

State of  
Washington  
House of  
Representatives



March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012

Mr. John W. Cleeson  
Chief Executive Officer, Younglove Construction  
P. O. Box 8800  
Sioux City Iowa, 51101

Mr. Tony Flagg  
Chief Operating Officer, United Grain  
1905 Harborside Drive  
Vancouver, WA 98660

Dear Mr. Cleeson and Mr Flagg,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the hiring practices and working conditions at the grain elevator/silo project at United Grain by Younglove Construction, LLC operating at the Port of Vancouver.

It has come to our attention that Younglove Construction hired approximately 200 foreign workers under the H1B1 Visa program and brought them to Vancouver to build the grain silo. Younglove's web site describes the construction method that they are employing as "slip pour" construction and describes this type of construction as "specialized". However there are construction companies in our state that are proficient in the "slip pour" construction method and who employ American workers. The H1B1 Visa Program is supposed to be reserved for workers who possess skills that cannot be found here in the United States. We are concerned that these 200 jobs could and should have been filled by local workers, at a time when local jobs are direly needed.

It is clear that the construction method used in building this grain silo is a skill that is readily available among workers in our region. As there are Washington companies that are qualified to build the Silo using the same method and would be employing Washington citizens; we are concerned at the validity of Younglove's use of "guest workers" under the H1B1 visa program.

Considering the current economic situation in our state and in Clark County, we are troubled by United Grain and Younglove Construction's decision to import workers from out of the country when there are American citizens who are struggling to find work and who are qualified to handle the tasks required on the silo project. This is especially troubling when the silo is being built on the Port of Vancouver which is public lands. We

would also like to enquire if you are participating in Washington's Warehouse/Grain Elevator Sales Tax Remittance Program.

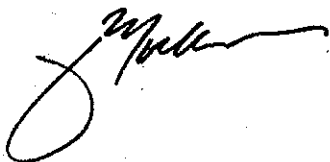
Construction work is inherently dangerous and injuries happen especially when people work long hours. Observers have told us that the laborers at your construction site work round the clock and 7 days a week in order to complete the construction of the silo. We would appreciate a record of your workplace accidents and confirmation of Younglove's worker's compensation coverage for their employees.

We take local job creation, worker safety, and economic recovery very seriously in our state and at this time we are working with Legislative staff to schedule a work session of the House Labor and Workforce Committee to explore the safety issues around "slip" construction and the use of guest workers.

We also will explore with the federal authorities why an H1B1 visa was granted for Younglove to bring in workers from outside of the country, for jobs which local workers could have performed.

We would appreciate a timely response to the issues that we have raised regarding your hiring practices, workers compensation coverage and construction methods. Thank you for your cooperation with our request.

Sincerely,



Representative Jim Moeller, 360-786-7872



Representative Sharon Wylie, 360-786-7924



Representative Tim Probst, 360-786-7994

CC: Senator Patty Murray  
Senator Maria Cantwell  
Representative Jamie Herrera-Beutler

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