

SUPPORT SB 647 (CARROLL FOY) and HB 1273 (KRIZEK)

RESPONSIBLE CONTRACTING = QUALITY APPRENTICESHIPS & QUALITY PROJECTS

Registered Apprenticeship Programs are registered with the state or the federal government and have extensive training and education standards that produce high skilled construction workers. SB 647 and HB 1273 promote the use of registered apprenticeship programs through responsible contracting.

Industry Shortage

It was reported on February 3rd, 2023, by the Association of Building Contractors, that the construction industry would need to attract 546,000 workers- a time of construction worker shortages in the modern golden age of American construction.

Construction Needs in the Commonwealth

Virginia enjoys a robust portfolio of construction opportunities a) the national focus on updating and improving infrastructure, b) a dominant and ever-growing position in data centers, c) a multitude of federal bases and facilities, d) the I 64 expansion mega project, e) the increasing diversity and need for power generation and transmission, and f) the relocation of professional sport teams arenas and stadiums. This is by no means an exhaustive list but demonstrates some of the larger projects.

Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement

In 2023 House Bill HB 2195 and Senate Bill SB1470 were signed into law. This law reorganizes workforce development in recognition of the need to streamline, measure, and mitigate certain labor needs in the commonwealth. One of the goals was to create more apprenticeships.

Two Major Components of Apprenticeship: In-Class Instruction & On the Job Training

The earn while you learn “other college” is dependent on the twin columns of in class instruction and on the job training. The needed 2000 hours per year is what enables this tried-and-true training model to create high-skilled construction workers with no debt and reduced turnover rates.

Investment Past the In-Class Instruction

The most important investment Virginia can make toward self-funded apprenticeships is to include apprenticeship standards in the procurement process. It is one thing to stand up apprenticeship programs and a completely different challenge to keep those programs going. For those companies that take the high road of real training through apprenticeship, the most obvious need is to be successful at bidding.

When Efficiencies become Cannibalism

Low bid brings out the worst in some contractors. This pattern creates winners of companies that cut corners, steal wages, and misclassify workers. These business models drive the industry towards a state of desperation and builds a considerable barrier for talented workers looking to enter construction.

Leveling the Playing Field

Responsible contracting apprenticeship policies create a more level playing field for the most scrupulous contractors. This means better quality training, careers, and projects for the taxpayers in Virginia.

What the Bills Do- SB 647 Patron: Carroll Foy / HB 1273 Patron: Krizek

- Requires public bodies to include responsible bidder criteria in their Invitations to Bid. These criteria include a track record of compliance and safety as well as utilization of registered apprenticeships including a minimum percentage of construction hours done by individuals enrolled in approved apprenticeship programs (12.5%).

