

MEDIA RELEASE
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NUCA Pledges Open Industry Discussions To Prevent Suicide ***Proclamation Signed By Industry, Association & Government Leadership***

(Fairfax, Va.) – Pledging to deliver a welcoming environment to its member's employees, executives of the U.S. utility construction industry and the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA) joined other associations and organizations on February 7, 2023, at the Florida Transportation Builders Association (FTBA) Construction Conference in Orlando, Florida, in signing a joint proclamation to reduce construction industry suicides.

"One death by suicide is one too many," said Doug Carlson, NUCA's Chief Executive Officer. "With this signed pledge, NUCA will take the lead in our industry to provide an optimal environment to encourage the employees of our members to discuss their mental health struggles without fear or repercussion or reprisal. Everyone has an expectation and a right to work in a safe and healthy environment where open, honest, and meaningful conversations around this difficult topic of suicide and mental health are encouraged."

Suicide is a recurring tragedy in the overall American construction industry. Death by their own hand occurs at a rate approximately 4.3 times higher than the overall U.S. average. Unfortunately, the construction industry is ranked as the nation's second-highest industry that encounters these personal tragedies.

The proclamation notes that organizations which have support systems and formal processes to assist their employees in seeking and finding help in times of personal distress are more resilient to those in distress and their coworkers.

"We have a tough-guy culture in the construction industry. Employees still do not feel comfortable talking to their coworkers or managers about issues troubling them, or about general mental health issues. That must change. We must recognize the issues pushing our industry's employees to mistakenly choose such a tragic end, and let them know there are better choices to be found that address their troubles than taking their life and devastating their families," Carlson concluded.

The proclamation was signed by Carlson, Florida Secretary of Transportation Jared Perdue P.E., FTBA President Anath Prasad, P.E., Suncoast Utility Contractor Association Director Theresa Mannix, and 16 others representing construction industry companies or associations, and related governmental departments.

A digital copy of the February 7th industry proclamation can be found at www.ftba.com.

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About The National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)

Founded in 1964, the National Utility Contractors Association represents over 2,000 U.S. utility and excavation contractors, manufacturers, and supplier businesses who provide the materials and workforce to build and maintain our nation's intricate network of water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and electric infrastructure. NUCA is found online at www.nuca.com, and can be followed on Twitter at [@NUCA_National](https://twitter.com/NUCA_National). The association's Twitter hashtags are #NUCAdigs and #WeDigAmerica.