



ELBERTON GRANITE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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The Honorable Rick Allen
U.S. House of Representatives
462 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Mike Collins
U.S. House of Representatives
2351 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515

Re: Support of H.R. 5437 - Protection of Lawful Commerce in Stone Slab Products Act

Dear Representatives Allen and Collins,

On behalf of the quarry operators, manufacturers, distributors, and skilled trades professionals that form the Elberton Granite Association, we write to respectfully request your support of H.R. 5437, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Stone Slab Products Act. The signatories of this letter collectively employ voters in the Elberton, Georgia area and strongly believe this legislation is necessary to protect jobs in Georgia and preserve its natural-stone industry.

As you know, the Elberton granite industry is one of eastern Georgia's historic economic engines. For more than a century, our community has produced premium natural stone and supported hundreds of direct and indirect jobs in Georgia — quarry workers, carvers, manufacturers, equipment manufacturers, transporters, and installers, including many family-owned, small businesses. We take this heritage seriously and work every day to preserve it, operating our businesses responsibly with a strong concern for the health and safety of our workers.

Recently, however, a wave of predatory litigation, mostly arising out of southern California, has attempted to hold upstream manufacturers and distributors liable for health harms related to fabrication activities that they do not perform and cannot control. These lawsuits treat finished natural stone slabs as though they inherently injure workers, even when the actual risk arises solely from improper fabrication by unscrupulous third parties operating without regard to existing OSHA standards.

The result is a legally untenable situation that threatens the long-term viability of the Georgia granite industry:

- Companies with leading health and safety practices are exposed to lawsuits for work undertaken by third parties, often years after the sale and regardless of precautions they have taken to highlight potential health hazards relating to fabrication.

Elberton Georgia... "the Granite Capital of the world"

- Litigation is directed at the quarriers and distributors engaged in the lawful commercial sale of slabs, rather than the low-end fabricators who disregard OSHA safety standards and are actually able to mitigate these health risks
- The economic ripple effects threaten investment, access to capital, and workforce stability in the natural stone industry and ultimately may threaten its very existence.

H.R. 5437 does not diminish worker protections and does not insulate from litigation those fabricators that disregard safety standards from responsibility for injuries suffered by their employees. Instead, it simply shields upstream quarriers, manufacturers, and distributors from liability for harms arising from the actions of third-party fabricators that disregard applicable safety standards. Fabrication activities are already governed by robust federal and state occupational safety laws, such as OSHA silica standards. Responsibility for responsible fabrication should lie with the party that performs and controls the fabrication process.

If upstream quarriers, manufacturers, and distributors are held to be liable for downstream fabrication, thousands of U.S. stone suppliers will continue to be targets for opportunistic litigation regardless of whether or not they have acted responsibly and in compliance with applicable rules and standards.

EGA members and their affiliates have been targeted by these lawsuits for several years now, and some have incurred millions of dollars in costs defending meritless litigation. This situation cannot continue indefinitely and the very existence of the Georgia natural stone industry will be placed at risk if it does.

We believe H.R. 5437 strikes the right balance by:

- Protecting lawful commerce.
- Making negligent and unscrupulous fabricators responsible for their actions.
- Preserving the viability of the American natural stone industry without weakening worker health protections.

We would be grateful for the opportunity to engage with your office to discuss these issues directly. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation and for your continued support of Georgia's working communities. We respectfully urge you to support H.R. 5437.

Sincerely,



Chris Kubas
Executive Vice President
Elberton Granite Association
cjkubas@gmail.com

Ross Oglesby 
Board of Trustees President - EGA Member Company Representative
Elberton Granite Association

EGA Member Companies

Baston Monuments, Inc.
Beaverdam Quarry
Blue Ribbon Quarries, Inc.
Blue Sky Quarries, Inc.
Broad River Quarries, LLC
Brownstone Memorials, Inc.
Burton Monument Company, Inc.
Central Granite Company, Inc.
Childs & Childs Granite Company, Inc.
Coldwater Granite, LLC
Dixie Granite Company
Geneva Granite Company, Inc.
Georgia Mausoleums, Inc.
G.B. Moon Granite Memorials, Inc.
Glass Art imaging, LLC
Gold Eagle Quarries, Inc.
Granites of America
Hillcrest Granite Company, Inc.
Holland Granite Company, LLC
Hunter Granite Sales, Inc.
Ideal Aggregate, LLC
J & B Granite Company, LLC
J & D Finishing, LLC
J & R Finishing Company, LLC
Keystone Memorials, Inc.
King's Monument Company, Inc.
L & M Granite Company, LLC
Majestic Marble
Matthews Granite
McCannon Granite Company, Inc.
Mize Granite Sales, Inc.
Pink Pearl Quarry, LLC
Polycor Georgia Granite Quarries, Inc.
Pyramid Materials, Inc.
Quality Monument Sales, Inc.
Reliance Granite Company, Inc.
River Edge Granite Company, Inc.
Savannah Valley Quarries, LLC
Solid Rock Granite Interiors
Southern Granite Company, Inc.
Star Granite Interiors
Sterling Gray Quarries, LLC
Superior Granite Company, Inc.
Walker Granite Company, Inc.
Wallace Granite Sales
Design Mart, LLC
Diamond Cut & Polish Company, Inc.
Don Jones Enterprises, Inc.
Granite Sales and Supply Corporation
Hulme's Tool Shop
Imex International, Inc.
Miles Supply of Elberton, Inc.
South Eastern Memorial Restoration
Spartan Tool Company, Inc.
A.Q. Stone Design Company
Duncan Transportation Service, LLC
Elberton Industrial Electric, Inc.
Evanswinn International, LLC
Flat Creek X-Press
Henry & Henry, Inc.
Husqvarna Construction Products
Jenson Etching, LLC
Johnson Machine Shop, Inc.
Kris Hendrix Etchings
Memorial Art
Nelson Granite, Inc.
Porcelains Unlimited, LLC
Robert's Contracting, Inc.
Sonya's Memorial Drafting, Inc.
Stone Graphics, Inc.
Travco Metal Works, LLC
U-Blast Stencil LTD
Wilson Industrial Electric, Inc.