



Snohomish County
County Executive's Office
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County Executive

For Immediate Release

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Executive Reardon Proposes Apprenticeship Requirement for County Construction Projects

Reardon's proposal creates opportunity to grow higher wage construction trade jobs.

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon is proposing to establish apprenticeship requirements for all County construction projects with an estimated cost of one million dollars or more.

“Our ability to grow a strong economy depends in large part on having enough skilled workers in the construction trades to meet the demand.” says Reardon. “The apprenticeship program offers greater opportunity for workers to build the skills needed to graduate to good paying jobs.”

The apprenticeship program would require contractors to hire apprentices enrolled in training programs approved or recognized by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council. The goal is for apprentices to perform 15 percent to 20 percent of total labor hours per County project. Transportation projects are exempt from the program.

The decision to move forward with the proposal was based in part on the successful outcome of an apprentice pilot program utilized for the County Campus Redevelopment Initiative (CRI). From October 2002 to November 2005, 17 percent of total labor hours on this project were from approved state apprentice training programs. The original goal was set at 15 percent.

Studies have shown that the percentage of skilled workers in the construction trades is declining due to attrition and retirement.

Snohomish County's apprenticeship program will be joining similar programs already in place for the State of Washington and King County. Each has shown that

apprenticeship programs are effective in providing training and experience to the individuals seeking to enter or advance in the construction trade.

According to Reardon, “the apprenticeship program is particularly important because it creates opportunity for underrepresented groups such as minorities, women and persons with disabilities to enter the construction trades and get needed training.”

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