
Transportation Committee

ESB 5863

Brief Description: Concerning highway construction workforce development.

Sponsors: Senators Jayapal, Rivers, Keiser, Miloscia, Conway, Angel, Liias, Pedersen, Hobbs, Kohl-Welles and Hasegawa.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Requires the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to work with the Department of Labor and Industries for apprenticeship preparation and support services, including providing grants to local Indian tribes, churches, nonprofits, and other organizations.
- Directs the WSDOT to recruit women and persons of color to the apprenticeship program, create a full-time equivalent position to coordinate these activities, and actively engage with populations underrepresented in the apprenticeship program.
- Requires a report by December 1, 2020, on how the efforts to engage with underrepresented communities have resulted in an increase in diversity in the apprenticeship program.

Hearing Date: 3/23/15

Staff: Alyssa Ball (786-7140).

Background:

The Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Office of Equal Opportunity provides statewide direction to department programs relating to external civil rights, including disadvantaged business enterprises, minority/women business enterprises, and on-the-job training support services. This office is guided by federal and state civil rights laws and regulations.

Currently, RCW 47.01.435 directs the WSDOT to expend federal funds, and other funds that may be available to the WSDOT, to increase diversity in the highway construction workforce.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

To the greatest extent practicable, the WSDOT coordinates with the Apprenticeship and Training Council at the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), using these funds for the following activities:

- pre-apprenticeship programs approved by the council;
- pre-employment counseling;
- orientation on the highway construction industry, including outreach to women, minorities, and other disadvantaged individuals;
- basic skills improvement classes;
- career counseling;
- remedial training;
- entry requirements for training programs;
- supportive services and assistance with transportation;
- child care and special needs;
- job-site monitoring and retention services; and
- assistance with tools, protective clothing, and other related support for employment costs.

In 2014 Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6011 provided the WSDOT \$200,000 to create a disadvantaged business enterprise outreach coordinator.

Summary of Bill:

The WSDOT must coordinate with the L&I, rather than the Apprenticeship and Training Council, to expend funding for apprenticeship preparation and support services, including grants to local Indian tribes, churches, nonprofits, and other organizations. To the greatest extent practicable, the WSDOT must expend funding from sources other than the federal funds that are used under current law. The services that the WSDOT provides to increase diversity in the highway construction workforce is expanded to include the recruitment of women and persons of color to participate in the apprenticeship program at the WSDOT.

The WSDOT must hire and maintain a full-time equivalent position to coordinate department activities that increase diversity in the highway construction workforce and actively engage with communities with populations that are underrepresented in current transportation apprenticeship programs.

The annual report that the WSDOT, in coordination with the L&I, provides to the Transportation committees of the Legislature must include an analysis of the WSDOT's efforts to coordinate diversity in the highway construction workforce and engage communities with populations that are underrepresented in transportation apprenticeship programs.

The WSDOT must report on how efforts to actively engage with communities with populations that are underrepresented in current transportation apprenticeship programs result in a higher level of participation among underrepresented populations over a five-year period by December 31, 2020.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 23, 2015.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.