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## **New Study Demonstrates Critical Role of American Workers in Building Life-Saving Medicine Infrastructure**

*Research shows the U.S. pharmaceutical industry generated 65 million labor hours and \$2.6 billion in wages for skilled union workers who built and maintained advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities across 18 states over the past five years.*

The Pharmaceutical Industry Labor-Management Association (PILMA) today released groundbreaking research demonstrating the pharmaceutical and biotech industries' substantial contribution to American jobs and economic growth. The comprehensive study reveals that between 2019 and 2024, the industry generated more than 65 million labor hours and \$2.6 billion in wages for skilled union construction workers across 18 states.

The analysis, conducted by the Institute for Construction Employment Research (ICERES) and supported by PILMA, examined 1,048 pharmaceutical and biotech construction projects, each valued at \$5 million or more. Together, these projects represent \$86.5 billion in infrastructure investment. The findings underscore the connection between America's biopharmaceutical industry and highly skilled union tradespeople.

"This study validates what we've long known – that American biopharmaceutical leadership and its commitment to healthcare innovation support countless skilled union workers," said Mark McManus, Chairman of PILMA and President of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry. "The cutting-edge infrastructure that powers our country's biopharmaceutical industry is built and maintained by union pipefitters, electricians, ironworkers, and other skilled building trades professionals. This partnership between industry and labor not only advances medical breakthroughs, but it also creates pathways to the middle class for thousands of families across the nation."

The research reveals dramatic growth in pharmaceutical construction activity, with private-sector spending increasing by over 70% from 2019 to 2024 after adjusting for inflation. This surge, driven in part by a sharp increase in the manufacturing of breakthrough treatments like GLP-1 medications, fueled 136.3 million total construction labor hours across 14 skilled trades.

The study also highlights the pharmaceutical industry's role in supporting the future development of the construction workforce – finding that industry projects generated an estimated \$19.5 million in funding for union apprenticeship programs during this period. These apprenticeship programs provide debt-free pathways to middle-class careers

while strengthening regional workforce capabilities without taxpayer funding.

PILMA's analysis comes at a critical time. Foreign reference pricing proposals threaten to erode investment in domestic R&D and advanced manufacturing, risking the very jobs and infrastructure that this study highlights. History shows that when other nations adopted similar price control schemes, the United States – with market-based policies – seized the opportunity to lead in investment and innovation.

Today, China is aggressively racing to dominate this critical industry and has already surpassed the U.S. in registered clinical trials and R&D growth. As policymakers consider Most Favored Nation drug pricing and other measures that would undermine domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing, this research demonstrates what is at stake should the U.S. lose its edge to China: billions in wages for middle-class workers and America's position as the global leader in life sciences.

To view the study, [CLICK HERE](#).

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