



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro

News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Board Launches Effort to Increase Hiring of Women for Transportation Construction Jobs

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) Board of Directors today approved a motion to improve the agency's efforts to encourage contractors to hire more women to work on Metro construction projects.

Metro has a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) to support national targeted hiring goals on its construction projects. An update on the PLA to the Metro Board showed that the program is exceeding its targeted worker hiring goals; however the national goal of female utilization on federally funded construction projects is not being met.

A motion by Metro Board Directors LA County Supervisors Sheila Kuehl, Janice Hahn and Hilda Solis and LA Mayor Eric Garcetti and Director Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker calls for Metro to create and publish a score card system that reflects percentages of women hired by Metro contractors; develop an incentive program to encourage contractors to exceed the national goal; and require contractors to demonstrate how they are promoting a diverse and inclusive work environment.

"Women are a driving force in L.A's growth and prosperity — supporting them in the workplace is good for business, and good for our economy," said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair Eric Garcetti. "This new incentive program will create a more equitable, inclusive work environment and empower women to pursue careers in the construction industry."

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed an executive order that established a goal that 6.9 percent of hours worked on federally funded construction projects should be by

women. However, reaching that goal has been difficult: the national average is below 3 percent, the California average is 2.1 percent and Metro is currently averaging 3.35 percent.

“Doing union construction, women make 93% of what men make, as opposed to the average 80% women make in other jobs,” said L.A. County Supervisor and Metro Board member Sheila Kuehl. “This type of job not only builds our transportation system, it builds stable incomes and lives for the women who hold them.”

“For too long, women have been all but shut out of the construction industry,” said L.A. County Supervisor Janice Hahn. “There are trained and educated women ready and willing to enter the transportation construction workforce and Metro will reward and encourage the companies that hire them and promote diverse and inclusive workplaces. These are good-paying, middle-class jobs and as we spend billions of dollars to vastly improve our county’s transportation infrastructure, everyone should have equal access to these opportunities.”

“I have fought for workplace equity my entire life, including as the first Latina in the Presidential cabinet, and I know we demonstrate our values when we back them with our dollars,” said Metro Board member and Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis. “As Secretary of Labor and LA County Supervisor, I have worked to ensure that every worker has the same benefits and access to a better life. With today’s action, Metro and I are supporting inclusive work environments that lift up our communities and address the disproportionate burdens and disadvantages that women far too often face.”

“Some of the barriers to attract women to the male dominated construction industry are lack of awareness of job opportunities, the need for supportive services such as pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and a lack of a female gender supportive culture at the work site,” say Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington. “Metro is initiating a disparity study, to be completed in a year that will take a closer look at this issue and recommend solutions to improve it.”

Metro’s PLA/Construction Careers Program (CCP) began in 2012 and has proven to help diversify the construction workforce, improve access to career opportunities for area residents and serve as a catalyst for improving socio-economic status of workers.

Metro also has programs such as Women Build Metro Los Angeles that hosts apprenticeship fairs and boot camps focused on introducing women to construction related jobs. Metro’s PLA/CCP and the passage of the Measure M sales tax ballot measure to fund projects ensure that jobs are available.

Metro also recently established a Women and Girls Governing Council that looks at Metro policies and programs with an eye toward increasing opportunities for women at the agency, as well as with its contractors.

About Metro

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is unique among the nation's transportation agencies. Created in 1993, Metro is a multimodal transportation agency that transports about 1.3 million passengers daily on a fleet of 2,200 clean air buses and six rail lines. The agency also oversees bus, rail, highway and other mobility-related building projects and leads transportation planning and programming for Los Angeles County.

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Metro-148 (PLA Motion)