



# SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Legislation promotes opportunities for diversity in construction workforce**

*SB 831A increases the amount of training programs aimed at increasing diversity in construction trades*

SALEM—Today the Oregon Senate voted to make it easier for women and members of minority groups to gain experience in construction through training and workforce development programs. Senate Bill 831A, which passed the Senate on a vote of 28-1 with one excused, directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to spend up to \$2.1 million on construction workforce diversity and pre-apprenticeship training programs.

“This bill ensures that all Oregonians have an equal opportunity to work in the high-wage construction trades,” said Senator Chip Shields (D-Portland).

Current law authorizes ODOT to use federal flexible highway funds to involve more women and minorities in the workforce through training programs, job site mentoring, skill-building classes, and other opportunities. Each year, ODOT must file a report evaluating the effectiveness of these programs at increasing diversity in the highway construction workforce.

SB 831A provides for a 40 percent increase in workforce development programs targeted toward women and minority groups.

“Workforce development programs are crucial to helping more Oregonians work their way into the middle class,” said Senate Majority Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “Offering more opportunities to women and minorities strengthens Oregon’s workforce and trains more workers for the needs of our growing economy.”

Senate Bill 831A will now proceed to the Oregon House of Representatives for a vote.

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*For more information on the Senate Majority Caucus, please visit [www.orsenatemajority.org](http://www.orsenatemajority.org)*