

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
SB 75 (Smallwood-Cuevas) – As Amended June 17, 2025

Policy Committee:	Labor and Employment	Vote:	7 - 0
	Public Safety		9 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes the Preapprenticeship Pathways to Employment Pilot Program (Program).

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires, by January 1, 2028, and until January 1, 2032, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) ~~to~~ partner with the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) and recognized building and construction trades councils to establish the Program at one men's facility and one women's facility.
- 2) Requires the Program ~~to~~ provide incarcerated individuals access to preapprenticeship training in a wide range of skilled trades and career readiness and case management services, which may be provided by existing workforce and community-based programs, to facilitate direct transition into union apprenticeships following release.
- 3) Requires, beginning January 1, 2029, CDCR to annually report program participation data to the Legislature.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Annual costs in the low millions of dollars to CDCR to establish and operate the Program, including hiring certified instructors and coordinating with local joint apprenticeship training committees to provide classroom and hands-on instruction across various subject matters (General Fund (GF)). CDCR estimates implementation costs to exceed \$1.5 million per institution, with additional per-institution costs in the millions of dollars to provide career readiness and case management services absent interest from community groups to provide such services.

Additionally, CDCR notes that several provisions of this bill are unclear, which may further increase costs. For example, the requirement to ensure equitable access to the Program across each CDCR facility may require CDCR to implement the Program at all facilities, not just one men's and one women's facility, and references to post-release case management services and data reporting may require CDCR to contact and track individuals no longer within CDCR's jurisdiction.

- 2) Costs of approximately \$209,000 in the first year and \$197,000 annually thereafter to DIR's Division of Apprenticeship Standards to partner with CDCR to implement the Program (GF).

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

There is an urgent need to create meaningful preapprenticeship and reentry pathways for incarcerated individuals who are ready to rebuild their lives, because too many people, especially women and people of color, are released without the skills, credentials, and support they need to succeed. SB 75 ensures that incarcerated individuals can access high-quality [Multi-Craft Core Curriculum]-certified training and wraparound services so they can transition directly into union-affiliated skilled trades careers, achieve economic stability, and avoid the cycles of poverty and recidivism that harm families and communities.

This bill is supported by the California Legislative Women's Caucus, Society for Human Resource Management, and various social justice groups.

2) **Post-Release Unemployment.** According to the Prison Policy Initiative, formerly incarcerated individuals are unemployed at a rate of over 27%. Such unemployment is highest within the first two years of release, making pre-release and post-release employment services critical. This bill requires CDCR ~~to~~ implement the Program, providing incarcerated individuals access to preapprenticeship training in the skilled trades, as well as career readiness and case management services, to facilitate an individual's direct transition into a union apprenticeship upon release.

3) **Prior Legislation.** SB 825 (Beall), of the 2017-18 Legislative Session, would have required CDCR ~~to~~ develop guidelines for incarcerated individuals' participation in preapprenticeship training programs and authorized CDCR to use the design-build contracting process or construction manager at-risk contracts for certain construction contracts. SB 825's hearing in the Assembly Public Safety Committee was canceled at the request of the author.

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