



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Bill to increase apprenticeships in state contracting approved by Senate

SB 782A requires state contracting agencies to use apprentice labor for at least ten percent of contract work

SALEM—On May Day, the Oregon Senate advanced a jobs bill that will help Oregonians get on-the-job skills training and boost the state's occupations and trade industries. Senate Bill 782A, which passed on a unanimous vote, requires state contracting agencies to use apprentices to carry out ten percent of work hours for the appropriate parts of the contract.

“Investing in apprenticeships will strengthen Oregon’s workforce and help our state succeed in the 21st century economy and grow our middle class,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “Apprenticeships will provide new workers with a great opportunity to learn and apply skills that will eventually help them get living-wage jobs.”

Apprenticeships serve as a rigorous occupational training opportunity for new workers by combining on-the-job work experience with classroom instruction. According to the Bureau of Labor and Industries’ Apprenticeship and Training Division, there are 121 different occupations that train workers as apprenticeships in Oregon, with about 5,000 apprentices currently registered in Oregon in 2013. SB 782A will provide these apprentices with substantial prospects to participate on a state contract for construction or other work.

“Connecting new workers to apprenticeship programs will help train tomorrow’s living-wage workforce,” said Sen. Chip Shields (D-Portland). “Senate Bill 782A will help more Oregonians find their way into the middle class by providing more skills-training opportunities for building trades and other occupations.”

SB 782A takes an incremental approach to increasing the amount of apprenticeships state agencies must use for state contracts. When the bill takes effect, it would require any state contract over \$5 million to use apprenticeships for 10% of the work, with the exception of the Department of Transportation. Starting in 2018, that percentage of apprentice work would increase to 12%.

The bill will now go to the Oregon House of Representatives for consideration.

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