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New bipartisan Michigan Building Trades Caucus announced

Rep. Ron Robinson, R-Utica, announced the formation of the Michigan Building Trades Caucus Wednesday.

The caucus is a bipartisan group focused on strengthening the state's skilled trades workforce. Robinson will serve as chair while Rep. Joey Andrews, D-St. Joseph and Sen. Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan, will serve as vice chairs.

"Skilled trades are the backbone of Michigan's economy and our communities," Robinson said in a statement. "This caucus is about bringing people together to support commonsense policies, expand opportunities for workers and make sure the next generation has a clear path to good-paying, in-demand careers."

He said to fix the housing shortage in the state, the state must prioritize career investment in technical education and apprenticeship programs that train builders and trades professionals.

Lawmakers and industry leaders will use the caucus to address these workforce shortages that impact infrastructure and housing and strengthen trades education and apprenticeship programs, Robinson said.

"Supporting our young people and developing homegrown talent is one of the smartest investments we can make," Robinson said. "Career and technical education creates pathways to stable, well-paying careers without leaving students in massive debt payments. These programs give people the opportunity to buy a home, raise a family, and build a future right here in Michigan."

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