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ATELS
cc: DeRocc

HORIZON SHEET METAL INC.

February 27, 2002

U.S. Department of Labor
Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training
Washington, D.C. 20210

Attn: Emily Stover-DeRocco

Re: California Apprenticeship Program

We have just finished reading your letter to Steven Smith, Director, California Department of Industrial Relations and applaud your recognition of Mr. Smith's obvious organized labor influence on apprenticeship training.

The Air Conditioning Trade Association, of which we have been a member since 1993, has an approved apprenticeship training program. Our firm has, along with the trainees and the State of California, benefited by introducing qualified journey persons in the sheet metal craft through a four year school curriculum and on the job training.

The State of California, in particular the California Apprenticeship Council, California Department of Apprenticeship Standards and California Department of Industrial Relations, along with the encouragement of our Governor, Gray Davis, are restricting training by recognizing "Union Only" training programs and totally combating the "Merit Shops" instructional schools.

Our firm, along with many other Merit Shops, will now be unable to introduce new trainees to the apprenticeship programs due to these recent regulations and decisions, which you are obviously aware of.

We would like to take this opportunity to "Thank You" for recognizing the "Union Only" campaign to curtail apprenticeship training and your efforts to level the playing field by recognizing "Merit Shop" programs as a vital alternative.

Thank you,

Linda Valdez
President

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