



Snohomish County Council

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Council Passes Apprenticeship Ordinance**

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Job training in the construction trades got a significant boost from the Snohomish County Council today as it expanded construction apprenticeship requirements on county construction projects. The proposal, approved by a 4-1 vote would require contractors to hire apprentices on all county public works projects over \$1,000,000.

“This program provides access to family wage jobs,” said County Council Vice Chair Dave Gossett, “and it creates the skilled workforce for the future.” He added, “As baby boomers begin to leave the construction trades, we will be faced with a critical shortage of workers unless we act to train workers now.” Gossett stressed this is also a good economic development tool by making certain the county has a well-trained workforce to deal with growth demands in the next several decades.

The contractors would be required to hire apprentices from training programs that have received the okay of the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council. Its expected that as many as 20 per cent of the hours on a county project could come from apprentice labor.

Up until now, the county has had a limited apprenticeship program. “This program worked well when we built our new office building, garage, and jail in downtown Everett,” said County Council Chair Kirke Sievers. “It makes sense to expand this to other county construction projects.”

As our County continues to grow, so does our need for new skilled workers. It’s important we do all we can to make sure that people can grow up, live and work in Snohomish County” said Councilmember Dave Somers.

Allan Darr, Genral Vice President of IBEW Local 302 remarked after the hearing “an apprenticeship program gives our members and Snohomish County an opportunity to work together to produce a workforce with the best skills while providing cost savings.”

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