

Date of Hearing: April 22, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Liz Ortega, Chair

AB 2550 (Caloza) – As Amended April 16, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Women in the construction industry: report

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Employment Development Department (EDD) to collect and report to the Legislature specified data related to the state's construction workforce, including the current number of construction workers who are women. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the EDD to collect all of the following data:
  - a) The current supply of construction workers who are women, by specialty.
  - b) The geographical distribution of construction workers who are women, by specialty.
  - c) The diversity of construction workers who are women, by specialty, including, but not limited to, data on race, ethnicity, and languages spoken.
  - d) The current and forecasted demand for construction workers, by specialty.
  - e) The training and educational capacity to produce trained, certified, and licensed construction workers, by specialty and geographical distribution, including, but not limited to, the number of state registered preapprenticeship and apprenticeship slots, the number of enrollments, the attrition rate, and wait time to enter a program.
    - i) Requires the EDD to work with the Department of Industrial Relations' (DIR) Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) to determine this capacity within state registered construction preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, as well as to determine the number of construction preapprentices and apprentices in any given year who are women.
- 2) Requires the EDD, on or before July 1, 2027, and every three years thereafter, to transmit to the Legislature a report of the data collected pursuant to this measure, as specified, as well as post the report to its website.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the EDD within the Labor and Workforce Development Agency and vests it with specified duties, purposes, responsibilities, and jurisdiction related to job creation activity functions, among other things. Unemployment Insurance Code § 301.
- 2) Requires the EDD to operate the State-Local Cooperative Labor Market Information Program as a primary source for local and statewide occupational information. Unemployment Insurance Code § 10533.
- 3) Requires the EDD, in conjunction with the Department of Social Services, the DIR, the Department of Education, and the Chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges, to establish a systemwide policy of actively promoting the training of women in

nontraditional occupations. Defines “nontraditional occupations” as any job classification in which not more than 25 percent of the employees are women, according to the statistics of the United States Department of Labor. Unemployment Insurance Code § 9602.5.

- 4) Provides for preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs within the DAS, sponsored by specific entities and employers, and requires the Chief of the DAS to perform various functions with respect to apprenticeship programs and the welfare of apprentices. Labor Code § 3070 et seq.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** 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.<sup>1</sup> 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:

- Assisting and providing resources to women and nonbinary individuals including apprentices and journeypersons in the construction industry
- Providing resources to employers and project owners to improve worksite culture and address barriers to employment
- Developing materials and training for employers and unions to promote recruitment and retention
- 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:*

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

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, the 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 program has remaining funding unless more is appropriated in this or future years' budget acts.

#### *EDD's Labor Market Information Division:*

The Labor Market Information Division (LMID) is the entity within the EDD that is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and publishing data and reports on California's labor force, industries, occupations, employment projections, wages and other labor market and economic data. The LMID does this work in conjunction with the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) through a federal-state cooperative program. The LMID conducts local surveys and processes unemployment insurance records, which are then used by the BLS to create standardized national, state, and regional statistics.

#### *According to the author:*

“Women belong on every job site in California. For too long, women have been underrepresented in the construction trades—not because of a lack in skill and talent, but because of inequities in access, opportunity, and data. AB 2550 is a critical step forward, helping us identify gaps in the construction industry, while creating stronger, clearer pathways for women to succeed and thrive in these careers.”

The author adds that the measure promotes equity, per HR 39 (Gipson, 2021), in that “For too long, opportunities for women in construction have felt out of reach. The industry has been historically male-dominated, and too many talented and capable women have been placed on the sidelines. This bill shows young women that a career in construction is not only attainable, but a space where they can lead and thrive.”

#### **Arguments in Support**

Women in Non Traditional Employment Roles, cosponsor of this measure, writes that, “Currently, California lacks comprehensive, statewide data on women in construction, limiting the ability of policymakers, educators, and workforce leaders to effectively address gaps in participation and training pipelines. AB 2550 would require the collection of critical data on workforce supply, geographic distribution, diversity, and training capacity, providing the insights necessary to build more inclusive and responsive workforce systems. Without this data, efforts to expand opportunities for women remain fragmented and less effective. With it, California can better align training programs with labor market needs, identify barriers to entry, and ensure resources are directed where they are most needed.”

#### **Arguments in Opposition**

None on file.

### **Prior and Related Legislation**

AB 1980 (Caloza) of 2026 would require, upon appropriation by the Legislature, the DIR through its DAS, to establish and administer the ERiCA Grant Program, as specified, to increase equitable access to building and construction career pathways for women, nonbinary individuals, and underrepresented populations. Pending in this Committee.

AB 133 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 143, Statutes of 2021, among other things, required the Department of Health Care Access and Information to work with the EDD's LMID, state licensing boards, and state higher education entities to collect, to the extent available, specified data related to the current supply of and forecasted demand for health care workers.

AB 1339 (Committee on Labor and Employment) of 2005 would have required the EDD's LMID to, on at least a quarterly basis, provide the Legislature with a report of mass layoff statistic data on the movement of work outside of California which it currently collects in conjunction with the BLS and through its own employer surveys. Vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger.

### **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

#### **Support**

Women in Non Traditional Employment Roles (Co-Sponsor)

#### **Opposition**

None on file.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Erin Hickey / L. & E. /