

# NYC might be left out of prevailing-wage bill

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New York City might be excluded from the expansion of the state's [prevailing-wage](#) laws.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo is pushing to exempt the city from a bill that would expand the definition of public works requiring [prevailing wages](#), according to [The Wall Street Journal](#). Building-trade unions have advocated for the legislation, while real estate developers warn the expansion would raise costs and slow projects.

For New York City, prevailing-wage rates are determined by the city comptroller and typically hew closely to the pay structures of construction unions, making it likely that union labor will be used for projects requiring such rates. Although state law requires the prevailing wage to be paid on public works, what constitutes such a project is not spelled out.

The new legislation would provide that definition by requiring construction projects receiving more than 30% of their budget from public sources to pay prevailing wages. Those terms were introduced Sunday in a bill by Assemblyman Harry Bronson, a Democrat from Rochester, according to the *Journal*. Previous legislation would have required any construction projects receiving public funds to pay prevailing wages.

The *Journal* article cites "people familiar with the talks" for the insight into Cuomo's negotiations. In a radio interview Monday, Cuomo said he supports prevailing wages but would veto a "bad bill."

"Government is full of good intention and poor implementation," the governor said. "If you do prevailing wage wrong, you'll actually cost union jobs. So, I disagree with the bills of the houses right now." Some in the real estate industry argued that the original bill would have made some projects uneconomical, reducing job creation.

The [Albany Times Union](#) reported that the bill faces an uphill climb, with the legislative session in Albany ending today. Cuomo has pushed for changes to the legislation that, according to the report, have made the bill "unpalatable" to the organized labor groups backing the effort.