

U.S. Rep. Karen Bass praises Local Hire program

BY [DAVE SOTERO](#) , MARCH 17, 2015

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Rep. Karen Bass (D-37th District) praised Metro’s local hiring program during testimony at the U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday.

Bass wrote the [legislation \(//bass.house.gov/press-release/house-adopts-bass-amendment-allow-local-hire-D-policies-transit-agencies\)](http://bass.house.gov/press-release/house-adopts-bass-amendment-allow-local-hire-D-policies-transit-agencies) for a federal pilot program that will allow transportation agencies to consider hiring local workers for future transit and highway project that use federal funds. Up to now, agencies that received federal funds could only consider income — not geography — when hiring workers.

“Every now and then, Congress does something in a bipartisan manner, and because of this action, the Department of Transportation established a pilot program that will permit L.A. Metro to prioritize local hiring on over two billion dollars in transit and highway projects,” Bass said. “Not just Metro, but around the country, local hire is now a policy. This investment will translate into tens of thousands of well-paying jobs for Angelenos, putting these tax dollars back into the communities that paid for the projects.”

“More local control to transit agencies will mean they can build light rail and subway projects that will last for generations while ensuring that people who need jobs today will be the first in line for the jobs these projects create.”

Bass went on to say that the L.A. region’s high unemployment rate was the reason why local hiring policies were so critically needed. “In L.A., it is crucial that we adopt local hiring policies. Los Angeles unemployment remains higher than the national average, and people who are living in South Los Angeles, who are directly impacted by the transit projects I mentioned, are facing some of the highest unemployment rates in the State.”

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The amendment was authored by Rep. Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles). It's still not the law of the land, but is significant. The issue is that
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This is important. In one sentence it means this: Metro can specifically target hiring workers who live near projects receiving federal funding.
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This is an important issue because local transit agencies are currently prohibited from creating local hiring programs when using federal funds for
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