

Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters



Affiliated with
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
25120 Pacific Highway South Suite 200, Kent, WA 98032
1(800) 573-8333 (253) 945-8800 Fax (253) 945-8878



June 12, 2009

To: Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
Representative Carl Wilson, Vice-Chair
Representative Jennifer Williamson, Vice-Chair
Representative Denyc Boles
Representative Rob Nosse
Representative Barbara Smith Warner
Representative Sherrie Sprenger

Fr: Matt Swanson, Political Director

Re: Support SB 455 A

Chair Holvey and members of the committee:

On behalf of the more than 24,000 members of the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters we are pleased to support SB 455. Apprenticeship utilization at our Communities Colleges and Universities will provide an important tool to build the construction workforce throughout the state of Oregon. Our contractors and members are ready to meet the challenge to recruit and train workers throughout the state in order to meet the needs of our public post-secondary partners.

We currently have almost 1,600 apprentices participating in our training programs throughout the state. This is an all-time high for our union. Of those, 34% are minorities, 10% are women and 8% are armed services veterans or reservists. Legislation such as SB 455 will help increase the representation of these groups in our trade by requiring the use of state registered training agents as contractors at our colleges and universities.

When thinking of apprenticeship utilization standards, it is important to note that like many professions our workforce is aging. In order to build the workforce of the future, requiring that public projects utilize state registered training agents will ensure that our new construction can also be the classrooms for our future workforce. These apprenticeships through the union construction trades are also fully funded through private dollars, paid for out of our Joint Apprenticeship training programs. We do not rely on state dollars to train the construction workforce.

Additionally, we think of the opportunities that are gained in communities from across the state. I think of an apprentice from Carpenters local 271, Arroya Newton, who was fortunate

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enough to work on the Hayward Field project at the University of Oregon under a project labor agreement. Because of the high apprenticeship standards and requirements to reach out to women and minority workers, she was able to get work on this project.

Aroya grew up in foster care and has spoken about how the only life skills someone like her picked up was how to apply for food stamps and the Oregon Health Plan. She discovered the Carpenters apprenticeship program through one of her children's fathers and decided that this would be a path to joining the middle class. For the first time in her life she is now able to feel secure in putting food on the table, a roof over her family's head and save for a rainy day. These are the type of opportunities that are available in our communities when we promote apprenticeship in our construction trades on public projects.

Her contribution to her children's future is now the pride she feels every day when she drives them by the Hayward field project and shows them what their mom has built. This opportunity gave her a chance that many Oregonians who grew up like her did not have. Without the agreement between the University, Build Trades Unions and Contractors this would not have happened.

Please support pathways to the middle class for Oregonians throughout the state at our Colleges and Universities and vote yes on SB 455 A

Questions? Contact Matt Swanson at 503-504-4894 or mswanson@nwcarpenters.org