April 24, 2023

The Honorable Bernie Sanders

Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions   
United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders:

The Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA) is supported by more than 3,500 construction firms engaged in industrial, commercial, residential, architectural and specialty sheet metal and air conditioning construction throughout the United States. **On behalf of our membership, SMACNA would like to voice its support for a fair and expedited nomination process and confirmation of Acting Secretary Julie Su to serve as the 30th Secretary of Labor** of the U.S. Department of Labor. In her current role as Deputy Secretary, Ms. Su has loyally, professionally and effectively served the President, and faithfully helped implement the laws as enacted. Further, she has served the Administration’s clearly and documented policies advocating for labor – management cooperation and fair enforcement of the laws.

Acting Secretary Su has led the national effort to reform outdated rules to better reflect the intent of enacted statutes and helped energize the Labor Department effort to reform and expand registered apprenticeship programs to meet and address the skilled workforce shortage crisis. In addition, Acting Secretary Su has worked with former Secretary Walsh to focus on the enforcement of long-established workplace laws routinely followed by scrupulous and law-abiding contractors and small businesses. While many unscrupulous businesses and their advocates may find this enhanced enforcement of the nation’s labor laws less than reassuring, advocating for the nation’s workers and the laws designed to protect both employees and law-abiding employers is the unquestioned mandate for DOL. To do any less provides an anticompetitive advantage for some employers bidding against employers that follow basic employment, wage and hour standards and many other training and health and safety rules.

During her tenure as Deputy Secretary of Labor, Ms. Su has served as the chief operating officer for the department managing its budget and executing the laws as passed. Ms. Su has also met with, worked with and listened to both employers and employees to best advance enacted statutes and advocate reasonable national labor – management policy. This has been especially true as the Department leads in implementing historic new laws, such as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, CHIPs and Science Act, and Inflation Reduction Act. Each of these landmark laws important to the business community, also requires the Department to guarantee proper implementation of long valued labor standards.

Prior to joining the U.S. Department of Labor, Deputy Secretary Su served as the secretary for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. As California labor commissioner from 2011 through 2018, Su was charged with the duty to enforce the state’s labor laws mandated by court order, enacted by the legislature and signed by the Governor to ensure compliance in countless and varied workplaces. She was an engaged force between unions and employers where she successfully connected

hopeful workers with apprenticeships and high skilled, well-paying union jobs. While a most helpful

chapter to her expanding her experience, the position at US Secretary of Labor is one without comparison.

at the State level, even in the largest state economy in our nation, a state that exceeds most of the other states in population.

SMACNA’s membership includes thousands of firms specializing in public work projects involving energy saving performance contracting, facility energy management and residential, commercial, public, and industrial energy system service, construction, and efficient retrofits. Based upon our extensive experience working with US Department of Labor officials for many decades, we urge you to take swift action and confirm this critical nomination so DOL can function as is mandate requires – to advocate and serve the nation’s workforce as well as their workplaces.

Sincerely,

Aaron Hilger

Chief Executive Officer

The Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association (SMACNA)

Cc: Sen. Bill Cassidy, Ranking Member

Cc: Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer

Cc: Minority Leader Mitch McConnell