

Rally held outside construction site of new federal courthouse

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HARRISBURG, Pa. (WHTM) - The creation of a new federal courthouse has been in the works for years in Harrisburg. Monday, a rally was held at the job site, at the corner of 6th and Reily streets. Dozens of people showed up.

"It's not a white issue, it's not a black issue, it's not a brown or beige issue. It's a labor issue. It's a working issue," said Reverend Dr. Franklin E. Harriston Allen, President of the Greater Harrisburg NAACP.

39 months of construction on a 243,000 square feet, ten-story federal courthouse in Harrisburg has many local businesses and labor unions upset.

"That \$200 million for the courthouse is not being spent on local labor and local minorities," said Dr. Allen.

The main issue, they argue, money for this project, located in Harrisburg, should stay largely in the area.

"The local economy is going to be really impacted by the fact that these contractors, that they've signed on, are coming from another part of the state," said County Commissioner candidate Diane Bowman (D).

The general contractor, Mascaro, is based out of Pittsburgh. On its website, Mascaro says, "We make a good faith effort to recruit and involve small and disadvantaged businesses in all of our projects."

We spoke with city officials, who say, the city is very interested in ensuring that minority businesses and contractors have every opportunity to bid on work, associated with the project.

Since this is a federal project, contractors have to be federally certified to work on it. Meanwhile, we reached out to Mascaro, about its response to this rally, but have yet to hear back.