CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS
AB 1980 (Caloza)
As Amended August 17, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires, upon appropriation by the Legislature, the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), through its Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), to establish and administer the Equal Representation in Construction Apprenticeships (ERiCA) Grant Program, as specified, to, among other things, increase the number of women, nonbinary individuals, and underrepresented populations employed in the construction trades.

Senate Amendments

1) Delete all provisions in the Assembly version except for:

   a) The requirement that, upon appropriation by the Legislature, the DIR, through the DAS, establish and administer the ERiCA Grant Program; and

   b) The authorization for the DIR to issue rules, regulations, guidelines, policies or procedures to implement the bill.

2) Establish goals for the ERiCA Grant Program, as specified.

COMMENTS

Women and other populations underrepresented in the construction workforce:

Nationally, women represent just 11 percent of the construction industry. Women make up an even smaller percentage (4.3 percent in 2025) of the hands-on trades jobs such as electricians, carpenters, laborers, and plumbers.[1] Other populations underrepresented in the building and construction trades include non-binary individuals, justice involved, at-risk youth and certain ethnic minorities.

The construction industry, like many others, is facing upcoming retirements of record levels of skilled tradespeople and urgently needs a pipeline of new workers. Furthermore, jobs in the building and construction trades offer individuals meaningful work with good pay. This creates an ideal environment for women and other historically-underrepresented populations to enter into and advance in the industry.

Women in Construction Priority Unit:

To help more women and underrepresented populations enter the trades, the Legislature and Governor, via the 2022-23 Budget Act, established the Women in Construction Priority Unit at the DIR. The unit was tasked with, among other things:

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[1] Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey. 2025. Bureau of Labor Statistics. https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm

1) Assisting and providing resources to women and nonbinary individuals including apprentices and journeypersons in the construction industry

2) Providing resources to employers and project owners to improve worksite culture and address barriers to employment

3) Developing materials and training for employers and unions to promote recruitment and retention

4) Leadership training to increase the upward mobility of women and nonbinary individuals in construction careers

In each of the Budget Acts from 2022 to 2025, $15 million was appropriated to support the unit, for a total of $60 million. That funding was used, in part, to stand up the ERiCA Grant Program.

ERiCA Grant Program:

The ERiCA Grant Program aims to increase outreach to and reduce barriers for women, non-binary individuals, and underrepresented populations to enter the building and construction trades. The program provides funding to pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs for recruitment and outreach, childcare stipends, and improvements to worksite culture.

To date, DIR has awarded approximately $51 million in funding through the ERiCA grants. The remaining $9 million appropriated by the Legislature for the Women in Construction Priority Unit was used for staffing, program evaluation and other administrative costs.

Neither the Women in Construction Priority unit nor the ERiCA Grant Program have remaining funding unless more is appropriated in this or future years' budget acts. This bill would codify the ERiCA Grant Program, as well as establish goals for the program.

According to the Author
"Today, women hold only about 10 percent of construction trade jobs and apprenticeships nationwide. Despite making up more than half of our country's population, the industry has been historically male-dominated, and too many talented and capable women stay on the sidelines, not realizing that these opportunities are within reach. AB 1980 turns opportunity into success, equipping women—especially from historically underrepresented populations—with the training, stipends, and support services they need to provide for their families, while building long-term, thriving careers in skilled trades. Because when we invest in women, we invest in California's future."

Arguments in Support
Women in Non Traditional Employment Roles, co-sponsor of the measure, states that "California faces an urgent workforce challenge. As the state continues to invest in critical infrastructure, housing, transportation, climate resilience, and clean energy projects, demand for a skilled construction workforce continues to grow. Yet women remain significantly underrepresented in registered apprenticeship programs and skilled trades occupations despite the family-sustaining wages, benefits, and long-term career mobility these careers provide. For many women, the barriers to entering apprenticeship programs are not a lack of interest or ability, they are financial and structural. The cost of childcare, transportation, tools, work attire,

certifications, and lost wages during training often make participation impossible. Women who are primary caregivers, low-income women, and women returning to the workforce face particularly significant challenges in accessing these opportunities."

Arguments in Opposition
None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, "this bill would result in an annual cost pressure of an unknown amount, likely in the tens of millions of dollars annually, to appropriate funds to DIR to continue administering the ERiCA Grant Program (General Fund). DIR's Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) awarded $25 million during the first round of grants for 2023-25 and $26 million during the second round of grants for 2025-27. DIR indicates that its annual costs to administer the Program would total $1.4 million on an ongoing basis (General Fund)."

VOTES:

ASM LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT: 7-0-0
YES: Ortega, Alanis, Chen, Elhawary, Kalra, Lee, Ward

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4
YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache
ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-2
YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

UPDATED

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