



## Western States Council of Carpenters – Alaska Satellite Office

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To: Co-Chairs Ashley Carrick and Ted Eischeid, and Members of the House Transportation Committee

From: Chris Dimond

April 16, 2025

Re: Support for HB 186, Apprenticeship Utilization on State-Funded Construction Projects

Co-Chairs Carrick and Eischeid, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 186, which proposes a requirement for the use of registered apprentices on state funded public construction projects valued at 2.5 million dollars or more.

This legislation is more than a labor policy. It is a strategic investment in Alaska's long term strength, not only in physical infrastructure but in developing and retaining a qualified, local workforce that is capable, professional, and committed to the communities they help build.

Registered apprenticeship programs are rigorous, federally recognized, and designed to produce highly skilled workers who are ready to meet the demands of real world construction. These are not short term training programs. They are structured pipelines that lead to sustainable careers. Graduates of these programs are more likely to remain in Alaska, contributing to the stability and resilience of our workforce and economy.

Alaska is currently experiencing a growing shortage of skilled construction workers, especially in areas outside the major urban centers. If the state is going to invest significant public funds into infrastructure, that investment should include an equally important focus on building up the human capital to sustain it. House Bill 186 supports that effort.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 92 percent of apprentices who complete registered apprenticeship programs are still employed nine months later, earning an average of 80,000 dollars annually. These are careers that offer real opportunity and stability. They represent a path toward economic independence and community growth.

Public dollars should serve a dual purpose; building the infrastructure we need today while preparing the workforce we need tomorrow. House Bill 186 makes that possible.

Thank you for your time and for considering this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Chris Dimond

Lead Representative

Western States Regional Council of Carpenters

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