529 education savings plans now available for skilled trades training, these careers become more accessible to Minnesota families who may have previously only considered traditional four-year colleges. The support for local apprenticeship programs, long an integral part of Minnesota's trade education landscape, strengthens the earn-while-you-learn approach that will be valuable for bringing younger workers into Minnesota's construction workforce. Moreover, the law encourages people to consider mid-career retraining for in-demand roles such as carpentry, welding, HVAC, or heavy machinery operation, by removing prohibitive upfront costs that might otherwise present obstacles.

The law also holds important implications for equity throughout the Minnesota construction sector. As professional certifications can help narrow wage gaps, Minnesota's minority and women-owned small contracting companies, who often encounter additional barriers, may find new

opportunities to compete and grow through greater access to 529 education savings plan-funded training and credentials.

Minnesota construction employers also stand to benefit directly: with families now able to save for construction apprenticeships as they would for college, the trades are positioned as respected and financially viable career paths for the state's youth. For those already working in Minnesota's construction sector, the new access to continuing education resources can help ensure timely compliance with evolving safety standards and building codes, as well as adapt to technological changes like prefabrication and modular construction. Contractor and trade associations across Minnesota may find it strategic to partner with local apprenticeship programs to raise awareness among prospective recruits about the expanded use of 529 educational savings plan funds.

The Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act marks a substantial shift in national policy, the effects of which extend directly to Minnesota. By reducing financial barriers to entry, training, and advancement, the law helps strengthen the state's construction talent pipeline, broaden workforce opportunities for Minnesota families, and ensure that local contractors can meet the industry's current and future needs.

About the Author



[John Holper](#) is a shareholder and experienced construction and real estate trial attorney with the law firm Bassford Remele, P.A. John has more than 30 years of experience representing commercial and residential owners, commercial landlords and tenants, lenders, business entities, developers, contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, architects, and engineers. He works with his clients not only when a dispute arises, but also on the front end by applying his litigation experience to help draft and negotiate construction-related contracts in order to manage risk and avoid litigation whenever possible. jholper@bassford.com, 612-376-1649.

DISCLAIMER: THIS ARTICLE IS NOT INTENDED TO BE RELIED UPON AS LEGAL ADVICE. THERE IS NO ATTORNEY-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BASSFORD REMELE, P.A. AND ANY READER OF THIS ARTICLE.

10/1/2025