



**BORDER BID BROUHAHA** Bidders seeking to build new sections of the border wall may now face contract curbs in California cities, as well as statewide penalties in California and New York.

**CONTRACTS**

# Fallout From Wall Bids

San Francisco last month joined other political entities critical of firms seeking design-build work on the Trump administration's U.S.-Mexico border wall, with a March 21 bill to ban wall-bidders from city contracts during the bid period. Already awarded contracts are exempt, but the ban may also include subcontractors, say media reports. Nearby Berkeley and Oakland are weighing similar measures, while California and New York are pushing statewide contract bans or pension-fund divestments against bidders. "Imposing any ban not based on contractor qualifications is preferential treatment," said AGC of California CEO Tom Holsman on March 24.

At least 500 design and construction sector firms and others could bid on the wall, with conceptual designs due on March 29. The final list of about 40 bidders will have 30 days to submit full proposals, says the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. Bidders will not include Mexican cement giant Cemex, which, despite earlier statements of interest, did not participate, a spokesman confirmed. A French politician was critical of megasupplier LaFargeHolcim CEO Eric Olsen's stated intention to provide cement from border-state plants. Contract awards are set for the end of May, says the agency. The proposed Trump budget includes \$4.1 billion for the wall through 2018, but Democrats will fight moves to include the money in a stopgap funding bill set for a vote by April 28 to avoid a partial government shutdown.

—*JT Long and Debra K. Rubin*

**MOVERS AND SHAKERS** Pepper Construction Group, Chicago, has elevated **Christopher R. Averill** to chief operating officer. He joined in 2015 as chief financial officer and executive vice president. Also promoted is **Jake Pepper**, who now is a vice president leading strategic IT initiatives. **Todd Donaldson**

is named president of Hourigan Construction, Richmond, Va. He succeeds firm founder **Mark Hourigan**, who becomes CEO. EW Howell Construction Group, Plainview, N.Y., has elevated **Paul O'Rourke** to executive vice president and COO and **Daniel Williams** to chief financial officer.

**OSHA FINES CONCRETE FIRM NEARLY \$13,000 FOR FATAL FALL**

The U.S. Labor Dept. last month fined Baker Concrete Construction nearly \$13,000 for a serious violation after construction worker Alex Baize, 33, fell to his death from the 14th floor of an Oklahoma City high-rise site in 2016, says The Oklahoman. After a six-month probe, OSHA said the concrete subcontractor failed to ensure the worksite was "free from recognized hazards" that would cause death or serious physical harm. The firm allowed workers to use a self-propelled lift near the open edge of the 14th floor, said a citation issued to the company that the newspaper obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. Baker Concrete officials did not respond to the paper's request for comment.

**BIG LNG FIRMS IN PAY DISPUTE**

Laing O'Rourke Australia Construction in March demobilized 800 workers on Australia's \$35-billion Ichthys LNG project in Darwin, the result of a pay dispute with its EPC subcontracting consortium partner, Kawasaki Heavy Industries. Laing was building four large cryogenic tanks and other infrastructure. Neither firm disclosed dispute details, but Laing told local media it had not been paid for several months. Work stopped with tanks 91% complete. Laing said another project on the Ichthys site, not linked to Kawasaki, is unaffected.

**KIEWIT GETS GAS-PLATFORM JOB**

Houston engineer Wood Group Mustang has started detailed planning to build Israel's huge Leviathan offshore natural-gas field, in the Mediterranean Sea, announcing that Kiewit Offshore Services will construct its estimated \$500-million to \$700-million platform. Leviathan is set to start production by the end of 2019. ■

**"EARLY IN MY CAREER, I SPENT A LOT OF TIME TRYING TO PROVE THAT I WAS JUST LIKE THE GUYS, BUT I CAME TO REALIZE THAT MY BIGGEST DIFFERENTIATOR COULD ALSO BE ONE OF MY BIGGEST STRENGTHS. I AM A WOMAN, I AM A MOTHER, AND I AM A [COMPANY] LEADER. THEY ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE."**

—GRETCHEN KINSELLA, PROJECT EXECUTIVE, DPR CONSTRUCTION

**177**  
**THOUSAND**

Number of European Union construction workers the U.K. will lose if it cuts EU market ties in Brexit negotiations, says a March 15 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors survey.

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