

A federal issue that demands unity

By Dani Sheehan.

The roofing industry cannot thrive without both a secure and sustainable workforce.

Labor continues to be one of the roofing industry's biggest challenges, and this year's conversation is more important than ever. In a [recent episode of Roofing Road Trips®](#), Heidi J. Ellsworth sat down with Will Lorenz, president of [General Coatings Manufacturing Corp](#), to talk about the need for a unified industry voice in shaping labor and immigration policy. With the [National Roofing Contractors Association \(NRCA\)](#) leading advocacy efforts, you have an opportunity to influence legislation that will impact your crews, businesses and future workforce.

When it comes to labor, roofing contractors often face very local challenges – recruiting in your own cities, finding access to training in your region and retaining workers through seasonal cycles. But as Will pointed out, the solutions can't be found locally: "These aren't local issues that affect just the state of Oregon or the city of Portland, for example. They're decided on a federal level that really need different states, contractors from every area, manufacturers from every area saying what's important to them – what can help the economy grow, what can allow more people to have roofs that are keeping them safe and dry."

The Dignity Act: A high-level overview

Immigration and workforce issues have long been part of the conversation at [Roofing Day in D.C.](#), and a new piece of legislation signals progress on a topic both parties have largely sidestepped. The [NRCA is in support of the Dignity Act \(H.R. 4393\)](#), a bipartisan bill designed to strengthen border security while also providing immigration reforms that address critical workforce shortages.

Key provisions include:

- Allowing long-term undocumented individuals to earn lawful permanent residence status through work, military service or education.
- Expanding workforce training and apprenticeship opportunities for U.S. workers.
- Creating solutions to sustain economic growth and protect industries like roofing that rely on skilled labor.

As the [NRCA noted in recent email communication](#), "The Dignity Act contains balanced solutions vital to sustaining a strong economy, meeting our national security needs and securing our industry workforce."

The workforce reality

Will emphasized the need for skilled workers in our industry extends beyond the next generation of American workers building lifelong careers: “We have to have people who can do the jobs and skills that we need so that the economy moves forward, roofing is successful and goes from there. Maybe we need young people in America to contribute, but the truth is we still need additional workforce.”

The [NRCA has been clear in its advocacy](#): immigration reform that addresses the workforce needs of the roofing industry is vital to solving the chronic shortages now reaching crisis proportions. The shortage of qualified workers is the single most significant limitation on the ability of roofing companies to grow their businesses, with lost economic growth estimated between \$3.6 and \$7.2 billion annually. This challenge is expected to intensify as the workforce ages and demographic shifts reduce the pool of available workers.

What contractors can do

With labor shortages impacting profitability and growth, supporting advocacy efforts through NRCA helps ensure the roofing industry’s needs are heard at the federal level.

- **Stay informed:** Follow NRCA’s updates on the Dignity Act and other immigration reform efforts.
- **Engage locally and nationally:** Take advantage of NRCA’s resources to connect with lawmakers and share your perspective as a roofing business owner.
- **Prepare for compliance:** With increased immigration enforcement persisting, review your crew’s [Form I-9s](#) and ensure your [workforce documentation is in order](#).

Take action: [Learn more about the Dignity Act and NRCA’s workforce advocacy](#). Add your voice to ensure roofing labor remains recognized, respected and protected.

[Listen to the full podcast as Will and Heidi further discuss that this issue is about more than roofs - it's about respect for the people who make this industry great and the future of roofing as a trade.](#)