
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND RETIREMENT
Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2550	Hearing Date:	July 1, 2026
Author:	Caloza		
Version:	April 16, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Emma Bruce		

SUBJECT: Women in the construction industry: report

KEY ISSUE

This bill requires 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.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Employment Development Department (EDD) within the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA). EDD is responsible for, among other duties, job creation activities and administering unemployment and disability insurance coverage and benefits. (Unemployment Insurance Code §301)
- 2) Requires 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 EDD, in conjunction with the Department of Social Services, 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) Establishes the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) within the LWDA to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of California, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment. (Labor Code §50.5)
- 5) Establishes the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) within DIR to oversee apprenticeship programs and requires the Chief of the Division (Chief) to perform various functions to promote the welfare of apprentices. (Labor Code §3070 et seq.)
- 6) Provides for preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs within DAS, sponsored by specific entities and employers, and requires the Chief to perform various functions with respect to apprenticeship programs and the welfare of apprentices. (Labor Code §3070 et seq.)

- 7) Requires DIR, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish a Women in Construction Priority Unit to coordinate and help ensure collaboration across DIR's divisions, and maximize state and federal funding to support women and nonbinary individuals in the construction workforce. (Labor Code §107.7.1)

This bill:

- 1) Requires 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. EDD shall work with the 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 EDD, on or before July 1, 2027, and every three years thereafter, to transmit a report of the data collected pursuant to these provisions to the Legislature.
- 3) Requires EDD to post the report in 2) on its internet website.

COMMENTS

1. Background:

Women and Other Underrepresented Populations in the Trades

Careers in the building and construction trades offer a reliable pathway into the middle class. Journeypersons and apprentices enjoy high wages, as well as health and pension benefits. In California, an increasing demand for housing, infrastructure, and climate-resilient development has led to sustained investments in apprenticeship programs. In April 2026, for example, the State announced \$18.6 million in grants to support apprenticeship in the building and construction trades. The construction industry's urgent need for skilled workers creates opportunities to diversify its 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.

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

Women in Construction Priority Unit

As part of the 2022/2023 Budget Act, Governor Newsom signed into law legislation to create the Women in Construction Unit at DIR. The goal of the Unit is to support women and nonbinary individuals in entering the construction workforce. Among other things, the Unit was tasked with:

- 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 addition to the Unit, a Women in Construction Advisory Committee was created to develop recommendations to diversify the construction workforce. The Advisory Committee is composed of representatives from certified collective bargaining agents who represent construction workers, construction industry employers, labor-management groups in the industry, and representatives from the Labor Commissioner's Office, Cal/OSHA, and the Department of Fair Employment and Housing.

Equal Representation in Construction Apprenticeship Grant (ERiCA Grant Program)

Using money appropriated in each of the Budget Acts from 2022 to 2025, the Unit established the ERiCA Grant Program. ERiCA grants seek to improve access to training and employment opportunities for underrepresented populations in construction trades throughout the state. Grantees can apply for 3 categories of funding:

- 1) Recruitment: Expanding recruitment efforts to be more inclusive of women and non-binary individuals to better facilitate their entry into construction careers,
- 2) Childcare: supportive resources for childcare and,
- 3) Worksite culture: mentoring and mental health support for apprentices and pre-apprentices and training for all on the worksite to better navigate the worksite interactions.

DAS awarded \$25 million in funds during the first round of the ERiCA grant program (2023-2025). The second round of grants is underway, with an expected performance period of June/July 2025- June 30, 2027. DAS awarded \$26,169,217 for this round.

EDD Workforce Services Branch and Labor Market Information Division

In addition to administering the state's unemployment benefits, EDD also administers a Labor Market Information Division (LMID). Through LMID, EDD collects, analyzes, and publishes statistical data and reports on California's labor force, industries, occupations, employment projections, wages and other important labor market and economic data. LMID does this work in conjunction with the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) through a federal-state cooperative program. LMID conducts local surveys and processes unemployment insurance records, which are then used by the BLS to create standardized national, state, and regional statistics.

This bill

AB 2550 would require 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, the number of state-registered preapprenticeship and apprenticeship slots, the number of enrollments, the attrition rate, and the wait time to enter a program. The bill would also require EDD to work with DAS to determine the capacity within state-registered preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs as well as to determine the number of construction preapprentices and apprentices in any given year who are women.

2. Need for this bill?

According to the author:

“The construction industry has historically been male-dominated, limiting access and awareness of opportunities for women across California. Nationally, women hold approximately 10 percent of construction trade jobs and apprenticeships, despite accounting for more than half of the United States population. Although careers in construction offer strong career pathways and economic mobility that support families and strengthen the State's economy, women remain significantly underrepresented in the field...

Expanding opportunities for women in construction will require stronger training pipelines, better access to apprenticeship and educational programs, and more accessible information to understand workforce needs and barriers to entry. Improving data collection related to women in construction can help legislators, educators, and workforce development leaders assess current workforce needs and forecast future demand.

As it stands, there is no comprehensive statewide dataset that extensively analyzes the supply, geographic distribution, diversity, labor demand, and training pipeline programs for women in construction. Without this data, legislators and workforce development leaders lack the necessary information to create effective plans and strategies that address workforce shortages and expand access to opportunities in the field.”

3. Proponent Arguments:

The sponsor of the measure, Women in Non Traditional Employment Roles, argues:

“**AB 1980 (Caloza)** establishes the California Women's Pre-Apprenticeship and Stipend Program, a critical investment in workforce equity and economic mobility...

AB 2550 (Caloza) complements these efforts by strengthening the data infrastructure needed to inform policy and workforce development strategies. 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.

Together, AB 1980 and AB 2550 create a powerful, complementary framework: one bill invests directly in women's access to training and careers, while the other ensures the state has the data necessary to sustain and scale those efforts. This dual approach is essential to building a more equitable, skilled, and resilient workforce.”

4. Opponent Arguments:

None received.

5. Prior Legislation:

AB 1980 (Caloza, 2026) would direct DIR, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to establish the Equal Representation in Construction Apprenticeships Grant Program (ERiCA Grant Program) to increase equitable access to building and construction career pathways for women, nonbinary individuals, and underrepresented populations in California. *This bill is pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee.*

SB 101 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 4, Statutes of 2025) among other provisions, appropriated \$14,993,000 to support the Women in Construction Priority Unit within DIR.

AB 107 (Gabriel, Chapter 22, Statutes of 2024) among other provisions, appropriated \$15 million to support the Women in Construction Priority Unit within DIR.

SB 105 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 862, Statutes of 2023) among other provisions, appropriated \$15 million to support the Women in Construction Priority Unit within DIR.

SB 154 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 43, Statutes of 2022) among other provisions, appropriated \$60 million to DAS and required it to be used, in part, to support the Women in Construction Priority Unit within DIR; provided that it is the intent of the Legislature that \$15 million be provided on an ongoing basis to support this unit.

SB 191 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 67, Statutes of 2022) among other provisions, required DIR to establish a Women in Construction Priority Unit to coordinate and help ensure collaboration across DIR's divisions, and maximize state and federal funding to support women and nonbinary individuals in the construction workforce.

SB 1115 (Skinner, 2022) would have required, upon appropriation by the Legislature, the DIR to establish a Women in Construction Priority Unit to coordinate and help ensure collaboration across the DIR's divisions and maximize state and federal funding to support women and non-binary individuals in the construction workforce. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations 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.

SUPPORT

Women In Non Traditional Employment Roles (Sponsor)
Contractors State License Board
Equal Rights Advocate
Grid Alternatives
Rising Sun Center for Opportunity

OPPOSITION

None received

-- END --