

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5491

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor & Workforce Development, March 2, 1999

Title: An act relating to the required use of apprentices on public works projects.

Brief Description: Using apprentices on public works projects.

Sponsors: Senators Costa, Roach, Franklin, Thibaudeau, McAuliffe and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor & Workforce Development: 2/18/99, 3/2/99 [DPS, DNPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5491 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Kline and Wojahn.

Minority Report: Do not pass substitute.

Signed by Senator Hochstatter.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7452)

Background: Under state law, public works contracts do not require utilization of apprentices. Under local ordinances or policies, however, certain public works contracts let by the City of Seattle, the Port of Seattle, and King County must require utilization of apprentices.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Contracts for public works estimated to cost \$1 million or more must require that no less than 10 percent of the labor hours be performed by apprentices enrolled in state-approved apprenticeship training programs. A contractor's failure to comply with the apprentice utilization requirement is a breach of contract. Such a failure also may bear on qualification for future contracts.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Only contracts for public works estimated to cost \$1 million or more, rather than all public works contracts, are subject to the apprentice utilization requirement. A contractor's failure to comply with the apprentice utilization requirement is a breach of contract. Such a failure also may bear on qualification for future contracts.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 1999.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: State-approved apprenticeship programs provide access to careers and family wage jobs. They offer the chance to earn a living and receive on-the-job training. They successfully graduate fully-qualified journey-level workers. They have helped bring women and minorities into the building and construction trades. This apprentice utilization requirement allows the government and the private sector to provide training at a low cost.

Testimony Against: State-approved apprenticeship programs can have long waiting lists. Federally-approved apprenticeship programs also provide training. They have also helped people discontinue receiving public assistance. Apprentices in federally-approved programs pay taxes that help finance public works and should be allowed to work on public works. This apprentice utilization requirement would deny them the opportunity to work on public works. This requirement would increase construction and administrative costs and would upset competitive bidding laws. This requirement is not good for workers, contractors, or taxpayers.

Testified: PRO: Senator Jeralita Costa, prime sponsor; Otto Herman, REBOUND; Robert Dilger, Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council; Dan Sexton, Washington State Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters; Richard King, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers - Local 46; Spencer Schweigler, Western Washington Painters and Tapers Apprenticeship; CON: Rick Slunaker, Associated General Contractors of Washington; Cynthia Coatas, Charter Construction; James A. Sneed, W.G. Clark Construction; Curt Anderson, ACCA/AGC; Steve Goldblatt, University of Washington.