

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## ESB 5863

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to highway construction workforce development.

**Brief Description:** Concerning highway construction workforce development.

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

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 3/23/15, 3/31/15 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill  
(As Amended by Committee)**

- 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 and to 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.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Bergquist, Gregerson, Kochmar, McBride, Moeller, Morris, Ortiz-Self, Riccelli, Sells, Takko, Tarleton and Zeiger.

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*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.*

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Harmsworth, Hayes, Pike, Shea, Wilson and Young.

**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. 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.

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**Summary of Amended 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 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.

**Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Bill:**

The amended bill removes the requirement for the WSDOT to hire a full-time equivalent (FTE) employee to coordinate and engage with communities with populations that are underrepresented in current transportation apprenticeship programs. Instead, the WSDOT is required to do this activity without hiring a new FTE.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs are a pathway to living wage jobs, particularly for women and people of color. It is difficult to get people into pre-apprenticeship programs and to let people know that they exist, and to support them to be able to finish their apprenticeship program. Washington needs to refocus its efforts towards expanding these programs to underrepresented populations. Young people face greater financial hardship today, including costs of transportation, housing, tools, and so forth. This bill would allow pre-apprenticeship programs to provide additional support. The pipeline from pre-apprenticeship programs to apprenticeships is very important. Pre-apprenticeship programs are an expensive training arena. This bill would be especially helpful to single mothers, as it can provide help for daycare during the training program.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Jayapal, prime sponsor; Terry Tilton, Northwest Carpenters; Lee Newgent, Washington Building Trades; Halene Sigmund, Construction Industry Training

Council of Washington; Melinda Nichols; Susan Crane, SkillUp Washington; and Samantha Kealoha and Theresa Wiles, Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.